



Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

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Refugee School Impact Program: Parent Curriculum Module 1

By Refugee Services

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1-888-572-6500/ info@brycs.org/ www.brycs.org

Refugee School Impact Program

*Cherishing Heritage
Embracing a New Culture*

الإعتزاز بالتراث

تبني ثقافة جديدة



**Parent Curriculum:
Module 1**



REFUGEE SERVICES
21700 Northwestern Hwy., Suite 1300
Southfield, MI 48075-4901
Phone: 248.423.2790
Fax: 248.423.3023
www.lssm.org

Welcome Refugee Families,

Thank you for enrolling your child in the Refugee School Impact Program provided by Lutheran Social Services of Michigan (LSSM). This program is designed to make your family's transition into the American Culture as smooth as possible. We at LSSM are striving to help you feel like you are a part of the community.

This booklet is **Module 1** of the parent curriculum. This includes everything that you will need to get your child(s) prepared for school. Feel free to ask your School Specialist to go over any topics that you don't understand.

One of the goals of this program is to increase the refugee student success by increasing parental involvement in the education process. We understand that you have experienced struggles which have brought you America. Trust that we are here to lend you a hand and help you to reach your goals and dreams.

Sincerely,

Jessica Cotton
Senior School Specialist



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Structure of the American School System

Public education vs. Private Education

Public education

Public education in the United States is provided by the individual states, not by the federal government (except in the limited circumstances of public schools on military bases, provided for the dependents of members of the armed services, and Federal territories, e.g. the District of Columbia). All states provide public school education from kindergarten through senior year of high school (12th grade) free of charge (except for 15 school districts in New Hampshire which do not offer kindergarten); further, the federal government does not establish a standard nationwide curriculum. Rather, the curriculum is typically established by state educational departments or local school districts, and teachers in many districts may have wide discretion to determine what is taught in the classroom.

Most states have adopted reforms based on the Outcome-based education movement. Rather than the traditional approach that all students would be expected to achieve at different levels, the focus of education would be to increase achievement, and insure through testing that all graduates must achieve one high standard, though some critics argue such a goal is not realistic. As of 2005, there is increasing state and federal pressure to quantify teaching efficacy using results from standards-based tests (cf. *No Child Left Behind*), which tends to lead to a more uniform curriculum. This trend toward educational standardization, which has been attributed with a concomitant decline in flexibility in teaching, and other reforms—such as the use of whole language methodology for teaching reading in primary school, instead of the more traditional phonics-based approach—promoted in recent years have been controversial. Another controversy has arisen over the adoption of new math standards which many critics charge has largely omitted the teaching of basic arithmetic as it has been understood over history rather than merely improve understanding. Other criticisms of recent educational trends include an increasing lack of post-secondary scholarships and subsidies.

Funding of the public school systems is most often provided primarily at the local level, with money obtained from county or city property taxes used to fund the public schools (in conjunction with additional funds from the state and federal governments).

Private education

Private school education in the United States at the primary and secondary levels generally receives little or no governmental support in the form of direct funding or subsidies, although non-profit bodies running private schools may receive favorable tax

status. Conversely, because of the constitutional prohibition regarding governmental establishment of religion, most private religious schools are in fact barred from such direct governmental support.

Most of the private institutions have traditionally been religious institutions funded by, for example, Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish communities. Some private secular schools, military schools, and multi-lingual schools also exist. Private secular and multi-lingual elementary and secondary education may cost \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year per student in large metropolitan areas, placing these schools out of reach of all but the wealthiest of middle- and upper-class families. However, many of these schools provide academic scholarships and need-based assistance. Religious schools vary in price, from nearly free to costs on par with private secular schools. Poorer families may send their children to these lower-priced schools for a religious education, or because they consider the schools better than the available public schools. Home schooling is allowed in all states (with varying degrees of regulation) and is an alternative for a small minority of households. The motivation for home schooling is often religious or political.

How are schools organized in my city?

In Michigan, children are able to attend preschool at the age of 4 where programs are available. Early children education is strongly encouraged. Early childhood, which is the period in a child's life from birth through age eight, is a critical time for children to develop the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive skills they will need for the rest of their lives. A child's cognitive development during early childhood, which includes building skills such as pre-reading, language, vocabulary, and numbers, begins from the moment a child is born.

THE REVISED SCHOOL CODE (EXCERPT)

Act 451 of 1976

“Except as otherwise provided in this section, every parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of a child from the age of 6 to the child's sixteenth birthday shall send that child to a public school during the entire school year. The child's attendance shall be continuous and consecutive for the school year fixed by the school district in which the child is enrolled. In a school district that maintains school during the entire calendar year and in which the school year is divided into quarters, a child is not required to attend the public school more than 3 quarters in 1 calendar year, but a child shall not be absent for 2 or more consecutive quarters. (2) A child becoming 6 years of age before December 1 shall be enrolled on the first school day of the school year in which

the child's sixth birthday occurs. A child becoming 6 years of age on or after December 1 shall be enrolled on the first school day of the school year following the school year in which the child's sixth birthday occurs.

The school year begins in late August or early September and ends in June. There are about three months of summer vacation in June, July and August. In the United States there are public schools and private schools. Public schools are free and most private schools charge a fee called tuition. Some are tuition free or offer scholarships based. The money to pay for the public schools comes from property taxes in your community. If you own your home, part of your property taxes helps pay for public schools. If you rent an apartment, the building owner pays the property taxes. The building owner uses part of your rent for these taxes. The government also helps pay for public schools with other money.

School Districts and School Boards

In the United States, the public schools are divided into districts. Some school districts include only one city or town, but other districts include more than one city or town. Each school district has a school board. The members of the school board live in their school district. The school board makes decisions about the schools in the district. For example, the school board decides if the district needs to build new schools. The school board also chooses a superintendent. The superintendent is the director of the school district.

Types of Schools

There are several kinds of schools in the United States.

Pre-school (ages 3 or 4): Some children go to pre-school. In pre-school, children play with other children and learn to listen to the teacher. Children usually attend a few hours a day for 2, 3 or 5 days per week. Not every school has a pre-school. Some pre-schools are free and others charge tuition.

