Alignment of Community Schools with the English Learner Roadmap Policy

Community Schools present an opportunity to rethink partnerships and the role that schools have in meeting the needs of students and families. Strongly aligned to this vision of schools is the English Learner Roadmap (EL Roadmap) policy goals to improve services for English learners (ELs) and ensure an assets-based focus of students and families. Therefore, it is critical for the establishment of an effective Community School for it to be implemented alongside the EL Roadmap, not as an additional program, but as a central component.

This document is adapted from Section 4: Engaging the Whole Village (pages 44-57) of the <u>California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 5: Aligning and Articulating Practices Across the System</u>. It offers guidance for how district and school leaders might plan for and implement the Community Schools model with the EL Roadmap as a central component.

The Community Schools Model

The Coalition for Community Schools defines Community Schools as "both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources, [with an] integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement." Many operate year-round, from morning to evening, and serve both children and adults. Because students' needs, community assets, and school system capacities all differ, Community Schools adapt to the local context and vary in the programs they offer and how they operate and collaborate with other organizations. They bring educators and community partners together in a place-based strategy in which the schools partner with community agencies and allocate resources to provide that "integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement."

The definition of Community Schools in the Education Code is aligned with research on the four pillars of the model, defined in statute as public schools with "strong and intentional community partnerships ensuring pupil learning and whole child and family development," and incorporate four pillars:

1. **Integrated student supports**, which can help students succeed by meeting their academic, physical, socioemotional, and mental health needs.
2. **Enriched and expanded learning opportunities** that include academic support and real-world educational experiences (e.g., internships and project-based learning).
3. **Family and community engagement**, which involves actively tapping the expertise and knowledge of family and community members to serve as true partners in supporting and educating students.
4. **Collaborative leadership and practices for educators and administrators** that establish a culture of professional learning, collective trust, and shared responsibility for outcomes in a manner that includes families, students, and community members.

The California Community Schools Partnership Program

California passed a historic $3 billion investment in the California Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP) in July 2021. The grant funding for both new and existing Community Schools is intended to provide sufficient resources for every high-poverty school in California to become a Community School within the next five years. In May 2022, the State Board of Education approved $649 million in initial-round CCSPP grants, which included grantees in three categories:

- Planning Grants ($38.2 million total). Up to $200,000 over two years for 192 LEAs with no existing Community Schools.
- Implementation Grants ($611 million total). Up to $500,000 over five years to 458 school sites (each serving 80 percent high need students) across 76 LEAs for new, expanded, or continuing Community Schools.
- Lead Technical Assistance Grant ($12 million) three-year contract for the Alameda County Office of Education to co-lead a support hub with the UCLA Center for Community Schooling, and in partnership with Californians for Justice and the National Education Association.

Additional planning and implementation grants will be awarded in the 2022–23 school year, and implementation grants will be awarded in subsequent years.

The California English Learner Roadmap Policy

The EL Roadmap was approved by the State Board of Education in July 2017 and provides "guidance to local educational agencies (LEAs) on welcoming, understanding, and educating the diverse population of students who are English learners attending California public schools." The vision of the EL Roadmap is that "English learners fully and meaningfully access and participate in a twenty-first-century education from early childhood through grade twelve that results in their attaining high levels of English proficiency, mastery of grade-level standards, and opportunities to develop proficiency in multiple languages." Its mission is for California schools to "affirm, welcome, and respond to a diverse range of English learner (EL) strengths, needs, and identities" and "prepare graduates with the linguistic, academic, and social skills and competencies they require for college, career, and civic participation in a global, diverse, and multilingual world, thus ensuring a thriving future for California." It is organized around the following four principles:

- **Principle 1: Assets-Oriented and Needs Responsive Schools**. Classroom practices, climate, curriculum, and instruction respond to the diversity among ELs, recognizing that not all ELs have the same needs.
- **Principle 2: Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access**. ELs are provided a rigorous, intellectually rich, relevant, developmentally appropriate, standards-based learning experience with instructional scaffolding that supports comprehension, active engagement, and participation and mastery.
- **Principle 3: System Conditions that Support Effectiveness.** The school site and district systems function to support implementation of the assets-based, meaningful, and rigorous curriculum, instruction, and school climate.
- **Principle 4: Alignment and Articulation Within and Across Systems.** ELs experience a coherent, articulated, and aligned set of practices and pathways across grade levels and educational segments and continuing through to reclassification and middle school.

Crosswalk for English Learner, Equity, and Transformational Community Schools

There is strong alignment between the four pillars of Community Schools and four principles of the EL Roadmap. Moreover, with the focus of Community Schools to deliver better services to high-need students, effective implementation of the model to best serve the needs of ELs, multilingual students, and their families cannot be done without ensuring that it incorporates the principles of the EL Roadmap. To support district and school leaders to create this alignment, we have created the following crosswalk, organized around the pillars of the Community Schools model, the EL Roadmap and EL effective school literature, and a racial equity and inclusion framework. This crosswalk can be used during the planning stages for new Community Schools or as a reflection tool to determine how to continue to improve alignment within existing Community Schools.

Pillar 1: Integrated student supports address out-of-school barriers to learning through partnerships with social and health service agencies and providers, ideally coordinated by a dedicated professional staff member. Some employ social-emotional learning, conflict resolution training, trauma-informed care, and restorative justice practices to support mental health and lessen conflict, bullying, and punitive disciplinary actions, such as suspensions.

EL Roadmap and EL Effective Schools Literature	Racial Equity and Inclusion Framework
Principle 1: Assets Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools; and Principle 4: Alignment and Articulation within and Across Systems	*Integrated students, family, and staff supports.*
 - Responsive to different strengths, needs, and identities, and support for the social, socioemotional health and development of ELs	 - Focus on a culture of everyday wellness, not only in times of crisis.

