TEACHING AND LEARNING DURING UNCERTAIN TIMES

A Review of Learning Continuity and Attendance Plans

by Dr. Conor P. Williams and Manuel Buenrostro

About the Authors

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INTRODUCTION

Last spring, the sudden closure of schools forced districts to recreate public education hastily—online. While the novel coronavirus posed a threat to all Californians, its impacts have exacerbated existing inequities across the state. Historically marginalized communities are more likely to be infected with the coronavirus and face greater health risks from COVID-19. While data on the pandemic's impacts on student learning is incomplete, there is reason to believe that these same communities face particularly large and inequitable opportunity gaps in district distance learning offerings. Indeed, in a summer 2020 analysis of these efforts, Californians Together found widespread reasons for concern. In far too many communities, English learners (ELs) appeared to have been marginalized or ignored in districts' initial pandemic responses.

In late June 2020, California replaced the 2020-21 Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) with the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan (LCP) as a response to the pandemic. The purpose of school district LCPs are to provide information about how districts invested state resources and instruction to address student learning during the COVID-19 crisis in the 2020–21 school year. These plans were drafted in the late summer of 2020 and locally approved by school boards, and reviewed by county offices of education in the early fall. As such, these plans provided a unique view of how well district approaches to distance learning this year centered equity for ELs and other students.

This report draws upon a comprehensive review of Learning Continuity and Attendance Plans (LCPs) from 41 school districts. The districts included in the study were chosen to represent a wide range of communities and settings across the state. For instance, the selected districts spanned 21 counties and enrolled 27 percent of all California K–12 students, as well as 34 percent of the state's ELs. Nineteen districts enrolled 25,000 or more students, 19 enrolled between 2,500 and 25,000 students, and three enrolled fewer than 2,500.

This is a review of the plans, not the implementation of the activities in the plans. The LCPs represent districts' best intentions but do not include evaluating how well they were implemented.

Californians Together reviewers rated districts' LCPs across seven focus areas. Each of these focus areas was broken up into three to five elements:

1 Family Collaboration
- Stakeholder Input in Decision-Making
- Communications Including Translations
- Staffing to Support Family Engagement
- Opportunities to Learn Strategies to Support Instruction at Home

2 Continuity of Learning for Equitable Access
- Synchronous Learning Time
- In-Person Instruction
- Devices and Internet Connectivity
- Extended Learning Time
- Preschool Access and Alignment

3 Assessment and Progress Monitoring
- Achievement Monitoring in Core Subjects
- Achievement Monitoring in English Language Progress
- Attendance Monitoring and Intervention

4 Educator Professional Development
- Educator PD to Support ELs (in addition to ELD)
- Staffing to Support EL Student Engagement
- PD on Cultural Proficiency/Competency

5 English Language Development (ELD)
- Designated ELD Strategies and Materials
- Designated ELD Instructional Time
- Integrated ELD Strategies
- ELD Professional Development

6 Responsiveness to EL Profiles
- Responsiveness to LTELs
- Responsiveness to Newcomer Students
- Responsiveness to Dual Language Learners

7 Social-Emotional and Mental Health Supports
- Access to Social-Emotional Supports
- Social-Emotional Elements Incorporated Within Instruction
- PD to Support Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Access to Mental Health Supports

WHY THIS MATTERS

This report aims to inform school district decision-making as they craft their upcoming 2021–24 LCAPs, and highlights the need for them to prioritize ELs—some of California's most historically marginalized students. Not all students have been identically impacted; therefore, district responses must take past and present inequities into account. As the pandemic reaches the one-year mark, districts have had time to adapt to address new challenges while opportunity gaps that have always been in the system have increased. These inequities will only worsen without meaningful commitments from educators and district leadership.

These commitments should be clearly stated as significant responses to EL student needs in the upcoming three-year LCAPs. **We have included a summary of LCAP recommendations in Appendix C on page 32.**

OVERALL KEY FINDINGS

While most districts had areas of strength, no district excelled on all metrics. As such, the analysis identifies some promising practices as well as areas of improvement. Moreover, while distance learning was rushed during the initial Spring 2020 closures, districts have now had more time to design and implement more equitable distance learning plans for educators and their EL students, and, as such, should be held to higher standards.

2021-24 LCAP

Throughout this report, you will see the icon above which identifies recommendations that are specific to the 2021-2024 LCAP.

IMPROVEMENT AREAS

- **Ensure that family engagement includes strategies for two-way communication.** While all plans mentioned collecting stakeholder feedback and 73 percent had considerations for engaging multilingual families, there was uneven evidence that all connections involved two-way communication strategies ensuring information would be ongoing and inform district planning. Given that the selected districts were amongst those with the highest number or proportion of ELs, it was concerning that 17 percent did not mention communications with translations; 22 percent did not mention any staffing plan to support family engagement; and 17 percent did not mention learning opportunities for families to help their children's instruction at home. However, while 56 percent of districts reported supporting families' digital literacy, this still left over 40 percent of districts with "Weak," or missing plans to address this.

- **Specify minimal synchronous instructional time with additional time for English learners.** Many plans lacked specificity when it came to guaranteeing how much synchronous instruction each student would receive: 22 percent did not mention minimum time for weekly synchronous instruction. Moreover, even when minimum synchronous instruction time was noted, only 40 percent specified additional time for ELs in general. Only 51 percent reported they had guaranteed extra time for live synchronous ELD instruction.

