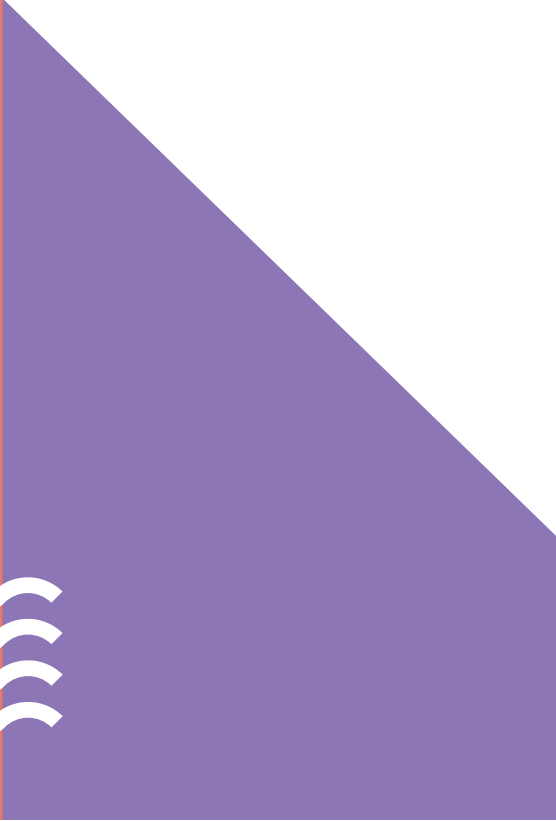
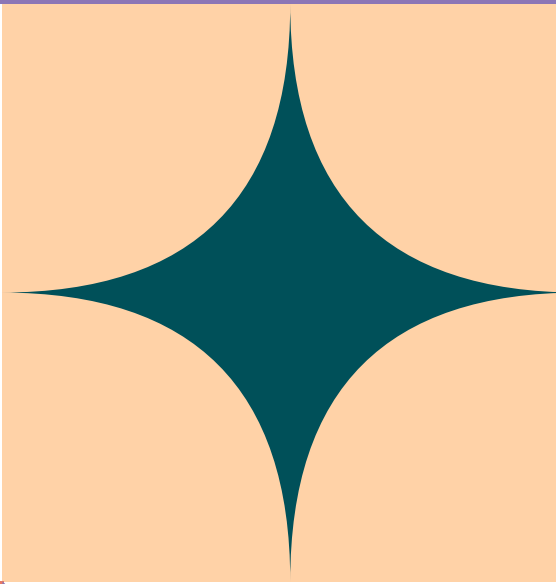


Educating to Belong

An educator brief for practitioners working with refugees in the US education system



By: Rola Tarek & Jordan Weatherl

- 01 **Introduction**
- 02 **Predicability**
- 03 **Adaptability**
- 04 **Future-Building**
- 05 **Relationships**
- 06 **Conclusion**

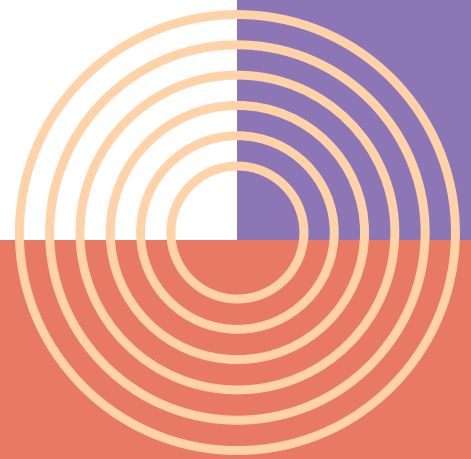


TABLE OF CONTENTS

01.

INTRODUCTION

How did this project come about, what question are we seeking to answer, and who is Mariam?

