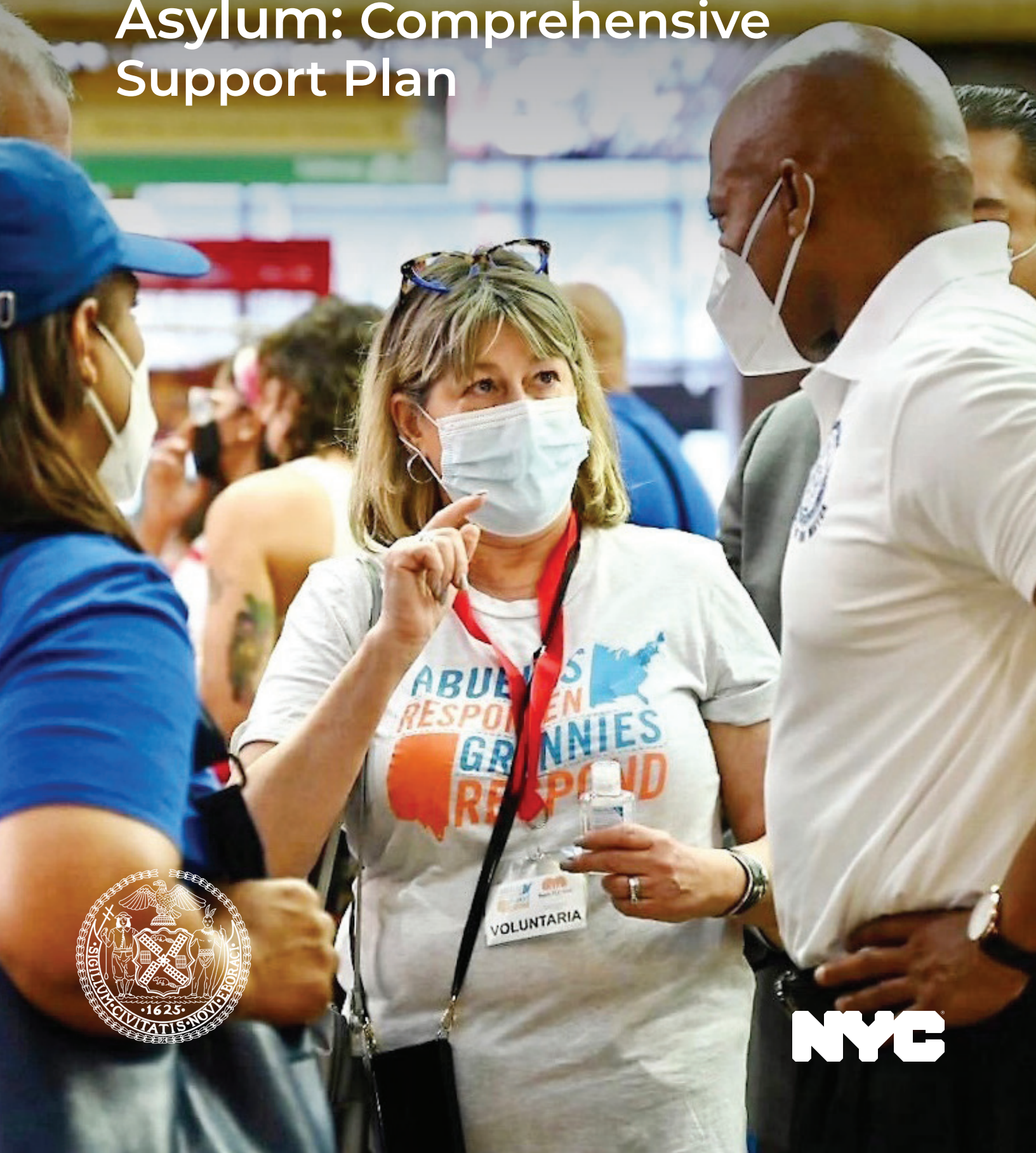


# OPEN ARMS

## Families Seeking Asylum: Comprehensive Support Plan



**NYC**

## Focus Area

### Specific Strategies and Action Items

**Please note that these action items and strategies are utilized to support all new-arrival students.**

**Additional support for students in temporary housing have been embedded in the plan.**

#### Inter-Agency Collaboration

- Collaborate with DYCD to prioritize after school enrollment for students/ families impacted communities.
- Liaise with MOIA who funds CBOs to support direct legal services such as advising on legal status and filing the proper paperwork and work with schools to host legal clinics so that families are aware of resources available to families. Public Resources presentations are also available.
  - The DOE's STH team will connect with ACS about providing additional information to families about child welfare/norms in NY.
- STH presented “back to school” webinars for DHS and HRA family shelter provider partners, and added several slides focused on MLL and enrollment support for migrant families. These presentations rolled out the week of 8/11. Outreach regarding these sessions has been supported by DHS and HRA, as well as our advocacy partner Homeless Services United (the nonprofit trade association for shelter provider partners).
- With DHS, the DOE STH team has been consulting with the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) and migrant-serving nonprofit organizations to identify supports ranging from meeting basic needs (clothing, food, shelter), to important transition supports (jobs, English language lessons, access to appropriate benefits).
  - This also includes an outreach to the Food Bank of NYC for a list of walkable pantries in each district.