- **Strengthen monitoring of English learner achievement and ensure interventions meet the needs of specific student groups.** One in three districts did not mention plans for monitoring ELs' achievement in core subjects, while 37 percent had "Weak," or no plans to assess their English language progress. Moreover, while nearly all districts mentioned attendance monitoring and tracking, 46 percent did not describe learning recovery strategies for ELs. With the pandemic having a disproportionate impact on ELs, it should be expected for all districts to have more specific plans to assess the achievement of their ELs and delineate learning recovery strategies to meet their needs.

- **Strengthen professional development plans to include all school staff and promote ongoing collaboration.** While most districts (83 percent) mentioned professional development to support ELs, only 41 percent had both teachers and instructional support staff in their professional learning plans. Moreover, only 22 percent of districts mentioned ongoing teacher collaboration, while 49 percent noted professional learning on cultural competencies. Over three in four districts (78 percent) did say professional development focused on both content and ELD standards. In these times of change, all school staff must be included in district professional learning plans and time allotted for ongoing collaboration to ensure that the needs of students are identified and met.

- **Differentiate plans for typologies of English learners.** Many plans had general, or no descriptions of how they would meet the needs of high-need diverse EL student groups. Over half (51 percent) of districts serving 6-12th grade students had "Weak" or no plans for helping Long-term English learners (LTELs). Fifty-nine (59) percent of all districts demonstrated "Weak," or no plans for serving Newcomer EL needs. In those districts serving elementary students, eighty-four (84) percent had no plans for helping dual language learners in preschool. Knowing that the pandemic has not impacted all populations equally, districts must dig deeper into the data to address the needs of the different typologies of ELs and other high-need students and describe specific strategies to meet their needs.

KEY AREA OF STRENGTH: Expanded Access to Devices and Connectivity

Spurred by pandemic recovery resources and new state mandates, districts made progress closing digital opportunity gaps—expanding access to learning technologies and internet connectivity for all students. Roughly 90 percent of districts described significant efforts to distribute devices and ensure that students could access virtual learning. While there is still room for improvement in supporting families' digital literacy, the expansion of access appears to be an area in which most districts have improved.

FINDINGS FOR EACH FOCUS AREA

The following seven sections of this report highlight the LCP review findings for each focus area, including a summary of each element's data, promising practices, and recommendations for district and state leaders.

Each element and overall focus area was rated on a four-category scale: "No Evidence," "Weak," "Good," or "Exemplary." The overall scores for each focus area were based on the rating for each of the elements under it. The full rubrics can be found in Appendix A on page 22.
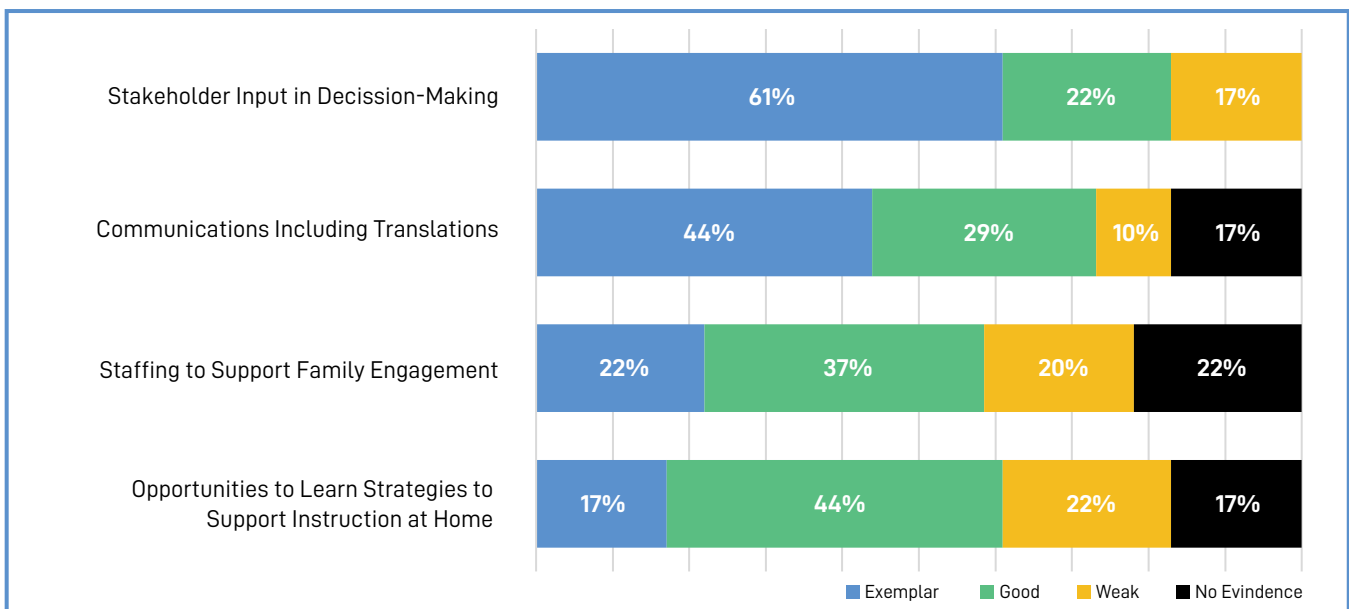
Researchers and educators have long known that EL families are powerful resources for supporting their children's success. With most schools closed for the pandemic, EL family members are more important than ever before. In many cases, they are the only adults who can regularly and safely spend time in-person with these children.

Unfortunately, polling suggests that many families are struggling to connect with schools and their learning options during the pandemic. In fall 2020, the Parent Institute for Quality Education Survey of Spanish-speaking families reported that nearly one-fifth still lack access to "high speed, reliable internet or wifi at home." Further, while 63 percent of respondents reported concerns about their children's emotional health during the pandemic, only about one-third of those families said their schools were providing resources to help them address those concerns. And a national survey from Latino Decisions found that 65 percent of Latino families—who make up a majority of EL families—reported "difficulty helping their children because they are too unfamiliar with class material."