One of our first conversations when we arrived at the Harvard Graduate School of Education was about our prior experiences working with refugees. **Rola Tarek** had spent ten years coordinating local and regional efforts to support participation and employability for university students, professional development for public educators, and school and community-based efforts to integrate refugees in Cairo, Egypt. Through this work, she realized the diversity of refugees, and their needs, and her lifelong passion to make programs work better for those that they are serving, especially programs that serve refugees. **Jordan Weatherl** spent a summer working in Athens, Greece with an international NGO that supported access to direct service organizations working on the ground with refugee populations and taught English as a Second Language in a local community center. Through this, Jordan determined he wanted to become a teacher and later to improve access to equitable educational opportunities for refugees. Both of their experiences and passions led us to graduate school, but now was **the time that we wanted to devote to determining what would really make a difference.**

Massachusetts had been experiencing a particularly difficult challenge in navigating the massive amount of refugees and migrants entering the education system in the past two years. Over 5,600 newcomers, foreign-born learners of English, entered the education system in 2022 (Mantil et. al., 2023) and over 7,300 migrants living in temporary housing in October of 2023 while seeking refuge. Refugees often experience some of the toughest circumstances in seeking safety and the opportunity to thrive. Many refugees that arrive in the US face significant barriers in accessing education systems, often due to cultural or linguistic barriers as well as staff that have not been properly equipped to support the unique challenges that refugee populations face (Gross and Ntagenwa, 2016). As the number of refugees continues to escalate in light of global conflicts, the challenges that educators within the US system face stretched resources, unforeseen barriers and higher levels of uncertainty in navigating their support of refugee students and families.

Mariam is a Pakistani-American educator and the academic coordinator of an NGO in Massachusetts that works to support immigrants and refugees from Haiti. The organization provides legal, educational and integration support for the immigrants and their families. Mariam has worked with the organization as a volunteer first in summer of 2022, then as a full-time employee since May 2023. In school, Mariam felt othered from a very early age, even in Kindergarten when she was the only student of color in her classroom. Many of her challenging experiences as a student in the US seemed to come from microaggressions. One experience that still stands out to Mariam is when she was in the 2nd grade and a white peer approached her after recess while they were cleaning up to tell her that Mariam's skin looked like dirt before washing their hands.

Mariam always wanted to start "a secretly feminist school" when she was a child. She remembers she didn't initially have "this push to work with migrant families or children", however when she moved back to the US as an adult she started working with her current organization in the summer out of a burgeoning desire to support some of the most vulnerable kids in her eyes. The students she works with are marginalized in their schools, but when attending Mariam's program, she sees them as so comfortable and "at home", because "everyone is a person of color". This drive to contribute as someone trying to do good in the world for her students is what keeps her going in the face of so many challenges.

This educator brief is meant to support educators in navigating the complex challenges that they face in supporting refugee students by examining the barriers they may face in and outside of the classroom as described by *Pedagogies of Belonging*, a model pioneered by Sarah Dryden-Peterson, our professor and course instructor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The **Pedagogies of Belonging** are made up of four distinct ideas: **predictability, adaptability, future-building and relationships**. Based on our research, work with refugees, and building on our interview with a Massachusetts-based educator working directly with refugees, we believe a better understanding of the principles of *Pedagogies of Belonging* will support educators on their journey to support their refugee students.

Research Question: How do American educators navigate the unique challenges of supporting recently resettled refugees and migrants as they integrate into the US education system?

PEDAGOGIES OF BELONGING

APPROACH

Predictability

“Safety created through knowing, understanding and trusting.” (Dryden-Peterson, 2021, p. 371)

Adaptability

“The capacities to analyze, renegotiate, pivot, and transform pedagogies to meet individual and collective purposes of education.” (Dryden-Peterson, 2021, p. 371)

Future-Building

“Learning how to make what seem like unknowable and impossible futures knowable and possible, ways of embracing the generativity of uncertainty.” (Dryden-Peterson, 2021, p. 371)

Relationships

Connections that “provide social support, which includes having people to talk to and feeling part of a group, and emotional support, which includes managing stress and feeling content, self-confident, and encouraged.” (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2017)



02.

PREDICTABILITY

“Safety created through knowing, understanding and trusting.”