Kindergarten (age 5): If children are 5 years old on or before December 1, they can go to kindergarten. Children do not have to go to kindergarten, but most children do. They go to kindergarten Monday through Friday. Most kindergarten classes are half-day, and some are full-day.

Grades 1 - 8 (Elementary/Middle/Junior High School): School years in the United States are called "grades". Children attend school 5 ½ - 7 hours each day from

Monday through Friday. Younger children usually stay in one classroom and have one teacher for the whole school year. Older students usually have 6 to 8 different classes during the day. They might change to different rooms and they might have different teachers for each subject. Schools for children in grades 5 or 6 through 8 are called Middle Schools or Junior High Schools.

Grades 9 – 12 (High School): Children usually enter high school at age 14 and graduate at age 18. High school students change classrooms and have different teachers during the day. High school prepares students for jobs or for studies at a community college or a university.

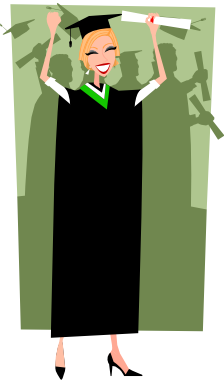
Before and After School Programs: Some schools have child care programs before school. At these schools, parents can bring their children to school before school starts. Some schools also have programs for children after school. At these schools, children may enroll in an after-school program for music, sports, homework help, or other activities. Some schools charge a fee for these programs. You must enroll your children in special programs and give your written permission before your children can come early or stay late after school.

Summer School: Many elementary and high schools offer summer school. Some classes in the summer are for students who need additional help in school. Some classes are for special activities or topics, such as computer classes. There may be a fee for summer school. Summer school may also be required for certain grades in preparation for the MEAP (Michigan Educational Assessment Program). You will receive more information from the child's school regarding this.

After High School: There are many options for students who graduate from high school. They may want to continue to study at vocational schools, community colleges, or 4-year colleges or universities. They can also choose to go to work or join the military.

There are many private and public 4-year colleges and universities in the United States. Private and public universities and colleges can be very expensive. Students can apply for scholarships and loans to help pay for their education. Some young people join the military to get a free education.

Community colleges are 2-year public schools funded by property taxes and the government. They are less expensive than private or public universities. After



attending a community college for 2 years, students can receive an Associate of Arts degree or transfer to a 4-year university to continue their studies. There is a Michigan Promise Scholarship available for all Michigan high school graduates to attend schools in MI. This information can be found out through your high school counselor.

The Michigan Department of Treasury will conduct College Savings Webinars during October and November 2007, and March, April, July, and August 2008. These Webinars will cover program details of MET and MESP. To view the Webinar schedule, visit www.SETwithMET.com.

Webinar sessions are scheduled to last one hour including time for questions and answers. You may be allowed administrative leave to participate in a Webinar; however, you must obtain your supervisor's approval before participating. If you are unable to participate in a scheduled Webinar, a PowerPoint document will be available for viewing on the Web site.

To participate in a Webinar session, you must log in at the Web site to view and call in to listen to the presentation. Log in at www.SETwithMET.com and call 1-800-851-3758; enter the 7-digit access code: 2033602 followed by the # sign. You will be placed on hold until the chairperson starts the presentation.

Questions regarding the scheduled Webinars may be directed to the MET office at (517) 241-4884 or 1-800-638-4543 outside the Lansing area. Program information may be obtained by calling MET at 1-800-MET-4-KID (1-800-638-4543) or MESP at 1-877-861-MESP (1-877-861-6377). Enrollment booklets are available on-line at: MET www.SETwithMET.com or MESP www.misaves.com.

Children must attend grades 1-12 to graduate from high school. It is very important to graduate from high school. Most universities and employers require a high school diploma. But some students leave high school before they graduate. They drop out of school. There are different programs for these students:

Evening Classes: Some high schools have evening classes for students who drop out.

Alternative High School: Some districts have alternative high schools. These are usually small schools in a different building from the regular high school.

GED Classes: There are day and evening classes to help adults pass the General Educational Development (GED) tests. Adults can use the GED like a high school diploma. Most universities and employers accept the GED. Local branches of public libraries usually have information about GED classes.

Who are the people who work in the school district offices and in the schools?

School personnel are the people who work in schools. There are three kinds of school personnel: administrators, teachers, and support staff.

Administrators do not teach students. They are in charge of the schools. There are different kinds of administrators:

- *Superintendent*: The superintendent is the administrator of the school district.
- *Principal*: Each school in the district has a principal who is the administrator of the school.
- *Assistant Principal*: Sometimes schools have assistants to help the principals.

Teachers teach the students in the school. There are many different kinds of teachers:

- *Homeroom/Division Teacher*: In middle, junior high and high school, students meet with their Homeroom/Division teacher for the first 10 or 15 minutes of each school day. During homeroom, students hear announcements and get information about the school day.
- *Classroom Teacher*: In kindergarten through 5th or 6th grade, students usually stay with their classroom teacher during the school day. The classroom teacher usually teaches many subjects such as reading, math, and science.
- *Bilingual Teacher*: The bilingual teacher teaches many subjects in the students' native language and in English.
- *English as a Second Language (ESL) Teacher*: The ESL teacher teaches English to students who don't speak much English. * All schools may not have an ESL teacher
- *Special Education Teacher*: The special education teacher teaches disabled students with special needs.
- *Gifted Teacher*: The gifted teacher teaches classes with more difficult work.
- *Music Teacher*: The music teacher teaches rhythm, singing and how to play a musical instrument.
- *Art Teacher*: The art teacher teaches painting, drawing, clay modeling, and other arts.
- *Gym Teacher/Physical Education (PE) Teacher*: The gym teacher or P.E. teacher teaches physical education such as sports and exercises.
- *Librarian*: The librarian teaches about the library and helps students borrow books from the library.
- *Speech Teacher*: The speech teacher helps students who have problems with pronunciation and speaking.

Support Staff help the administrators and teachers do their work. Some of the support staff are:

- *School Secretary*: The secretary answers the telephone, types letters and notes, greets school visitors, and helps the principal.
- *School Nurse/Health Clerk*: The school nurse or health clerk takes care of sick children in the school.
- *Social Worker/Counselor*: The social worker or counselor helps students with problems they are having in school or at home. The social worker may work with the child, the parent or the whole family. For example, a social worker can help a family whose child joins a gang. In high school, the counselor helps students choose classes and gives them information about colleges and jobs.