Pie chart: Exemplar 17%, Good 42%, Weak 41%
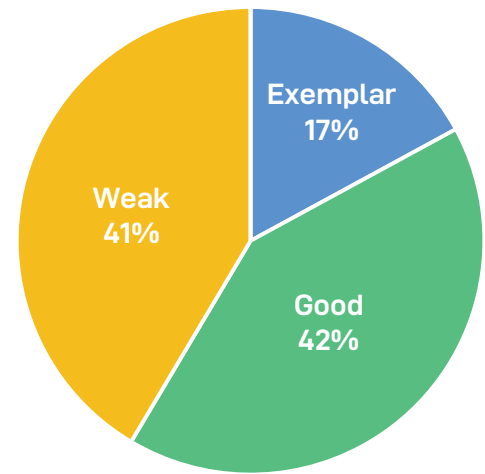
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Overall, reviewers rated 42 percent of district LCPs as "Good" and another 17 percent as "Exemplary" in the area of family collaboration. While this is encouraging, 41 percent of districts' fall plans were still rated "Weak" in this area. These topline focus area findings reflect some mixed results in the component elements. For instance, while 83 percent of districts scored "Good" or "Exemplary" for collecting feedback on their pandemic learning plans from families, staff, and students, 39 percent of districts gave "Weak" or "No Evidence" that they provided their families with strategies to support their children's learning at home. And 42 percent of districts offered Weak or No Evidence that they were devoting new or current staff time to support family engagement.

	Exemplar	Good	Weak	No Evidence
Stakeholder Input in Decision-Making	61%	22%	17%	
Communications Including Translations	44%	29%	10%	17%
Staffing to Support Family Engagement	22%	37%	20%	22%
Opportunities to Learn Strategies to Support Instruction at Home	17%	44%	22%	17%

PROMISING PRACTICES

New technologies and opportunities to provide feedback are a good start. Still, districts cannot wholly improve their family collaboration practices to support ELs without devoting energy, staff, and resources to these tasks.

Glendale Unified School District: **Attendance Clerks.** The district assigned four "attendance clerks" to each school and tasked these staff with "weekly check-ins with students and families to offer academic [and] social-emotional support." Attendance clerks are also tasked with leading "parent support groups per school site" and providing "guidance as needed to ensure students and families have access to learning resources and promote school connectedness."

Redwood City School District: **Multilingual Webinars and Trainings.** Starting in August, the district hosted a series of multilingual webinars and training to help EL families support their children during the pandemic. The first events in this series focused on digital literacy skills necessary for accessing distance learning—e.g., "Learn how to create an email account (Aprende a crear un correo gmail)" and "Connecting Students to Learning from Home (English, Spanish)." Later sessions incorporated strategies for providing children with academic support at home.

DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

Create opportunities for family professional learning. Families need support to understand new platforms, use online learning technology, and learn strategies to support their children's instruction at home. With students spending more of their learning time at home, districts need to continue expanding family professional learning opportunities. 🔎 **2021-24 LCAP**

Conduct outreach for ELs and their families. Districts must conduct linguistically and culturally competent outreach. All communications to families should be translated into languages they speak and understand. Ideally, staff who speak the languages of ELs and their families can support these efforts. New technology is also becoming available to facilitate two-way multilingual communication, such as new phone apps that simultaneously translate two-way communications with families. 🔎 **2021-24 LCAP**

Ensuring classified and certified staff can support family engagement. Now, more than ever, districts must prioritize bilingual and culturally relevant/responsive staffing to support better family engagement. Moreover, it is essential to hire and build staff capacity to meet any family engagement goal. This is emphasized by a January 2021 report by the Parent Organizing Network, which mentioned that "it is insufficient to build parents' capacity without simultaneously developing the staff's ability to work with families." 🔎 **2021-24 LCAP**

STATE RECOMMENDATIONS

Encourage districts to describe how they will conduct and measure two-way stakeholder engagement effectiveness in their LCAP and other plans. The guidelines in the LCAP and other plans should encourage districts to describe the tools being used to support two-way stakeholder engagement (such as apps) and how these tools promote increased accessibility to educators and other school staff. Moreover, districts should be encouraged to describe how these tools' effectiveness would be measured as a way for the state to collect strategies and evidence that can inform the field. 🔎 **2021-24 LCAP**

Conduct statewide or regional convenings of district and site parent or community liaisons. Statewide or regional convenings of parent and community liaisons can uplift the vital role they play in communicating with families to meet their health and social-emotional needs and how best to support their student's in-person or virtual learning. These liaisons have also played a critical role in students' re-engagement and will continue to do so as schools start to reopen. These convenings can use the Dual Capacity-Building Framework and use an assets-based focus to ensure that the strengths that families bring with them are leveraged to the benefit of their students and community.

The pandemic is a historical novelty—there is no large-scale research base on how to offer universal public education amidst such mass disruption. As such, schools and districts have launched a range of experiments in reinventing public education via distance learning. Most, though not all, include a significant virtual or online component. Some rely heavily on particular applications or technologies, from Google Classroom to Zoom to Seesaw, Flipgrid, Hāpara, and a universe of others.