(Dryden-Peterson, 2021, p. 371)

When reflecting on her initial days in her role, Mariam experienced lots of disorganization at the beginning and variation for teachers' experiences, students' educational levels and programming. Leaders running the program did not yet know enough about educational approaches that can help students during times of uncertainty and transition, and were using these buzzwords like “project-based learning” without knowing what it truly means, causing more challenges in creating a predictable environment without shared or accurate understanding. In addition, there was a disconnect between students' needs and current program managers' desires, leading to frustration on both sides. Mariam felt like there was so much potential to the program, ultimately opportunities to fix the disorganization. Their music program is robust so she saw this as an opportunity to enhance the academic program.

On a cultural level, Mariam is grappling with feeling like someone with more identity markers closer to her students should be doing this job - other people with Haitian Creole background, who know the language and the culture. Sometimes, she doesn't feel at home, however she is still grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow, which encouraged her to start learning Haitian Creole at the school. She is hoping to be able to improve and implement changes to this program, so she wants to actually build a program that would run without her and build systems that work.

When refugees first come to the US, it can often feel like so little is predictable. **When will they be able to go back home? How long can they live in their new housing? Will there be others like them nearby?** As educators, we can often see the challenge they experience firsthand as they navigate the school halls. However, these challenges of predictability can often extend to our work and lives as well. Am I creating a classroom that supports the rhythms of life that they want and need? If I switch up my lesson plan and introduce new concepts or practices, am I disrupting their learning experiences? If my needs change as a person or professional and I am no longer able to be as present as I wanted to be, am I helping or hurting? Ultimately, it is challenging to foster predictability when there are so many priorities and needs, when the environment is disorganized and when it is unclear what exactly you are trying to build towards.

THESE CHALLENGES CAN BE:

DIFFERENT NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

It's hard to meet the many goals and needs of refugee students, whose needs can range from learning a language to getting help for trauma. When teachers have to deal with a lot of different students' needs in the same classroom, it's hard to be predictable.

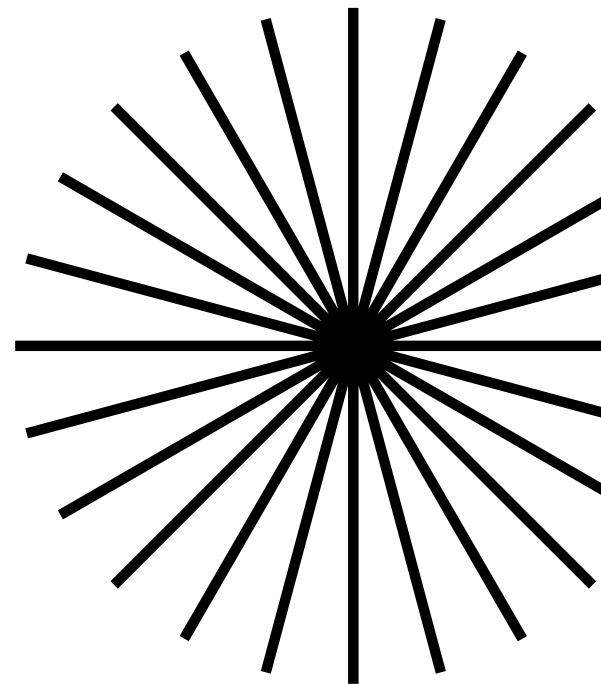
Additionally, It could be hard to set a clear path in learning because of the need to balance different goals at the same time, like dealing with learning loss, language and cultural integration, and mental and emotional well-being of the students.

LIMITED RESOURCES

With teachers being overloaded with work, they may not be able to set up predictability in the classroom, especially if they don't have enough educational tools, support staff, or specialized training.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS CAN BE DISORGANIZED

Due to transitioning to a new society and with limited access to resources, being able to be part of a consistent learning experience can become a challenge for refugee students and their educators. This uncertainty could be also affecting the family dynamics which puts further pressure on the students and their educators who are trying to create a predictable environment.



WHAT CAN BE DONE?

First, it is important to know that challenges in predictability often come from some level of uncertainty. Uncertainty is “the limited ability to predict even the immediate future—that is, to engage it prudently and with foresight” (Vavrus, 2021, p.) and many teachers will face highly uncertain seasons when supporting refugee students. It may be unclear what the students' needs are at any given moment, or how to respond when a new challenge arises due to language or identity. Instead of treating uncertainty as an enemy filled with danger and fear, being able to embrace uncertainty as a generative opportunity in understanding and creating the future is what one scholar, Frances Vavrus, speaks about.