In elementary school, talk to your child's classroom teacher first. He or she will help you or tell you who can help you.

In middle, junior high or high school, you can call your child's homeroom teacher first.

Keep for your records

At the beginning of the school year, fill out the information in this chart about your children:

Child's Name	School's Name	School's Telephone Number	Grade	Teacher's Name

Getting involved in your child's education



When parents are involved in their children's education, kids do better in school. Want to learn how to help your child achieve and succeed? Read on! You'll learn why involvement is so important and suggestions for how to get involved.

Why Is Parental Involvement Important?

In study after study, researchers discover how important it is for parents to be actively involved in their child's education. Here are some of the findings of major research into parental involvement:

- When parents are involved in their children's education at home, they do better in school. And when parents are involved in school, children go farther in school — and the schools they go to are better.
- The family makes critical contributions to student achievement from preschool through high school. A home environment that encourages learning is more important to student achievement than income, education level or cultural background.
- Reading achievement is more dependent on learning activities in the home than is math or science. Reading aloud to children is the most important activity that parents can do to increase their child's chance of reading success. Talking to children about books and stories read to them also supports reading achievement.
- When children and parents talk regularly about school, children perform better academically.
- Three kinds of parental involvement at home are consistently associated with higher student achievement: actively organizing and monitoring a child's time, helping with homework and discussing school matters.
- The earlier that parent involvement begins in a child's educational process, the more powerful the effects.
- Positive results of parental involvement include improved student achievement, reduced absenteeism, improved behavior, and restored confidence among parents in their children's schooling.

How Can Parents Get Involved?

Involvement in your child's education can mean:

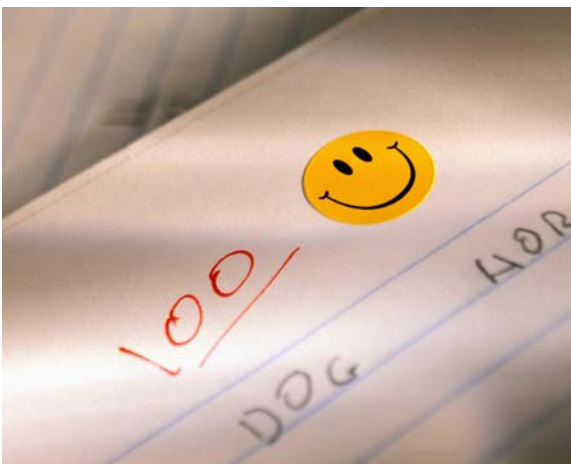
- Reading to your child
- Checking homework every night
- Discussing your children's progress with teachers
- Voting in school board elections
- Helping your school to set challenging academic standards
- Limiting TV viewing on school nights
- Becoming an advocate for better education in your community and state.

Or, it can be as simple as asking your children, "How was school today?" But ask every day. That will send your children the clear message that their schoolwork is important to you and you expect them to learn.

Some parents and families are able to be involved in their child's education in many ways. Others may only have time for one or two activities. Whatever your level of involvement, do it consistently and stick with it because you will make an important difference in your child's life.

How can I learn about my child's school? Is my child a good student?

Schools want parents to be involved in their children's education. Parents can be involved in their children's schools in many ways. They can:



- talk to principals and teachers
- attend school activities
- help make decisions about the schools
- volunteer at the schools

Schools have different ways to tell parents about school programs and their children's learning progress. Many schools have:

Open Houses are times for parents to meet their children's teachers, see their classrooms,

and hear about what work their children are doing.

Parent-Teacher Conferences are meetings between parents and teachers. The teacher meets privately with each child's parents to discuss the child's progress or behavior in the classroom. Usually teachers ask for at least one conference during the school year in the fall. However, if a child is having serious learning or behavior problems, a teacher will ask parents to come for a conference at other times during the year. Parents can also ask for a conference any time there is a problem. Parents can call the teacher or write a note to the teacher asking for a conference. Often conferences are held before or after the school day. *(Extra tips for Parent-Teacher conferences are available at the end of this section)*

Written Materials are mailed home or brought home by the children. For example, schools may send these materials home:

- School Calendars about classroom assignments, classroom activities, holidays, or school programs
- Newsletters telling what's happening in the classrooms and school
- Surveys asking parents for their ideas and concerns
- Permission forms for students to take field trips
- Announcements for school meetings, conferences, honor assemblies, school closings, and other events

Sometimes parents have to answer written materials. For example, you must sign a permission form before your children can go on a field trip.

Phone Calls and the Internet are other ways schools communicate with parents. Teachers often use the telephone to talk to parents. Sometimes you can have a parent-teacher conference over the telephone. Some schools have homework hotlines. Parents call a specific phone number and hear a message about their children's homework assignments. Some schools also have a school web site with information about school programs, classroom activities, and how to email a teacher.

Parents can call the school whenever they have a question and talk to teachers or the principal. If you want to visit your child's school, call the school first to make an appointment. You can call the school or send a note to the teacher.

*** Parent-Teacher Conferences ***

Make the Most of Your Meeting



College concerns? Worried about grades? Routine chat? Parents and teachers meet for a variety of reasons throughout the school year. Whatever your reason for visiting, it's important to remember that you and your child's teachers are partners in helping your child in the transition to adulthood. The combined support of teachers, counselor, and you will be essential to help your child get on the right track to achieve his goals.

Your Involvement in School

Being involved in your child's life at school is important. Obviously, you can't accompany him every step of the way, but it's important for him to know you're interested in what he's doing, and that his hard work is appreciated. Also, if you stay informed about your child's classes and activities, you'll be better able to give him help or guidance when he needs it.

Meet with your child's teachers for a brief chat at the beginning of the school year. A good relationship with his teachers will make it easier for you to work together if problems arise during the year. Your child's teacher can also help you understand what your child experiences every day, and inform you about his schoolwork and responsibilities.

Talk to Your Child Beforehand

Ask your child if he has any questions or concerns he'd like you to discuss with his teacher, and find out what he likes and dislikes about the class. Let your child know what you plan to talk about with the teacher—when your child is involved in decisions about his education he is more likely to take responsibility for his work and performance.