And yet, while there is not a strong research consensus on mass distance learning, some components are critical for ELs. These students need opportunities to continue to engage with language development, particularly by speaking and listening. Oral language development is particularly important for ELs, as it serves as the foundation for academic English language development. During distance learning, ELs must also have sufficient time and opportunities to use the languages they speak—both their native languages and English.
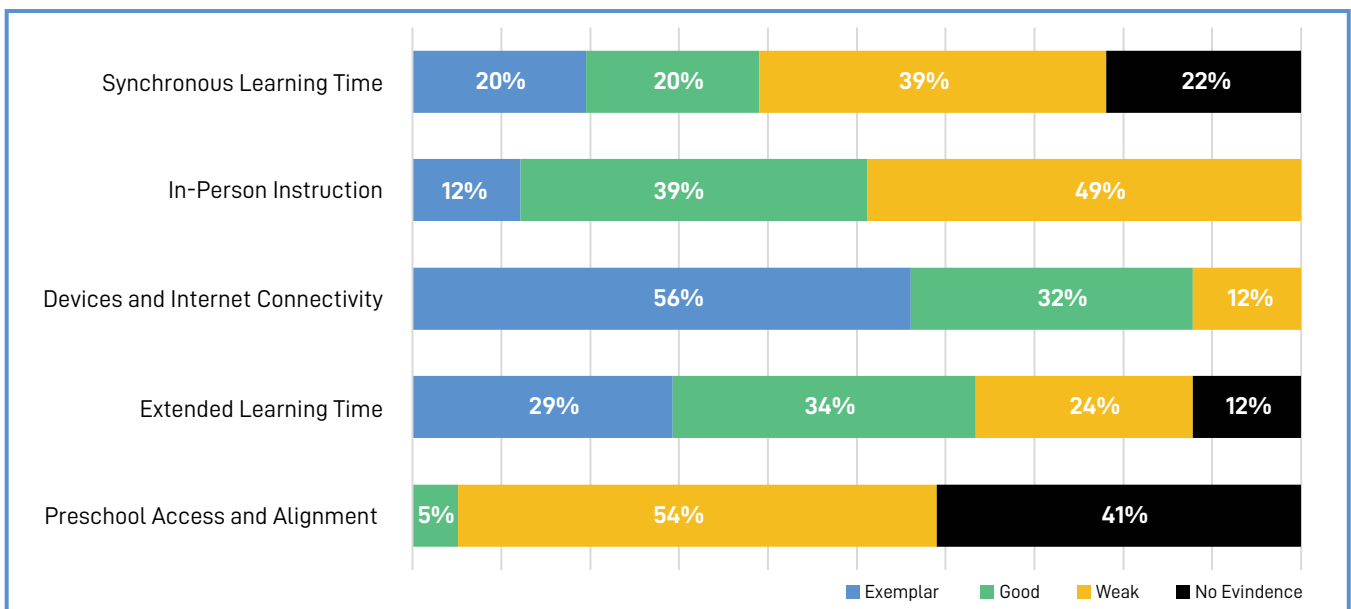
Good 32%

Weak 68%
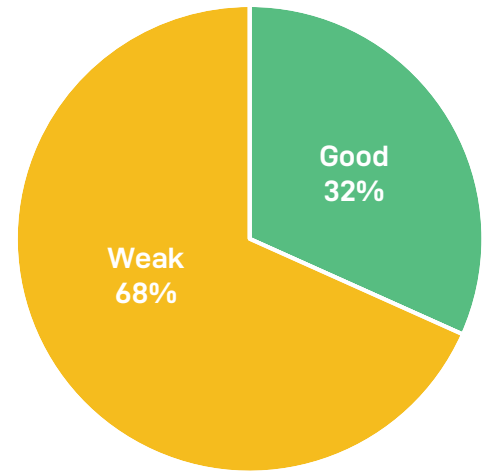
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS*

Unfortunately, 68 percent of plans were "Weak" overall in continuity of learning for equitable access. This largely reflects little evidence of: 1) the amount of guaranteed daily live instructional time provided to students—particularly ELs—and 2) the prioritization of ELs and other at-risk students in plans for in-person learning.

Indeed, 40 percent of plans set guidelines for minimum minutes of daily or weekly live instruction that included additional time for ELs. A further 39 percent mentioned at least minimum time for weekly live instruction, but no additional time for ELs. Somewhat troubling, 22 percent did not mention any minimum time for weekly live instruction. Plans for school reopening also raised concerns: nearly half did not mention prioritizing at-risk or EL students for in-person instruction.

There were some bright spots. A majority (56 percent) of districts scored "Exemplary" with plans to provide students with sufficient devices and connectivity to access distance learning and build families' capacity to use new tools. A further 32 percent scored "Good" by describing a device and connectivity distribution approach that included following up to increase access.

	Exemplar	Good	Weak	No Evidence
Synchronous Learning Time	20%	20%	39%	22%
In-Person Instruction	12%	39%	49%	
Devices and Internet Connectivity	56%	32%	12%	
Extended Learning Time	29%	34%	24%	12%
Preschool Access and Alignment		5%	54%	41%

*Results for "Preschool Access and Alignment" only includes elementary and unified school districts (39 total).

PROMISING PRACTICES

While it is heartening to know that California districts have made significant progress in closing some of the digital divides that plagued spring distance learning, this must be seen as just the first step towards a more equitable approach to continuing learning during and after the pandemic. All students, but particularly ELs, need regular opportunities to speak and engage with their peers and teachers right now. This may be challenging during the pandemic, but that does not make it impossible.

Calexico Unified School District: ELD Intervention Classes. The district provides ELD intervention classes to ELs who show evidence of learning loss, students at risk of becoming LTELs, and LTELs. These classes are taught by EL Interventions Teachers, who are also tasked with collaborating with classroom teachers, monitor student participation synchronously and asynchronously, and reaching out to parents when students are not engaged.

