

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Afghan Student Enrollment and Engagement in U.S. School Districts

Seven signals a district can measure one year after it reaches its Afghan students.

Abstract · The full document is available to clients and partners on request
Second edition, 2026 · Ariana Nexus

ABSTRACT

Afghan Student Enrollment and Engagement in U.S. School Districts

A school district can enroll an Afghan student without reaching them. Enrollment is a record; engagement is an outcome, and the distance between the two is where districts lose students they believe they already have.

This document describes what a district looks like one year after it reaches its Afghan students, across four dimensions — enrollment, attendance, family engagement and staff load — reduced to seven signals a superintendent can read without commissioning a new data system.

It is written for superintendents, EL directors, principals and registrars.

The second edition adds three things the field asked for after the first. Boys' disengagement, which presents differently from girls' and later. Harassment and intergroup conflict, including conflict between newcomer groups rather than only between newcomers and the existing student body. And the interpreter who is fluent in Pashto or Dari and does not know the U.S. school system — who can translate a truancy letter accurately and still leave a family with no idea what is being asked of them.

It also addresses the family side: how middle school becomes high school in the United States, what a parent is expected to do and when, and why a family that appears disengaged is often a family that was never told.

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ACCESS

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