What does it look like to embrace uncertainty?

Don't hold the unknown all to yourself!

As educators, it can feel that we must have all the right answers and have them immediately, but the beauty of embracing the unknown means that you can acknowledge when you are uncertain or not sure how to act which creates a moment to sit in the uncertainty with authenticity. Saying “I am not sure” is a powerful way to embrace uncertainty together with your student.

Listening and taking your time is almost always good.

When uncertain, we can often feel the urge to find an answer as quickly as possible because living in the unknown is uncomfortable. However, one of the best ways to be predictable to your students is to know that you are a safe and reliable person in their lives that they can depend on, even when their lives outside the classroom or in other spaces in school feels unpredictable. Choosing to listen to better understand their experiences, challenges, hopes and dreams can often be exactly what they needed.

Engaging students in collaboration around learning goals.

Educators can benefit from engaging their students in discussions to set goals, routines and classroom culture together for their learning journey. This might help educators better understand their students' needs and respond to them, navigating some of this unknown. Additionally, it helps students cultivate a sense of agency and engagement.

Use uncertainty to create.

When your student comes to you with a question or a challenge you do not know how to deal with, responding with further questions and a willingness to figure it out together is a great way to embrace uncertainty. Asking "What would your perfect answer be to this problem? If you had infinite resources, what would the best solution look like? What is the best way for me to help you in finding out what we should do?" are all great ways to create out of uncertainty. Your student may not have the best idea of what to do next, but neither do you, so embrace the uncertainty together to find the best way forward. One of the best ways to be predictable to your students is to ensure you are a safe and reliable person in their lives that they can depend on when outside the classroom or in other spaces in school feel unpredictable.

Peer-to-peer support.

With classrooms becoming increasingly diverse, the possibility of students speaking different languages and being from different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, engaging students in supporting their new classmates who have experienced refuge, can help them navigate the culture at the school, acquire learning skills, and create friendships.

03.

ADAPTABILITY

“The capacities to analyze, renegotiate, pivot, and transform pedagogies to meet individual and collective purposes of education.”
(Dryden-Peterson, 2021, p. 371)

When she started working with her organization, Mariam went through the hiring process for the summer program that she would lead with only a week before the programming was meant to start. **She recalled that the curriculum was not appropriate for a summer school, but they did not have a person who would be able to look at the curriculum and see if it was even appropriate in the first place.** The content was focused on project based learning, but none of the students could read in English and some even struggled in their home languages.

She was working with stock curriculum and resources for fourth graders, but the vast majority of her refugee students were actually in the third grade. Many of the teachers that had been hired were actually just parents and many of them didn't have lesson planning or teaching experience. In her day to day work Mariam has to balance different needs including following up on the running of the after-school program, sometimes jumping in if the teacher is not there, managing the school space as they're working from a school that is not theirs. Some of these needs are navigating cultural differences in the teacher-student relationship. One of the new teachers in the program who was helping students in grades 5-8 to do their homework, took offense at students talking back at him and it was very difficult for him to accept that culturally students talk back at teachers in the U.S. Finally, she shared how the youth in her program faced “a lot of race based challenges in the US” which further affected their integration and sense of belonging.

As educators, we all know how important adaptability is from our very first day as a teacher, whether it be a lesson plan that goes totally sideways due to a disruption, an activity falling apart, or students losing engagement halfway through the teaching period. **However, it can sometimes feel even more challenging when supporting refugee students** due to large language barriers prohibiting use of practiced teacher tricks, differences in culture creating unexpected misunderstandings, or unique student skill sets from past educational experiences.

Because so many of the needs of refugee students are unique in comparison to other US students, being able to adapt support to their needs can be especially critical and challenging. Many schools are not set up well to support the unique needs and foster the talents of refugee students, and often when student needs are opposing or too diverse, especially when educators have not received any equipment to support refugee students, it can feel too challenging to adapt to.