Redwood City School District: Prioritizing At-Risk Students for In-Person Learning. The district has a plan to pursue a waiver to offer after-school in-person instruction for small groups of children while prioritizing at-risk students. The plan would include prioritizing newcomer ELs, special education students, homeless students, foster youth, young children, and students with significant learning loss.

DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

Prioritize at-risk students, including ELs for in-person learning. Any district plan to provide in-person learning opportunities, including regular and after-school options, must prioritize bringing in ELs and other at-risk students first. These are the students who face the greatest opportunity gaps during the pandemic and should have first access to safe, in-person learning when it becomes available.

Provide additional opportunities for students to learn, particularly ELs and other at-risk students. To address learning gaps, districts should make plans to extend learning time now and into the next school years. To support this, districts should hire dedicated teachers for summer enrichment programs and after-school staff for extended learning focused on meeting EL needs, including dual language learners in the early elementary grades and LTELs in the secondary grades. **2021-24 LCAP**

Prioritize supports for 1st-grade students that did not attend kindergarten in the 2021-22 school year. A significant number of students did not enroll in kindergarten during the 2020-21 school year. This makes it likely that many students will arrive in first grade next fall in need of additional support to ensure that they are prepared to succeed. To ensure that these current opportunity gaps do not produce larger achievement gaps in the future, districts should prioritize ELs entering first grade for extended learning opportunities in the summer and expanded learning schedules in the fall. **2021-24 LCAP**

STATE RECOMMENDATIONS

Set clear district guidelines for synchronous instructional minutes. The current distance learning mandate (outlined in SB98) could be met with either live ("synchronous") or taped ("asynchronous") instruction. As seen earlier, many districts met this requirement through mostly asynchronous instruction, which is inequitable, particularly for ELs. In any future requirements for distance learning, the state should require daily synchronous instructional minutes that encompass the majority of total instructional minutes and is consistent across all districts.

Fund additional supports for 1st-grade students, including through summer programs, expanded learning, and support for teachers. The state should invest in a summer "jumpstart" (extended year) program before the fall semester for students entering 1st grade. In addition, expanded learning in the fall is needed to make sure these students can thrive. First-grade teachers will also need professional development on instruction and curriculum to best meet their students' needs, including delivering ELD to ELs who did not attend kindergarten.

While all pandemic learning models are rife with challenges for educators, perhaps nothing has proven as challenging as assessment. Across California and the country, teachers are finding it particularly difficult to monitor their students' progress. Different school systems use varying methods for counting student attendance over time, gauging students' academic achievement, and measuring EL progress toward learning English. This is particularly concerning at a moment when so much of public education is being conducted in new and experimental ways. Without valid and reliable data on how often students are engaging, how well they are learning academic content, and how well ELs are acquiring English, schools risk continuing with distance learning models that may not be serving students at all well.
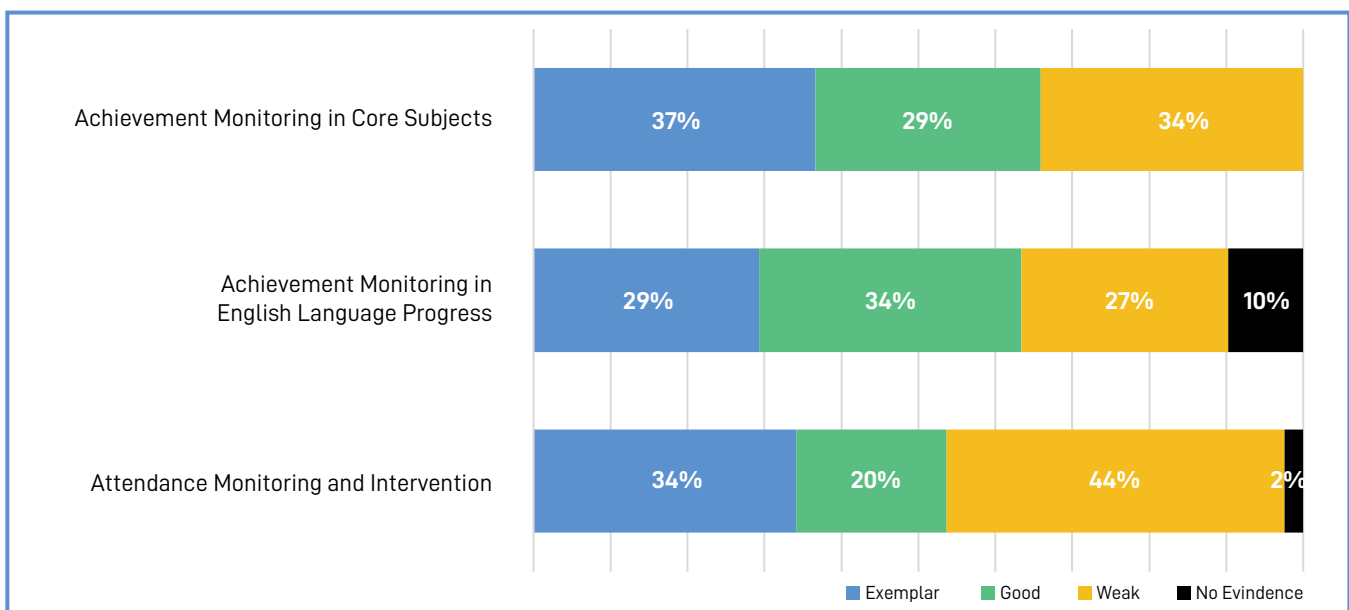
Weak 39%
Exemplar 32%
Good 29%
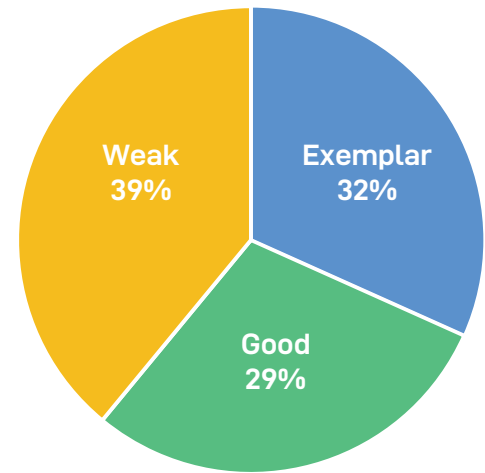
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS*