Questions

Jot down any questions you may have before your meeting to make the most of your time with his teacher. Some questions you may want to ask:

- How has my child performed in your class so far this year?
- What skills and knowledge will my child be learning in your class?
- Will my child complete any major projects or term papers this year?

- How do you determine grades on assignments? How do you determine his overall grade for the class?
- If my child needs help, is tutoring available?
- If my child is a fast-learner how can you and the school make sure he is challenged?
- Is this a college-track class? How does this class help students build skills to succeed in college?
- What resources are available at school to help my child with your class?
- How can I help my child succeed in your class this year?
- What resources would help my child do his work better? Are there additional books or resources available at school or in the community that would help him?

Special Circumstances

Aside from any questions you have, it's also important to let your child's teacher know about your concerns or any special circumstances that might affect his work in school. Update his teachers or high school counselor if any major changes occur in your family. Some families are reluctant to reveal private matters, but you might consider simply alerting his counselor or teachers that your family is going through difficult times.

Keep an Open Mind

You may find the teacher has constructive criticism about your child. Keep an open mind to the teacher's comments. Neither your child nor his teacher is perfect, so if a problem arises it's important to consider both sides of the story. The best solution is one that helps your child succeed in school.



Follow-Up

Take notes during your meeting to record important points that were made. Let your child know what you discussed and if you and his teacher made any decisions or came to any conclusions. Set up another meeting with the teacher, if necessary, to monitor your child's progress or to discuss any continuing problems or concerns.

How can I enroll my children in school? What papers do I need?



Papers that you may need for enrollment:

See next page for the guidelines from the Michigan Department of Education

- Transcripts from previous school(s) if available could help with placement. For example, parents may have school records from other U.S. schools or from schools in their native countries.

The school has medical and dental forms you need to have filled out and bring back to the school. When the medical forms are completed, students are tested and placed in the class that is best for them, such as bilingual education class or ESL class. You might also fill out a “Home Language Survey” to help with this placement.





MDE Recommends

ENROLLMENT- PROOF OF IDENTITY AND AGE

The section of the *Revised School Code* that addresses this issue is contained in the Michigan Compiled Laws under MCL 380.1135.

Identity and Age

Michigan law requires a person enrolling a student in school provide the local or intermediate school district with a certified copy of the student's birth certificate or other reliable proof of the student's identity and age. The pertinent part of the law states the following:

- (1) Upon enrollment of a student for the first time in a local or intermediate school district, the district shall notify in writing the person enrolling the student that within 30 days he or she shall provide to the local or intermediate school district either of the following:
 - (a) A certified copy of the student's birth certificate.
 - (b) Other reliable proof, as determined by the school district, of the student's identity and age, and an affidavit explaining the inability to produce a copy of the birth certificate.
- (2) If a person enrolling a student fails to comply with subsection (1), the local or intermediate school district shall notify the person enrolling the student in writing that, unless he or she complies within 30 days after the notification, the case shall be referred to the local law enforcement agency for investigation. If the person enrolling the student fails to comply within that 30-day period, the local or intermediate school district shall notify the local law enforcement agency.
- (3) The local or intermediate school district shall immediately report to the local law enforcement agency any affidavit received pursuant to this section that appears inaccurate or suspicious in form or content

Examples of Other Reliable Proof

The school district has the authority to determine the type of other reliable proof it will accept to prove a student's identity or age when a certified copy of the student's birth certificate is not produced. Besides a birth certificate, local boards of education may accept a baptismal certificate indicating date and place of birth, court records, county, military, or immigration records, doctor or hospital records with a sworn statement, certain family records, life insurance policy, or, if none of these is provided, a sworn statement from a parent or guardian which must be notarized.

Social Security Number

It is unlawful for any federal, state, or local government agency to deny any individual any right, benefit, or privilege provided by law because of such individual's refusal to disclose his social security account number. A school district cannot mandate that parents disclose the social security number of their children.

Further information regarding the disclosure of social security numbers is available under the *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)* [20 USC §1232g et seq.]

This information is provided as a service of the Michigan Department of Education and is distributed with the understanding that the Department is not engaged in rendering legal advice. Those individuals desiring or requiring legal advice should seek the services of an attorney.

Final December 1998

Michigan Department of Education
Bureau of School Finance and School Law
Student Issues Unit
P. O. Box 30008
Lansing, MI 48909
517-373-6534
Toll Free 1-888-323-4231
Fax: 517-373-7113
Web Site Address:
<http://www.michigan.gov/mde>

Which medical forms and examinations do my children need before they can begin school?

When children enter school for the first time, they must have a physical examination. The doctor will fill out a medical form. The medical form includes immunization records. Children must also have an examination when they enter 5th and 9th grades. If children do not have the necessary medical forms completed, they will not be allowed to attend classes when school begins.



Immunizations: All students must have immunizations (vaccines) for the following diseases:

- Diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus (DPT)
- Polio
- Measles
- Rubella (German measles)
- Mumps
- Hepatitis B (for children entering preschool or 5th grade)
- Haemophilus influenza type b (for children under 5)

If a child had some of these immunizations in another country or state, parents have to show a medical record to the doctor at the child's physical examination. If there is no medical record of the immunizations, the child must have the shots again.

Children may need a dental examination before they start kindergarten, 5th and 9th grades. The dentist must complete a dental examination form for the school. In most elementary schools, children receive screenings for vision (eye), hearing (ear), and back problems. Children who wear glasses do not receive a vision screening. If the screening shows a problem with the child's vision, hearing, or back, the school sends a letter to the child's parents. If you receive a letter from the school, you should then take your child to a doctor or clinic for a complete examination.

Parents also have the right to waive immunizations. Attached is a copy of the form and further details.

Required Childhood Immunizations for Michigan School Settings

Entry Requirements for All Public & Non-Public Schools		
Age → Vaccine** ↓	4 years through 6 years	7 years through 18 years
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis	4 doses DTP or DTaP, one dose must be ≥ 4 yrs	4 doses D and T OR 3 doses Td if #1 given ≥ 7 yrs of age. Must have 1 dose within last 10 years
Polio	4 doses, if dose 3 administered ≥ 4 years, only 3 doses required	3 doses
Measles,* Mumps,* Rubella*	2 doses ≥ 12 mo.	2 doses ≥ 12 mo.
Hepatitis B*	3 doses	3 doses
Varicella* (Chickenpox)	1 dose if given ≥ 12 months of age and prior to 13 th birthday OR 2 doses if initiated ≥ 13 th birthday OR current lab immunity OR reliable history of disease	

* Current laboratory evidence of immunity is acceptable instead of immunization with antigen.