THESE CHALLENGES CAN BE FRAMED AS FOLLOWING:

ADAPTING CURRICULA

Educators need to adapt curricula to the needs of their students, while they're overloaded with not enough resources and team members to check if the lessons are appropriate for different age groups, language levels and learning needs. Curricula also need to be adapted so the students are able to regain any learning loss especially in literacy and numeracy, attain the skills required for success in their new society and build character.

LACK OF LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

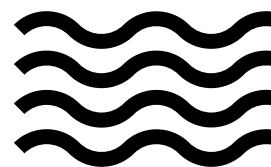
With limited resources, crunched time and heavy workload educators find themselves having to manage multifaceted challenges all at once without enough logistical support and professional development.

RACE-BASED CHALLENGES

Students usually have to adapt to being racialized in the U.S which makes it harder for them to fit in and feel like they belong. These contextual problems make things even more difficult for teachers who work with refugee students.

DIFFERENT NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Teachers have to deal with different ways of communicating and make sure that kids from different language and cultural backgrounds understand what is expected of them. These differences make it harder for the students to adapt, especially when teachers and school structures are not equipped to support them.



WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Django Paris, speaks on the power of Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy as a particularly powerful tool to use in pluralistic, multicultural settings. **Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP) primary objective is to maintain and promote language, literacy, and cultural diversity as an integral aspect of the democratic aims of education, and as a necessary response to changes in population and society** (Paris & Alim, 2014). CSP fosters the unique and diverse skill set of all students and teachers, while also giving students the opportunity to engage with multicultural learning that goes both ways. Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy necessitates that educators employ strategies that facilitate the preservation of cultural and linguistic skills within the communities of their students, while also providing opportunities to develop skills and knowledge needed for them to succeed in the dominant (or new in the case of refugees) culture. The objective is to promote the practical implementation and diverse perspectives of multilingualism and diversity among students and educators (Paris, 2012).

What does this practically look like?

Foster students' existing strengths!

Educators can often feel when there are so many barriers that there are only challenges and needs, when that is never the case. Every refugee student comes with their own set of skills that they can employ when given the proper space and avenues. Being able to find their talents and being able to foster those strengths is at the core of CRP in recognizing what they bring to the table and letting it shine through.

Don't overrule their language

While there is some merit to having standardized procedures, these should not be at the supreme cost of prohibiting refugee students from using their home language. Mariam exhibited CSP by working to enable her students to utilize their own languages using the "Forward project learning" by Karen Brennen which allowed for students to choose their own interests for their projects and product products in their home language and English. Providing opportunities to meet students where they are at, valuing their existing linguistic abilities is a beautiful way to adapt to meet students where they are currently as an educator.

Foster a learning community

Culturally sustaining pedagogy cannot be done in a vacuum, and often cannot be done well in only interpersonal relationships; it is best when done in community. Early on in her role, Mariam decided she would work with youth leaders who are slightly older than her students or have gone through the program before who can translate and build relationships with younger students which drives student engagement. CRP should often look like giving students the opportunity to share amongst their peers, with folks who are different or share the similar salient identities as an opportunity to feel understood or help others to understand them.

Building connections with parents and families

As part of her work, Mariam worked with parents as part of her teaching team and although this was not helpful because the parents lacked the skills and knowledge to educate and to facilitate a classroom environment, but engaging parents to take a role in meeting some of the learning needs (e.g. maintaining their language, sharing their cultural heritage) can help the students adapt better to their new environment, feel better connected to their school and better respond to the educational interventions in the classroom. This can also help build bridges between the refugee families and the wider school community.

04.

FUTURE-BUILDING

“Learning how to make what seem like unknowable and impossible futures knowable and possible, ways of embracing the generativity of uncertainty.”

(Dryden-Peterson, 2021, p. 371)

Due to the challenges of the language barrier, cultural differences, teacher preparation, gaps in academic achievement and many other barriers, Mariam and her teachers often find themselves spending most of their time doing homework support with their refugee students. Often, Mariam works to meet foundational learning needs like numeracy and literacy to help them catch up. However, for the future, Mariam wants to work on **supporting the students to think about their future, who they are and who they want to be**. She wants to help her students more in skill building and have them think about not just academically but also where they will be in the future. Of course Mariam wants to work on numeracy and literacy, but also help them figure out who they are in the world, their values, what it means to be an immigrant and a global citizen, as well as to think about global problems like climate change.