District LCPs included some encouraging descriptions in assessment and progress monitoring, with 61 percent of districts scoring either "Good" or "Exemplar" in the overall category. The majority of LCPs were rated as "Good" or "Exemplar" for their efforts to assess EL progress in core subjects (66 percent) and the English language (63 percent) and in the area of attendance monitoring (54 percent).

While all districts described plans for monitoring student progress in core subjects, 39 percent did not include plans to measure EL academic content progress. Moreover, nearly two in five districts had weak or no plans to assess EL progress in learning English. The report showed that 10 percent were rated as "No Evidence", while another 27 percent mentioned using English proficiency assessments. However, they did not provide sufficient details to indicate how they would use the measurements to monitor English language progress. While these districts may have stronger assessment systems in place than they shared in their plans, these numbers remain somewhat disappointing.

Furthermore, reviewers concluded that nearly half of districts (46 percent) did not include information about how their attendance monitoring and tracking systems would inform learning recovery strategies for ELs.

	Exemplar	Good	Weak	No Evidence
Achievement Monitoring in Core Subjects	37%	29%	34%	
Achievement Monitoring in English Language Progress	29%	34%	27%	10%
Attendance Monitoring and Intervention	34%	20%	44%	2%

*Results for "Responsiveness to LTELs" only includes unified and high school districts (22 total); and results for "Responsiveness to Dual Language Learners" only includes elementary and unified school districts (39 total).

PROMISING PRACTICES

While valid and reliable assessments are difficult to administer during the pandemic, districts should recommit to finding creative ways of testing and tracking students' progress.

Greenfield Union School District: **Comprehensive Tracking Approach.** The district employs a comprehensive approach to tracking and encouraging student attendance. Through a software program, the district can monitor attendance and automatically identify students who are missing significant amounts of live instruction. The district also provides positive feedback for "Good and improved attendance," as well as phone and email outreach to families whose children are absent. Notably, the district specifically calls out the need for translation and interpretation for EL families.

San Diego Unified School District: **Comprehensive Assessment Strategy.** The district describes its assessment strategy as being built around a suite of academic assessments, the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC), and "observed oral interactions, written work, exit slips, and conferring." The plan also articulates a theory of action around assessment, promising that the district will collect data on student progress to identify students in need of accelerated learning—not remediation or grade retention.

DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

Monitor and assess EL progress toward learning English. Districts must monitor and assess ELs' progress towards English language proficiency. In doing this, districts should embed formative and observational assessments and ensure that results inform instruction and interventions. It is concerning that 37 percent of districts provided minimal or no mention of how they planned to do this in their LCP. **2021-24 LCAP**

Evaluate effectiveness of attendance strategies. Districts should be as clear as possible about their attendance goals and the expected outcomes and effectiveness of interventions they implement to increase student attendance. Plans should include discussions that indicate how these protocols will be targeted to reach and succeed with ELs. **2021-24 LCAP**

STATE RECOMMENDATIONS

Identify interim formative measures that districts can use to monitor growth in English language proficiency. In spring 2020, the summative ELPAC was not administered to all ELs, and it is questionable if all ELs will be assessed in spring 2021 since the required participation rate has been waived. The state should identify interim formative measures that districts can use to monitor English language proficiency growth.