For more information, please refer to www.michigan.gov/immunize

**All doses of vaccines must be given with appropriate spacing between doses and at appropriate ages to be considered valid.



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

JANET OLSZEWSKI
DIRECTOR

IMMUNIZATION WAIVER FORM

INSTRUCTIONS TO PARENTS OR GUARDIANS:

Vaccine-preventable diseases are still with us. In many cases, they cause disability or death. Immunizations are one of our most cost-effective measures to protect children from harmful diseases. A high proportion of children must be immunized to prevent outbreaks of disease in school settings and other places where children work and play closely together.

Sections 9208 and 9211 of the Michigan Public Health Code require that a parent, guardian, or person *in loco parentis* applying to have a child registered for the first time in a Michigan school or in a program of group residence, care, or camping in this state shall present to officials at the time of registration or not later than the first day of school or program enrollment, a certificate of immunization verifying that the child has been vaccinated against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, polio, hepatitis B, and varicella (chickenpox). Vaccination for *Haemophilus influenzae* type b and pneumococcal conjugate is also required for preschool-aged children.

A parent or guardian wishing to exempt his or her child from a particular vaccination must provide a written statement indicating the religious or philosophical objections to the vaccination(s). A child who has been exempted from a vaccination is considered susceptible to the disease or diseases for which the vaccination offers protection. The child may be subject to exclusion from the school or program, if the local and or state public health authority advises exclusion as a disease control measure.

By signing this waiver, you acknowledge that you are placing your child and others at risk of serious illness should he or she contract a disease that could have been prevented through proper vaccination.

ALL INFORMATION MUST BE FILLED IN BELOW.

I object to having my child, _____, born _____, immunized against the diseases I have checked below: (First & Last Name) (Birth Date)

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diphtheria | <input type="checkbox"/> Measles | <input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis B |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tetanus | <input type="checkbox"/> Mumps | <input type="checkbox"/> Haemophilus influenzae type b |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pertussis | <input type="checkbox"/> Rubella | <input type="checkbox"/> Pneumococcal Conjugate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Varicella (chickenpox) | <input type="checkbox"/> Polio | |

Reason: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name: _____

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

Child's Address: _____ Telephone _____
If different from parent/guardian

Parent or Guardian's Signature _____ Date Signed _____

Preschool Program or Licensed Day Care Center OR School Name (Required)

File in the child's permanent record and attach a copy to the IP-100 or IP-101 report that is sent to the local health department.

What should I do if my child is sick?

If children are sick, they should stay home. Sometimes parents send a sick child to school because they have to go to work and can't stay home with the child. But a sick child often makes other school children sick. Most schools do not want parents to send their child to school if:

- the child has a fever of 100° F or higher
- the child threw up the night before or in the morning before school
- the child is coughing a lot
- the child has a skin rash or sores
- the child has lice (The parents must wash the child's hair with a special shampoo and remove the lice eggs from the hair. After this, the child can go back to school.)
- the child has chicken pox (The child must stay home for 7 days after the chicken pox begins.)
- the child has strep throat (The child can go back to school after taking an antibiotic for 24 – 48 hours.)
- the child has scarlet fever (The child can go back to school after taking an antibiotic for 24 – 48 hours.)
- the child has conjunctivitis (pinkeye)

Schools usually send a letter to parents if a student in their child's classroom has a contagious illness such as chicken pox, strep throat, scarlet fever, or lice. This letter will tell you what to look for so you will know if your child catches the illness.

What if my child must take medicine in school?

Parents should not send medicines to school with children unless it is absolutely necessary. Children are not allowed to take medicine by themselves at school. If it is necessary for a child to take a medicine in school, parents should write a note to the school nurse. The child should bring the medicine to the nurse's office. Some schools may need a doctor's note.

Parents should send medicine to school in the original pharmacy bottle, not in a bag or an envelope. The bottle must have a label with:

- the child's name
- the doctor's name
- the name of the medicine
- how much and when to give the medicine

The child must come to the nurse's office to take the medicine.

If you have a question about your child's health at school, call the school nurse or health clerk. If you are reporting an absence, call the school secretary.

If your child becomes sick or has an accident at school, the school will call you or the person on the Emergency Card.

Emergency Card Information: The school will give you this form when you enroll your children in school. On the Emergency Card, write the name and phone number of the person to call if your child is sick or has an accident at school. It is very important to fill out the emergency card for each child and send it back to school.



It is important to write:

- the telephone number where you are during the day
- the name and telephone number of a relative or close friend
- the name and telephone number of your child's doctor or clinic
- any special health needs your child has

If this information changes at any time, contact the school and fill out a new Emergency Card.

Moving: If you move to another apartment or house, you should contact the school and give them the new address and phone number. You should also fill out a new Emergency Card.

If my child must be late or absent from school, what should I do?

Late For School: Children should not be late for school. Children should come on time to school. If children come late, the teacher will mark them late or tardy. You should call the school in the morning if your child is going to be late. Or you can send a note with your child to the school.



Absent From School: When your child can't come to school, call the school every day in the early morning before school starts. Some schools have an answering machine. Parents can leave a message on the school's answering machine. When you call the school, you should say the following information:

- your child's name
- your child's grade and teacher
- why your child is going to be absent
- your name and phone number

Sometimes parents take their children out of school during the day before school is over. They may have to take their children to the doctor or dentist during the day. If you want to take your children out of school, you must write a note to the teacher. Your child should take the note to the teacher in the morning. The note should say:

- why you are taking your child out of school
- what time you will take your child out of school
- the name of the person picking up your child if he or she is not a parent or guardian

When you go to the school to pick up your child, go to the office and ask for your child. The school will ask you to sign a paper so your child can leave.

Family Vacations: Parents should not take their children on vacations during school time. Parents should take family vacations during school vacations. If you must take your vacation during school time, you should talk to your child's teacher before you go.