She took the first step by meeting with the parents and thinking together about how they need to move forward from doing just homework in the academic program. She wants to help them figure out who they are in the world, their values, what it means to be an immigrant and a global citizen, as well as to think about global problems like climate change. To do that Mariam will introduce them to texts that talk about people with similar contexts as theirs and then who they were able to **make change in their world**. Also she wants to instill values in them like responsibility, accountability and empathy and have programming around books and movies. She wants to make sure they know they have agency and power over their lives.

When working with refugee students, future-building can seem like a monumental task that is frankly unrealistic. Educators may struggle even more to support future building with students when so many different refugee student **needs feel urgent**, like getting an after-school job to provide for their family or making sure they pass their classes to move on to the next grade. An added layer is that **future building can often feel ethereal**, as if building towards the future was so far off, difficult to imagine or unclear that there is not much of a point in trying. However, future-building is something that all people do that is absolutely essential to every person's ability to thrive. It is something we did to become educators and something that our students deserve as well.

THESE CHALLENGES CAN BE:

HYPERFOCUS ON HOMEWORK SUPPORT

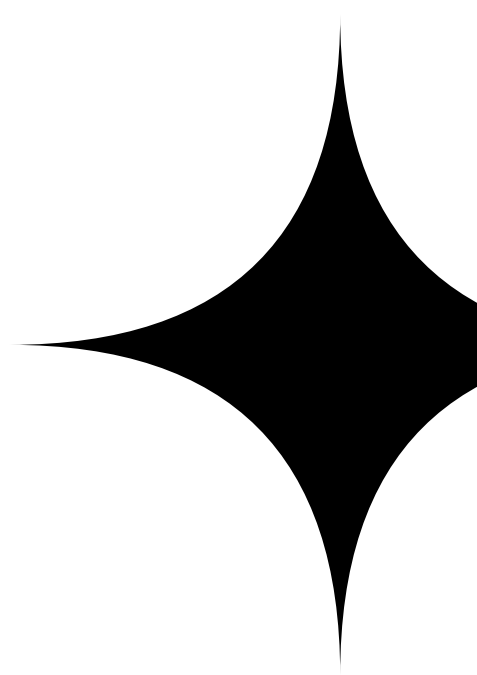
Refugee students usually face academic challenges due to interruptions in their learning journeys which creates a dominance in the educational programs that support them, like in the case of Mariam, leaving less space for working on future-building projects.

URGENCY OF FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

For refugee students to be able to catch-up academically, educators find themselves needing to urgently address numeracy and literacy skills, which makes it difficult for them to think about future-building while they need to address urgent needs.

FUTURE-BUILDING PERCEIVED AS ETHEREAL

Future-building activities that focus on dreaming big, fostering critical consciousness and creating a sense of agency and participation may be seen as ethereal and impractical due to the need to meet the urgent academic needs of students for them to be able to integrate in the educational system. This puts an extra burden on educators to be able to create the space with the students and their families to think and plan for the future and build their character as engaged citizens.



WHAT CAN BE DONE?



The practice of future-building can be informed by radical understandings of the power of education. **Dr. Benjamin Piper** writes of one such understanding in a framework he deems **Ubuntu Education which “refers to unity, to togetherness, to the contributions of the collective to all children’s learning... which requires everyone to contribute to moving towards unity” (Piper, 2016, p.107)**. Ubuntu Education helps to realize that all people are responsible for the work of fostering the learning of our students, refugee or not, and that this can only be done through human kindness. However, some may argue that human kindness does not go far enough in fostering a peaceful and thriving future.

Scholar Johan Galtung writes of the difference between different conceptions of peace which can inform the work of what kind of future we as educators are creating with our refugee students. **Negative peace is the absence of interpersonal violence but often retains harm from structures, whereas positive peace is the absence of both interpersonal violence and structural violence - a term that he dreams to be social justice (Galtung, 1969)**. Although many refugees have fled physical violence, they are entering US systems that could continue to oppress and harm them unless Ubuntu education and a stance of social justice is taken to ensure that the learning they experience is one that builds a future they hope for (and one that we hope for them as well).