- Attentive to all aspects of child development: academic, social, emotional, physical, linguistic, cognitive, and psychological.
- Sensitive to academic, social, and health and wellness support for students, as needed
- Comprehensive in creating partnerships to provide additional support—including expanded learning time.
- Supportive climate of affirmation, safety, and trusting relationships.
- Inclusive services are provided by culturally and linguistically supportive and accessible entities.
- Perceptive attention to the specific traumas, vulnerabilities, and needs of immigrants, refugees and undocumented students—including protections related to legal status.

- Mental health, wellness, and healing centered supports for students, staff, and families that are culturally responsive, destigmatized, and centered on harm reduction.
- School-wide restorative practices.
- No Community School funds for punishment policies, including police and school hardening.

Pillar 2: Expanded learning time and opportunities, including after-school, weekend, and summer programs, additional academic instruction, individualized academic support, enrichment activities, and learning opportunities that emphasize real-world learning and community problem solving.

EL Roadmap and EL Effective Schools Literature

Principle 2: Intellectually Rich Instruction and Meaningful Access; Principle 3: System Conditions for Success; and Principle 4: Alignment and Articulation within and Across Systems.

- High expectations and strong instruction for all students—with Integrated/Designated ELD strategies and scaffolds, including home language supports to ensure meaningful access and participation.
- Attention to language development and language access in and through all content and activities.
- Learning emphasizes engagement, interaction, critical thinking, inquiry, and discourse.
- Engagement in relevant and standards-based curriculum.

Racial Equity and Inclusion Framework

Enriched, culturally sustaining and expanded learning opportunities.

- Move toward individualized learning and away from test scores and "one size fits all" approaches to teaching and learning.
- Culturally-rooted and sustaining programs and curricula beyond ethnic studies that foster racially just schools.
- Inspire students through project-based learning, expansion of the arts, music, outdoor learning, including school gardens, extra-curricular activities, and experiential learning connected to the local community.

- Access to the FULL curriculum (arts, electives, career preparation, etc.).
- Home language is understood as a means to access learning, as the foundation for learning a second language (English), and as an asset. It is affirmed, welcomed, developed, and utilized for learning.
- Sufficient resources invested in building educator and staff capacity to address EL needs, including linguistic and culturally appropriate practices.
- Opportunities for meaningful learning, including making space for bilingual development and support for bicultural identity.
- Build partnerships to provide additional support, including expanded learning time.

- Capacity building and support for staff, specifically aimed at anti-racism and expanding a diverse, multilingual staff

Pillar 3: Family and community engagement brings parents and other community members into the school as partners with shared decision-making power in children's education. Such coalitions also make the school a neighborhood hub providing adults with educational opportunities, such as ESL classes, green card or citizenship preparation, computer skills, art, STEM, etc.

<u>**EL Roadmap and EL Effective Schools Literature**</u>

Principle 1: Assets Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools

- Schools value and build robust school, family, and community ties, including opportunities for shared leadership.
- Everyone thrives in a climate of safety and a trusting, two-way relationship between school and family.
- Cultural and linguistically accessible communication creates trust.

<u>**Racial Equity and Inclusion Framework**</u>

Active student, family, and community engagement.

- Strengthen relationships among students, families, and educators that are at the heart of a Community School.
- Invite student engagement.
- Support language justice for families and students who don't speak English to ensure everyone can communicate with the school and fully participate.

Pillar 4: Collaborative leadership and practice build a culture of professional learning, collective trust, and shared responsibility using such strategies as site-based leadership/governance teams, teacher learning communities, and a Community School coordinator who manages the complex joint work of multiple schools and community organizations.

EL Roadmap and EL Effective Schools Literature	**Racial Equity and Inclusion Framework**
Principle 3: System Conditions for Success; and Principle 4: Alignment and Articulation within and Across Systems. • Create a culture of teacher collaboration and professional learning. • Generate clear statements of shared commitment and collective responsibility to provide coherence related to embracing assets and needs of students and community. Commit to delivery of high-quality relevant equitable schooling. • Forge a system of culturally and linguistically valid and reliable assessment support instruction, continuous improvement, and accountability.	*Shared power and collaborative leadership and practices.* • Commit to a shared power mindset embedded in the governance structure with impacted students and families as equal partners, alongside educators and community partners, at all levels of the system. • Prioritize transparency and accountability by imparting information in a clear, timely, and accessible manner to impact decision-making.

Conclusion

It is our hope that this document can support the development and continued implementation of Community Schools, through alignment with the EL Roadmap. The Community Schools model holds great promise to deliver much needed services to EL students, immigrant and refugee students, and their families. Furthermore, we do not see the EL Roadmap and the Community Schools model as two separate policies, but as two complementary strategies that cannot be fully realized without the other.

Additional Resources

You can access all of [the EL Roadmap Tookits on the Caifornians Together website](#), which includes Section 4: Engaging the Whole Village (pages 44-57) of the [*California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 5: Aligning and Articulating Practices Across the System*](#) that this document is based on.

Section 4: Engaging the Whole Village includes additional information about alignment with Community Schools, including:

- **Strategies to Strengthen Connections Between School and Community** (pages 47-48). This section discusses the different levels of school-community partnership and includes reflection questions and the 12 suggestions for school leaders to consider.
- **Community Mapping Activity** (page 57). This activity will help your school model build stronger relationships with community institutions that represent the diversity of language and cultural groups served by the school.
- **Reflection Tool on Engaging the Village** (page 58). This tool can help your team reflect upon the degree to which your school engages and partners with the community to support ELs during the planning process for a new Community School, or to periodically identify areas of improvement within an existing Community School.