#### Enrollment Process

- The DOE STH team receives daily updates of new shelter locations from DHS, and makes sure Regional Managers are fully informed of new sites so that they can activate their district teams and deploy personnel to meet with families. While in

some areas there is more staff than in others, individuals are being very flexible, and the team is not hearing of major gaps in service.

- DOE STH Regional Managers and their staff support enrollment in school by coordinating with the Family Welcome Centers and enrollment team. When there is an influx of families, the STH family workers or coordinators walk families over from the shelters/hotels to the enrollment site.
  - An example of this: In District 2, where many hotels are opening daily and serving as shelters, the STH regional manager coordinated with the Family Welcome Center to set up a table at their summer enrollment site to support these families and students to enroll in schools. There are two bilingual enrollment staff members at that table.
- Family Welcome Center counselors Identify schools within the vicinity of the shelters that have available seats, especially for MLLs.
- An enrollment staff member will be at the Asylum Seeker Navigation Center, M-F 9am - 5pm, to provide enrollment support.
- Student enrollment will add similar stations and support at other Family Welcome Center sites based on need.
- Families will receive backpacks and supplies when they are enrolling.
- Anecdotally, if a counselor is meeting with a family and the family mentions their migration status, counselors are able to note that in the customer management tool. This system is not a tracking tool and would not be a reliable metric.
- **Vaccinations:** DOHMH is part of a cross-agency team to link these families to FQHCs and health centers not just for immunizations but also for on-going pediatric care. As a reminder, students in temporary housing are excluded from immunization requirements as part of their right to immediate enrollment.

## ***Transportation***

- OPT is prioritizing routing for all students in temporary housing including those in the 13 DHS emergency shelters and all busing exceptions requests.
- The STH Team is also coordinating with the Office of Pupil Transportation's Access and Eligibility team to understand the transportation needs of students in the newly-opened shelters and other asylum seeking families.
- For students in DHS shelters (including the 13 newly opened emergency shelters)



- Students in temporary housing in grades k-6 are eligible for busing
- STH team and OPT is working closely with DHS to monitor shelter provider support in arranging transportation.
- While in the process of being assigned transportation, the Parent/Guardian can get a MetroCard from their child's school to take their children to and from school.
- For students not in DHS shelters (including DV/HPD/RHY shelters, doubled up students, and other STH):
  - Students in temporary housing in grades k-6 are eligible for transportation
  - We are ensuring staff have familiarity with the [Busing Exceptions Form](#), which may be required to arrange transportation
  - Families should work with their shelter staff or school staff to submit the request form
  - No additional documentation is required
  - While in the process of being assigned transportation, the Parent/Guardian can get a MetroCard from their child's school to take their children to and from school.
- Reminder, a Busing Exception request form is not required for students in DHS shelters. Families in DHS shelters should work with their shelter or DOE staff who can support them in arranging transportation.
- OPT and vendor, NYCSBUS, will be providing 10 buses at the Port Authority Bus Terminal at 7 am on August 16th. The buses will have air conditioning and water for the passengers. Buses will transport families to Shelter sites in Manhattan and Bronx possibly other locations, to be determined.

## ***Finance/Budget***

- The STH team is making sure Superintendents and schools are aware of Title I STH Funds and its usage to support the academic and immediate needs of these families. The Title I STH Funds Toolkit and Short Guide was released in Principals and Superintendents Digests on 8/16 and an optional webinar walking through the resources will be held on 8/19. ([RSVP here](#)). We will include messaging around how these funds can be used to support asylum- seeking families.
- As schools take in additional students and require additional resources, schools can apply for budget appeals at any time. We also consistently monitor school registers through the October 31 snapshot date. Additional funding is released to schools early

if needed. Schools have already received several million dollars through this process ahead of the coming school year.

- Our HR directors are working closely with principals to ensure bilingual/dual language/ENL teachers are certified and licensed.
- Schools receive a school allocation memorandum (SAM) each year for translation and interpretation services. These funds are typically available beginning in September and the Office of Language Access (OLA) will reach out to school Language Access Coordinators with an update once funds are available.