Make-up Work: Children who are absent from school must do the school work and homework they miss. If a child is absent from school for more than 2 days, most schools

want parents to call the school to get the make-up work. You or your child's friend can go to the child's class to get the make-up work.

Can I visit my child's school?

Visiting the School: Parents are welcome to visit their children's school. When you visit the school, you must first go to the office for a visitor's pass. You can visit your children's classroom, but you cannot talk to the teacher during the class. If parents want to talk to the teacher, they must make an appointment in advance.

Do I have to pay for anything in the school?

There are fees for some school activities or materials:

Book fees: There are book fees for textbooks. If the book fee is too expensive for a family to pay, parents can talk to the school about reduced or waived fees. Your child must take good care of the books. At the end of the school year, your child will have to return some or all of the books to the school.



Extra activities: Sometimes there are fees for extra activities such as sports, music lessons, or academic or social clubs. Many of these activities are before and after school.

Field Trips: Sometimes students go on field trips to museums, zoos, and other places. Parents must sign a permission form before the child can go on the field trip. Sometimes there is a small fee to help pay for the field trip. Sometimes parents are offered a chance to volunteer to go on the field trip to help the teacher watch the children on the trip.

Lunches: If children do not bring their lunch to school, they can usually buy lunch at school. Most schools have a free or low-cost lunch program for parents that cannot afford to pay. Parents must fill out a form about their family income for their children to receive free or low-cost lunches.

You can call the school secretary or your child's teacher if you have questions about school procedures.

Instructional Programs

If my children do not speak English well, what can schools do to help?

Students who have difficulty speaking or reading English may take English as a second language (ESL) or bilingual classes at school. ESL classes teach students to speak, read and write in English. Bilingual classes are taught in the students' native language and in English. Bilingual classes teach subjects such as math, science and social studies as well as English.

When students first enroll in school, they take an English test. The test helps the school place the students in the right classes. Students in bilingual or ESL programs take an English test each year. Students take ESL or bilingual classes until their English skills are good.

What subjects do my children study in elementary school?

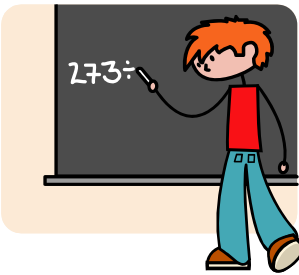
The school curriculum is the subject's children study in school. In elementary schools, children study many different subjects:

- reading, language arts, and math (every day)
- health, science, social studies (2 to 5 times a week)
- art, physical education, library, music (1 or 2 times a week)

In elementary school, each class is about 30 or 40 minutes long. Children also have recess in elementary school. During recess, children usually play outside in the school playground. Recess is about 15 minutes.

What subjects do my children study in middle school or junior high school?

In middle school or junior high school, children usually change rooms for classes. They usually have different teachers during the day. They usually stay in the building during the day and do not have recess. The subjects they study are:



- Reading and Language Arts
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- Foreign Languages (for example Spanish or French)
- Music
- Physical Education and Health
- Computers
- Art

What subjects do my children study in high school?

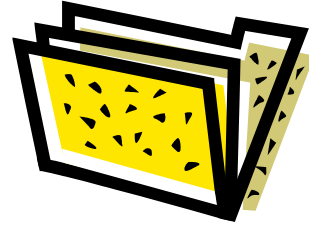
High school students take required and elective courses. Required courses are subjects that all students must take to graduate. For example, English and math are required courses.

Some high school classes have different levels of difficulty. For example, an English class might be a basic, regular, advanced or honors class. Here are some of the different subjects in high school:

- English
- Math (for example, algebra or geometry)
- Science (for example, biology or chemistry)
- Family and Consumer Science
- Gym/Physical Education
- Computer Science
- Applied Technology
- Business
- Social Science
- Fine Arts
- Foreign Languages
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Driver's Education

*** HELPFUL HINT ***

Keep a folder for all school documents. Often children bring home school information for parents in their backpacks. This folder can hold information about the school calendar, bus schedule, school vacations, holidays, and other materials and announcements sent from the school.



If my child has learning problems or special needs, what can the school do to help?

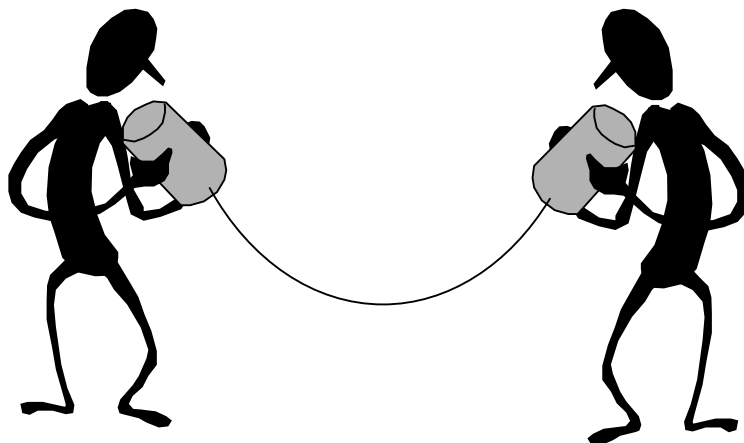
Special education is a program for students with certain problems in school. These students may have problems seeing, hearing, talking, walking, learning, or behaving in class. Schools provide special education services for disabled students to help them succeed in school. If your child has special learning needs:

- Ask about the services available in your child's school.
- Tell the school what kind of special help your child needs at school.
- Ask for an interpreter at meetings if you do not speak English.
- Keep all important documents and letters the school staff gives or sends to you.

Students who have special talents or abilities are sometimes called "Gifted" or "Talented". These students can sometimes take special classes with more difficult and creative work.

*** HELPFUL HINT ***

If you have problems talking to someone at the school or reading English, ask someone who speaks English to call the school to explain the problem. Schools may have translators to help parents who speak little or no English. The school won't know there is a problem unless you tell them.



American Manners, Etiquette and Protocol

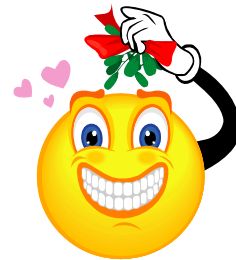
If you're visiting America or you've moved here recently you can fit in even quicker if you understand American manners and etiquette. America is a huge country with vast differences in cuisine, industries, political beliefs and mannerisms, depending upon the region in which you are.