What does this practically look like?

Work with students, families and loved ones

One of the first things that Mariam did with her cohort of students was to meet with their parents and have a conversation about how they need to move forward from doing just homework in the academic program. This created a reality where it was not just the student nor Mariam driving for a better future, but the entire community building together. The heart of Ubuntu Education is a togetherness and unity where all are working together to support the learning of the students, so all should be involved and empowered in fostering their learning. It is also important to note that the learner should be at the center of their education, meaning that they are the expert of their own experiences and know better than anyone else what future they hope to build, so future building means elevating the student's voice and agency while empowering all those around them to realize their future.

Address barriers and dream big

Hopefully your refugee student is not experiencing any interpersonal abuse, but they may still be experiencing harm by the structure they are operating in. Do any of their identities prohibit or create barriers to future building, like their gender seemingly preventing them from entering an industry dominated by the opposite gender? Does their identity as a refugee create social or structural barriers that prevent them from taking next steps to realize their future, like getting into the university they dream of going to? If they are safe from personal violence but not able to future-build due to structural barriers, this is an immense opportunity for you as an educator to drive change that tears down the unique barriers preventing them from taking their next step by listening closely to their dreams, identifying barriers, creating tangible and actionable solutions, and walking side by side with them to realize the future.

05.

RELATIONSHIPS

Connections that “provide social support, which includes having people to talk to and feeling part of a group, and emotional support, which includes managing stress and feeling content, self-confident, and encouraged.” (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2017)

When reflecting on her biggest challenges as an educator, she said that the youth she’s working with **“have a lot of race based challenges in the U.S” and that this feels extremely poignant as an immigrant herself.** Although she often felt foreign as a child, she didn’t grow up with the same challenges regarding race, as it was primarily culture and religion that made her feel set apart from her community. This reality makes it difficult for her to talk with her students about race with authority or even simply relate to students that are experiencing race as their most salient identity in the US as refugees. **Mariam often feels that she would have been more helpful as an educator if she had the same racial, ethnic background and experiences as the young learners she is working with.**

While Mariam was working in an unstructured environment with many uncertainties for the students and families she’s working with, one of her biggest strengths as an educator, **she said “I don’t assume things about children”.** Mariam recalls that from her experience **“there are teachers who assume that if a child is not doing well in class or socially it means their parents don't want to help or they're not good enough”.** Instead Mariam talks to the child and their parents, she reflects on her own experience “I understand how foreign a child can feel even when they are the same age as everyone around them” and that even as an adult she sometimes feels isolated among friends or that her experiences are not understood.

The experience of feeling disconnected to refugee students is one that many educators can have as the unique experiences of fleeing a country, being put into a culture and place that is often very different from your home, and being forced to learn a new language is not an extremely common set of experiences for many educators in the US. Educators may find that their ability to relate to their refugee students is far more challenging in comparison to relating to their other students not just because of a difference in set of experiences, but because the identities that many US educators find most salient may be totally different than our students due to cultural differences. Educators often feel a sense of belonging or ownership within their own classrooms and school community, whereas refugees may feel deeply disconnected or different from their learning community, which adds another layer of challenge to relationally connect.

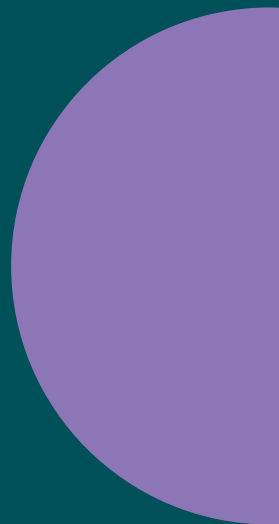
THESE CHALLENGES CAN BE:

DISCONNECTION BETWEEN EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

Due to the diverging experiences between educators and students this can create a disconnect between them and may affect the educators' ability to build trusting relationships with their students, and hinder the students' ability to engage and belong in their school community.

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT STUDENTS AND THEIR CONTEXTS

Due to the multilayered nature of the challenges faced by the refugee students and their families they could be struggling more to integrate, achieve and communicate these challenges, which makes it more probable that educators make assumptions about them and their abilities, especially if they don't share similar experiences and backgrounds.



WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Relationships are potentially the most important part of all of the Pedagogies of Belonging, considering that even if a teacher is able to create spaces that are predictable, is able to adapt to the needs of their students, is excellent at collaborative future-building, none of this would be truly possible without being couched in relationship between them and their student. **Paulo Freire**, a Brazilian educator, writer and philosopher shares that there are a few essential principles that guide relationship building between students and teachers. **Teachers must be engaged with students through dialogue that serves as a catalyst to create mutual understanding, that all dialogue should occur from a place of humility so that both the teacher and student enter the conversation truly desiring to know more than they did when they started, and that dialogue should occur from a place of hope as hopelessness breeds silence** (Freire, 2014). The power of conversation, seeking to understand and hope together cannot be understated, ultimately coming from a humble place that acknowledges there is far more to learn and grow into.

What does this practically look like?

Take genuine interest into topics of importance

Educators can often feel when there are so many barriers that there are only challenges and needs, when that is never the case. Every refugee student comes with their own set of skills that they can employ when given the proper space and avenues. Being able to find their talents and being able to foster those strengths is at the core of CRP in recognizing what they bring to the table and letting it shine through.

Use of understandable language

When speaking with refugee students, it can be deeply important to utilize words and phrases that are explicitly clear, direct, and easy to understand not as a reduction of complexity, but as a means to make sure that understanding occurs. When language gets used that is lofty, too complicated or rigid, especially in academic settings, it can often be putting performance above understanding. Depending on where the student is in their use of English, it can be helpful to prioritize use of language they already use to help make sure they do not feel alienated or left out of the conversation, especially in whole class or group discussions.

Educators' reflective practice

Reflective practice can help educators to better relate to their students' experiences and build relationships with them to be aware of their own experiences growing up, in relation to race, migration and belonging, and how it shaped their journeys as citizens and educators.

Education as an act of Freedom

According to Freire (2014) the nature of education and the relationship between teachers and students should be dialogical, based on dialogue, as both engage in a practice of freedom. Their relationship needs to be engaging and based on mutual learning. This process of dialogue means reflecting critically on their world, which is important for students, particularly those who are marginalized, to explore and name their experiences as an act of love and freedom.

Hope, faith, humility and love for students

Based on Freire's pedagogy (2014), educators' practice needs to be based on love for their students, have humility in understanding their experiences, strengths, backgrounds, and needs, have faith in them, and take the time to build trust. Trust is built when both educators and students say what they mean and follow through with their actions. Finally, educators need to have and foster hope with their students, to help them keep seeking better conditions and change for themselves and those around them, and be patient.

CONCLUSION

This educator brief is not an exact recipe to become a perfect educator for refugee students, but think of it as one recipe as a part of a greater cookbook that we know many educators have contributed to and will continue to build in the future. We hope that this helps educators who are trying to navigate their way through the complex uncertainty, challenges, and opportunities of educating refugee students. The Pedagogies of Belonging can serve as a great roadmap towards a brighter future where all refugee students can have predictable spaces, adaptable resources and people, where the future can be collaboratively built all while learning is fostered through strong relationships.

FURTHER READING.

- **The Harvard Immigration Initiative** has a multitude of excellent educator briefs, policy briefs, webinars and other resources that are meant for different stakeholders to better understand how to support students from immigrant backgrounds. Although these resources are oriented primarily towards educators supporting immigrants, there are many great insights that are inclusive and supportive of refugees as well.
- **The Massachusetts Refugee and Immigrant Advocacy Coalition** (MIRA) has many different resources, training, reports and other resources that are meant to support many different stakeholders across Massachusetts in understanding the current state of what refugees across the Commonwealth are experiencing and how to better support them.
- **The International Rescue Committee** (IRC) has published many different articles, reports and resources to support educators' work in teaching refugee students. Specifically, they began a program called Healing Classrooms that supports UK Educators in creating inclusive classrooms that seek to mitigate the harm that toxic stress from fleeing conflict brings and how education practices can be holistic healing while fostering learning.

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