## Language Access and Support

- Working closely with STH and the Office of MLs to ensure families are being supported with the enrollment process, particularly in their native languages.
- The Office of MLs is also meeting with each superintendent to share where to find instructional material, policy guides, and resources to support family engagement. These meetings will be completed by August 26. Superintendents will also know who within the Office of MLs they can reach out to based on the content-area (policy, family and community partnership, instruction/professional learning).
- The Office of Language Access (OLA) provides free written translation and connects schools and central offices with free over-the-phone interpretation services as needed. On-Site and Remote interpretation services are also available. For more information on services, visit the [OLA InfoHub Page](#).
- Each school should have at least one Language Access Coordinator who has completed training on translation and interpretation services for families. In addition, all schools have Field Language Access Coordinators within OLA to assist with translation and interpretation support.

## Academic and Extracurricular Programming and Support

- The Division of School Leadership, Office of the First Deputy Chancellor, and Teaching & Learning (particularly our partners in Specialized Instruction & Support and Office of Multi-language Learners) will work in concert to support superintendents and principals with the following:
  - Selecting, creating, and utilizing high-quality curricular and instructional resources that are culturally and linguistically responsive;
  - Selecting, creating, and utilizing assessment practices that provide baseline data on language proficiency (NYSITEL, etc.) literacy and mathematics;



- Professional learning to enhance teacher practice in the areas of second language acquisition, specialized instruction for diverse learners (including those with IEPs), culturally responsive sustaining education, and trauma-informed pedagogy;
- Creating an array of before and after school activities across all grade levels that directly respond to students' needs and interests; this includes a targeted recruitment plan where schools advertise said extracurricular offerings to families and students to enhance students' academic and social experiences.
- The DOE Central Team will work closely with superintendents and principals to determine any areas that require additional resources and support through regular progress monitoring (check-in meetings, focus groups, surveys, etc.)
- Arriving students are placed in the appropriate grade level in alignment with [Chancellor's Regulation A-101](#), taking into consideration their age and available academic records. Students who arrive without educational records are placed in a grade level provisionally based on age, and the principal makes a final determination as to the instructionally appropriate grade level.
- Principals have access to a comprehensive [Transfer Student Toolkit](#) which guides them in the review of academic records, awarding transfer credits, and grade placement. This Toolkit includes guidance on academic programming for students who arrive without academic records.
- Principals will be reminded of existing resources in an upcoming Principals' Digest.

## **Social-Emotional Support/Mental Health**

- Each Family Welcome Center has two counselors who will help walk families through the enrollment process.
- Upon enrolling, asylum seeking students will have access to universal social-emotional supports available to all students, as well as access to small group or individual supports, as needed.
- School implementation of the DESSA social-emotional screener will help identify social-emotional strengths and areas of need and to escalate a referral pathway to support.
- In addition to DESSA data, schools are encouraged to closely monitor student attendance, as school absences may be an indicator of needs, for which schools can activate systems of support and follow up.

- Schools are encouraged to meet weekly at the start of the school year to discuss student progress and refer students to support staff if/when areas of need emerge. During these check in's, school leaders and staff can review attendance and DESSA data, share observations and reports of student functioning, discuss supports currently in place, and/or reach out to families to learn more.
- For students who demonstrate social-emotional challenges, schools can leverage internal mental health resources (i.e. Counselor, Social Worker, School Based Mental Health Clinic, etc.) and/or refer students to CBO partners. School professionals will make every effort to connect students to services in their preferred language, leveraging strategies used for other multilingual learners attending DOE schools.
- Bridging the Gap social workers can be leveraged as a resource to support the unique social-emotional needs of this population.
- For students requiring support beyond what is available in school, families can be referred to NYCWell, which is a free, confidential service available in over 200 languages via text or call.

### **Support From Community Providers/CBOs**

- Collaborating with United Way of NYC to coordinate CBO support for migrant families.
- Working closely with Community School Lead CBOs in impacted districts to ensure that families are receiving the supports needed, examples include:
  - Make the Road NY (MRNY) has worked closely with city agencies to support migrant families arriving in NYC right now. Support provided by MRNY includes: Language access services, workshops on how to enroll and explore the schools available to them that will support their unique needs, guidance and referral support to available immigration clinics and support for families that may have had holds on their immigration cases.
  - Comprehensive Youth Development runs a Legal Information Clinic out Manhattan Comprehensive Night and Day High School (District 2), where they support students and their families who have immigration issues such as asylum cases, SIJS cases, deportation proceedings etc. CYD provides case management, refers families to attorneys and links families to translation services where necessary.
  - El Puente (District 14) hires dedicated staff to work with immigrant students and supports students to become acclimated into the school community. Staff link families to additional services needed and El Puente also offers ESL classes, runs a food pantry and distributes clothing to families in need.

- In District 24, United Community Schools runs a food pantry, provides clothing (in partnership with Operation Warm and the Gap), and this year they will be utilizing STH funds to run an after-school program with a 'newcomer curriculum' infused into it.
  
- The Coalition for Hispanic Family Services, supports migrant families through the Bushwick Community Partnership and the Elmhurst Community Partnership by providing casework services and referral services.



**NYC**<sup>®</sup>