In the U.S., unlike many other countries, individuals have rights which are protected by American law, no matter who their boss is. These rights include topics like race, age, religion, *sexual orientation*, disability, pay, safety and personal treatment. These laws are in place to insure that all people are able to find employment and be treated well in a safe environment with fair pay. Overall, America represents a diverse number of nationalities, all of whom are free.

Americans work hard, generally from 8 or 9 a.m. to 5 or 6 p.m. with an hour for lunch, around noon. The federal government proclaims ten holidays per year. They are as follows



- Christmas Day: December 25th
- Columbus Day: 2nd Monday in October
- Independence Day: July 4th
- Labor Day: 1st Monday in September
- Martin Luther King's Birthday: 3rd Monday in January
- Memorial Day: Last Monday in May
- New Year's Day: January 1st
- Thanksgiving: 4th Thursday in November
- Veterans Day: November 11th
- Washington's Birthday: 3rd Monday in February



Be on time for appointments since punctuality is important in the American culture. It's acceptable to be a few minutes late for a social affair, though. Dress well yet conservatively for your first meeting. Additional meetings may find you adjusting your wardrobe to follow suit with your American counterparts. Dress tends to vary widely depending upon the type of business you're doing and how large the corporation. Pantsuits are generally acceptable business wear for women, tailored suits for men. Leisure hours afford casual dress such as jeans, tee shirts, ball caps.

Many Americans speak only one language: English. It's perfectly acceptable to ask an American to speak slower or repeat what he has said. Idioms, particularly sports-related ones, are abundant in this culture. Saying things like "call the shots", "team players", or "touch base", are second-nature comments in America.

In some cultures compliments are seen as suspicious but in America compliments are dished out freely. Joking around is often done in meetings as well as one's personal life.

Avoid jokes of ethnic or religious humor. Sports are very popular in America and are a good way to start a conversation. Avoid conversations concerning religion, politics or controversial subjects until you know the person well.

Titles are used, along with the last name, upon introductions. Sometimes the complete name is given. If you don't know a person's title, or they don't have one, "Mr.", "Miss", "Mrs." or "Ms" are suitable.

In most cases, business gifts are given at the end of a business deal. Gifts are usually unwrapped upon receiving them. Gifts are often given during the holiday seasons from late November to early January. When visiting a home it's not necessary to bring a gift. If you would like to bring one, flowers or a box of chocolates is a fine choice.

Some countries have many unspoken rules about things like if you should use a particular hand to accept or give a gift, whether or not you should decline the gift first, and whether or not the gift should be in even or odd numbers. None of these practices are associated with gift-giving in the U.S. Americans accept all colors or numbers, except for the number thirteen, considered unlucky.

In other countries, developing a friendship between business associates is a must before continuing with the deal. Not so in America. Money is the bottom line here and social pleasantries such as preventing someone from "losing face" is not practiced here. Hard-hitting, hard-selling tactics are often used, including arguing, pointing out faults in your plan, or simply saying "no" to your proposals. The direct approach is often seen as the best route to take in business. When a decision is reached, though, consider it unbreakable.

In some cultures shoving a business card into one's back pocket is the ultimate rude gesture but in America it's simply a matter of convenience. Often business cards aren't even exchanged - something completely foreign in some countries. Also in the U.S. it's just as likely that there will be a woman in charge instead of a man. It's not unusual to see a man dishing out coffee and the woman running the show.

Many business meetings are held over lunch, a light meal usually served without alcoholic drinks. Sometimes drinks accompany lunch, depending upon the business rules for that particular company. Supper, or dinner, is the main meal of the day, usually between 6 and 8 p.m. Seldom is business conducted on Sundays.

Table etiquette is not as strict as in some countries. Use the knife or fork in either hand, or switch them at will. Some foods are eaten with the hands, such as appetizers, breads, cupcakes, fruits and some vegetables. In America, unlike many countries, it's not considered rude to walk down the streets while eating. Do not throw your wrapper or food pieces onto the sidewalk or street.

When invited to an American's home don't be surprised if the women, and even the children, are a part of the group affair. In some countries only the men sit and eat together but in the U.S. all people in the house are usually included. It's acceptable to refuse any particular food or drink without offending someone. If you smoke, ask if it's acceptable to do so, since in many homes and restaurants, smoking simply isn't allowed.

Do not smack your lips or slurp soup while eating. Don't reach on to another's plate to sample a food nor should you ever take a sample of your own food and put on someone

else's plate. When finished eating simply lay utensils down in no particular order or pattern.

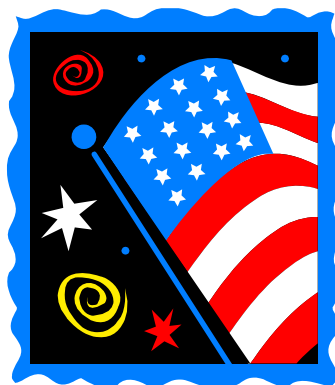
Handshaking is acceptable for men or women. Women can offer their hand to a man and a man can offer his to a lady. Space while conversing is about two feet. Eye contact shows sincerity but intense eye contact is a negative sign. Pointing at someone is slightly rude but it's okay to curl just the index finger to summon someone to you. You can also use the entire hand, palm up and curl all fingers towards yourself.

Some hand signals are seen as vulgar in other countries but are perfect acceptable in America. These include the "ok" sign of circling thumb and index finger together. Thumbs-up is another positive sign, seen negatively elsewhere. The "V" for "Victory" is also acceptable, raising the index and middle finger only, but separated. Backslapping is sometimes done to show camaraderie between pals. Group waves are okay, usually, when arriving or exiting a large group of people. In a formal business setting take the time to shake hands instead.

Americans are very casual about things that are taboo in other regions of the world. Chewing gum is perfectly acceptable in public, just don't throw the gum on the sidewalk when finished. Yawning, sneezing or coughing can also be done in public but make sure to cover your mouth.

Although showing respect to the elderly is a common courtesy every where in the world, the emphasis is not put on this gesture as harshly as it is in other countries It's acceptable to speak to any member of a group first, without looking around to see who is the eldest.

Your stay in U.S. will hopefully be a pleasant one. For the most part, Americans are accepting of other cultures and people. To have the best success, though, mind the manners of the region, be kind and considerate, but most of all, be yourself.



Federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) -- the main federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school. Proposed by President Bush shortly after his inauguration, NCLB was signed into law on January 8th, 2002. NCLB is built on four principles: accountability for results, more choices for parents, greater local control and flexibility, and an emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research.

The NCLB Act significantly increases the choices available to the parents of students attending Title I schools that fail to meet State standards, including immediate relief--beginning with the 2002-03 school year--for students in schools that were previously identified for improvement or corrective action under the 1994 ESEA reauthorization.

Local Education Agency(s) (LEAs) must give students attending schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring the opportunity to attend a better public school, which may include a public charter school, within the school district. The district must provide transportation to the new school, and must use at least 5 percent of its Title I funds for this purpose, if needed.

For students attending persistently failing schools (those that have failed to meet State standards for at least 3 of the 4 preceding years), LEAs must permit low-income students to use Title I funds to obtain supplemental educational services from the public- or private-sector provider selected by the students and their parents. Providers must meet State standards and offer services tailored to help participating students meet challenging State academic standards.

To help ensure that LEAs offer meaningful choices, the new law requires school districts to spend up to 20 percent of their Title I allocations to provide school choice and supplemental educational services to eligible students.

In addition to helping ensure that no child loses the opportunity for a quality education because he or she is trapped in a failing school, the choice and supplemental service requirements provide a substantial incentive for low-performing schools to improve. Schools that want to avoid losing students--along with the portion of their annual budgets typically associated with those students--will have to improve or, if they fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for 5 years, run the risk of reconstitution under a restructuring plan.

You will hear a lot about this act and programs to support this act throughout the school year.

Youth Group Sessions (1.5 hrs each)

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
<p>Activity: The Colors of Life (Icebreaker) Pretest *Overview of the program *Student Code of Conduct *Importance of Homework *Tips for Success: Staying organized and Good Study Habits *Attendance *Typical day at school</p>	<p>Who Am I? Activity: Collage of you Tibetan Personality Test Expressing yourself * Create Personal Scrapbook Journal</p>	<p>Activity: Tied in Knots Building Positive Peer Relationships Conflict resolution Role play Healthy Lifestyle *3 meals a day *Exercise *Brushing twice a day *Hygiene management Pairing with youth mentors (field trip before the next meeting will be a laser tag mix and mingle w/mentors)</p>	<p>Activity: How to make an Inuksuk Discovering your natural talents Exploring school Programs and Activities *After the Discovering your talents exercise, work through the list of school activities and programs to pair the child's talent with an activity Working with youth mentors (Field trip before the next meeting will be to the library. Students will do a scavenger hunt, explore a topic of their interest and apply for a library card)</p>	<p>Activity: String Toss Game Cultural Expectations *What will American teachers expect *Respecting parents, teachers and others in authority Understanding cultural diversities * <i>Choose activities from the cultural Appreciation Materials</i></p>	<p>Finish up diversity activities Posttest Recap what was learned (Pizza Party)</p>

Incentive Offer



The Refugee School Impact Program is proud to offer this incentive to parents that participate in the LSSM English as a Second Language Classes, In order to receive the \$50 gift card offer you must fulfill the following requirements:

- 🚩 You must have a child enrolled in the RSIP and the child must attend 85% of the scheduled meetings/activities
- 🚩 You must be enrolled in a ESL provided by LSSM
- 🚩 You must attend a minimum of 6 classes
- 🚩 Parent must attend 2 of the 3 parent support group meeting (1st will be the orientation)

*Please note that you are only eligible for 1 gift card per family regardless to how many children you have in the program or members of the family that enroll in the ESL classes.

If you would like to enroll please fill out the attached form and return in to the school specialist.

If you are already enrolled in one of our classes, please inform the school specialist. She will be able to verify that with the instructor. Once verified it will be determined if you will qualify for this special offer.

Vocational English Language Training Student Referral / Registration Form

Name:			
	Last (Family)	First (Given)	Middle
Address:			
	Street	City	State Zip
Phone:			A#
	Home	Cell	Alien number
FY 2009			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 st Trimester	Type of Employment Service:
	<input type="checkbox"/>	2 nd Trimester	Employability Services(#1) <input type="checkbox"/>
Caseworker	<input type="checkbox"/>	3 rd Trimester	Intensive (#2) <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	JET client	TAG <input type="checkbox"/>
Documentation:			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	New Client	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Client Already in Database	
Other Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	School Impact (SIG)	Case worker
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reception and Placement (R&P)	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Match Grant (MG)	
Information below is for VELT Instructors			
Location:		Start Date:	
Instructor:		End Date:	

Tests / Evaluations:

Date	Test Type	Score / Level	Notes

BRYCS: Raising Children in a New Country: An Illustrated Handbook

This resource will be covering during your next support group session.



Brand New!

RAISING CHILDREN IN A NEW COUNTRY: An Illustrated Handbook

<http://www.brycs.org/documents/RaisingChildren-Handbook.pdf>

Emphasizing the importance of parental nurture, supervision, structure and limits, discipline and respect, and educational participation

The CD version and the printed and bound copies (in color) will be available in October/November. Place your order now to reserve yours at info@brycs.org (limit of 5 per agency, please)! Further information will soon be available on how to order additional copies.

Resources used and information available

Federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>

Illinois State Board of Education

<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/bilingual/pdfs/parentguide.pdf>

Information on Vaccinations

Fact sheet on different vaccines. Available in different languages

www.michigan.gov/immunize

Michigan Care Improvement Registry

This link has a listing of immunizations that are required my Michigan.

http://www.mcir.org/sch_packets.html

Enrollment

MDE enrollment-Proof of identity and age

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/enrollment_122559_7.pdf



Refugee Services
21700 Northwestern Hwy
Southfield, MI 48075
(248) 423-2790
www.LSSM.org

Funding for the School Impact Program is provided by the
State of Michigan Department of Human Services

Program Developed by Jessica Cotton
Senior School Impact Specialist 10/07