Set clear standards for attendance monitoring and intervention and ensure district reporting to the state is disaggregated by student groups. The state should clear guidelines for all districts to follow in attendance monitoring and intervention for any distance learning moving forward. Reporting these data by student group (current ELs and reclassified ELs separately) will also ensure that gaps in impact are evaluated and addressed. Without these transparency measures, it will be difficult to determine the impact of distance learning on each student group.
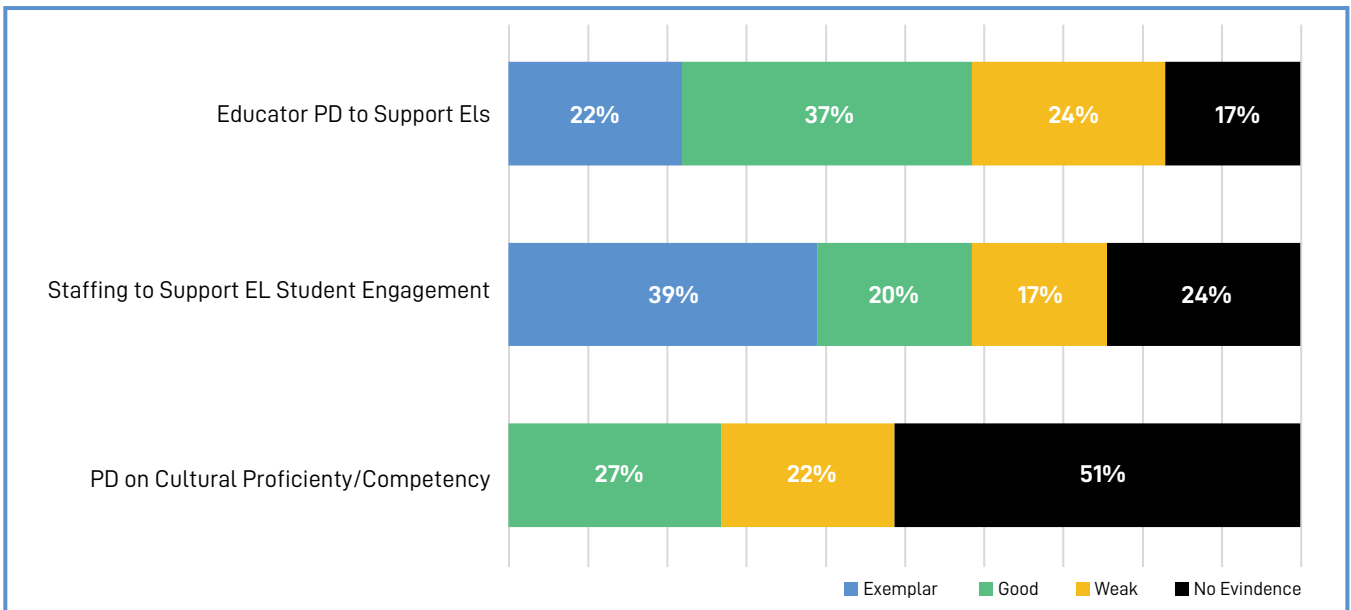
By the time districts finalized their LCPs last fall, it was clear that the pandemic's spread made it likely that much of the 2020–21 academic year would involve distance learning. As such, it was critical for districts to provide teachers with training and guidance that would help them succeed in these models. As the prolonged school closures continue to take an inequitable toll on historically marginalized students and their communities, districts must prepare teachers to support these students—particularly ELs. Few teachers have significant training or experience with distance learning; in addition, there is evidence that this model is difficult to implement even with experience, training, and planning.

No Evidence 7% · **Exemplar** 32% · **Good** 29% · **Weak** 39%
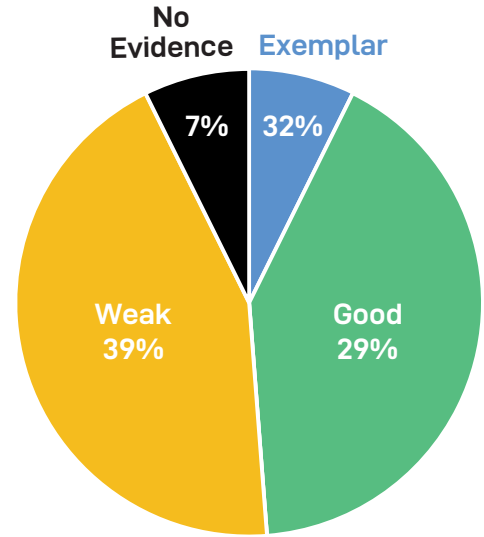
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Reviewers were split on this element, rating roughly half of district LCPs "Good" or "Exemplary" and the other half "Weak" or "No Evidence". Districts scored well on staffing to support ELs, where 59 percent of LCPs at least included a "plan for hiring or staff assignments [that] ensures the needs of EL students are met during distance and in-person learning." While the majority of districts (59 percent) described a plan for professional development that included both teachers and instructional support staff, it is a significant concern that 41 of districts scored "Weak" or "No Evidence" in this category.

In addition, 51 percent of district LCPs included "No Evidence" that their professional development opportunities would address cultural proficiency and competency. Given that distance learning models require schools to collaborate more comprehensively with families—including EL linguistically and culturally diverse families—this is a disturbing oversight. Given that many ELs and their families face significant stress or trauma caused by the pandemic, schools must be prepared to engage and support them in culturally affirming ways.

	Exemplar	Good	Weak	No Evidence
Educator PD to Support Els	22%	37%	24%	17%
Staffing to Support EL Student Engagement	39%	20%	17%	24%
PD on Cultural Proficienty/Competency		27%	22%	51%

PROMISING PRACTICES

Teachers cannot fully support ELs via distance learning without training and support. Districts should prioritize this now, as distance learning is likely to continue for at least some of the remaining school year. Strategies to address learning loss will need additional staff support.

Franklin-McKinley Elementary School District: **EL-Focused Professional Learning.** The district describes plans to provide ongoing professional development to both teachers and classified staff focused on their newly adopted English language arts curriculum (including ELD), math strategies for supporting ELs and students with disabilities, culturally responsive strategies, and student engagement.

Calexico Unified School District: **EL Intervention Teachers and EL Specialists.** The district outlines roles and responsibilities for EL intervention teachers and EL specialists. During distance learning, EL intervention teachers are tasked with providing small group intervention classes to ELs who demonstrate learning loss and collaborating with classroom teachers to promote more robust student engagement. These teachers also received 30 hours of planning time to develop intervention ELD lessons. The district's four EL specialists (two at the secondary and two at the elementary level) also work closely with LTELs and students at risk of becoming LTELs to monitor progress, hold virtual meetings with students and families, and provide resources to meet emerging needs.

DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthen PD offerings to ensure all teachers are prepared to support ELs (as required by state law to be included in the LCAP). Districts should set aside—and emphasize—time for ongoing professional development and collaboration between EL teachers and teachers of other content areas to provide designated ELD and integrated ELD in all core subjects. Moreover, these efforts must be described in the LCAP as called for in the 2018 Budget Language (AB 1808), stating that LEAs "shall include specific actions in the Local Control and Accountability Plan related to, at a minimum, the language acquisition programs... provided to pupils and professional development activities specific to English learners." **2021-24 LCAP**

Ensure that educators have and develop cultural proficiency and competencies. Professional learning opportunities that support teachers, other school staff, and district leaders to build stronger competencies for navigating cultural and linguistic differences should be required. It is critical that these learning opportunities reach school leaders and are ongoing to ensure continued growth and reflection on practices. **2021-24 LCAP**

Hire and assign staff responsible for connecting with and supporting ELs. EL student engagement is essential to their success in distance learning and after schools reopen. If districts do not hire or assign staff to be responsible for connecting with and supporting these students' academic and linguistic development, EL students and their schools will struggle. In hiring, recruitment, and retention strategies, districts should make cultural and linguistic competencies priority factors. **2021-24 LCAP**

STATE RECOMMENDATIONS

LCAP template should require districts to describe services and professional development to support the delivery of a high-quality program for ELs, as required by statute. Designated and integrated ELD are a legal requirement, and the state LCAP template should require districts to describe these services and the professional development to support the delivery of a high-quality program for ELs. Moreover, the 2018 Budget Language (AB 1808) makes this an explicit requirement, stating that LEAs "shall include specific actions in the Local Control and Accountability Plan related to, at a minimum, the language acquisition programs...provided to pupils and professional development activities specific to English learners." **2021-24 LCAP**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT (ELD)

ELs in California must receive designated and integrated ELD supports, even during pandemic distance learning. This mandate isn't just the law; it's also a critical way to keep EL linguistic and academic development on track until schools reopen.
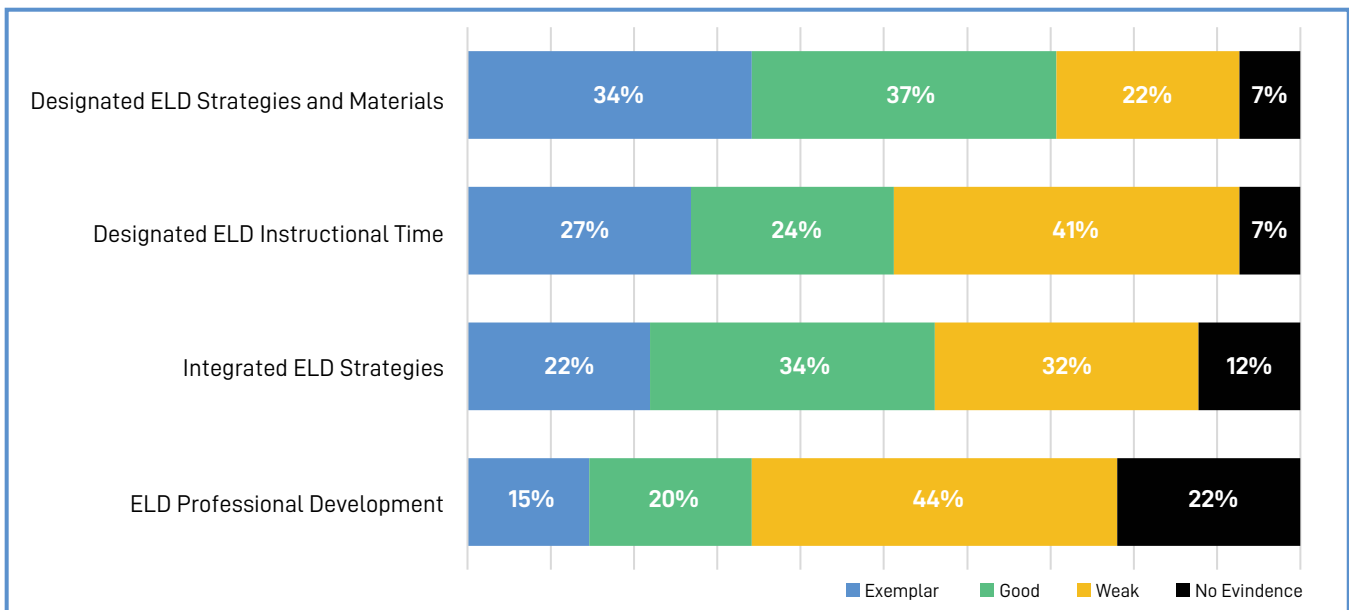
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Almost all districts described how they would provide ELD to students. However, most districts did not provide a meaningful description for each of the four elements, ranging from delivering designated and integrated ELD strategies to ensuring ELD instructional time and professional development. Reviewers rated over half of districts' LCPs as "Weak" or "No Evidence" for their overall descriptions of how schools would ensure that ELs received ELD services.
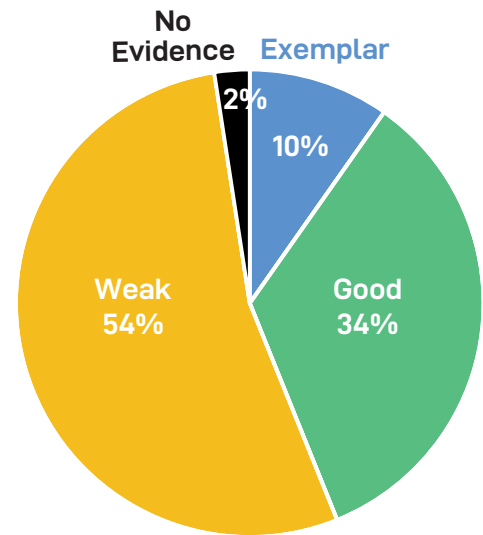
While over 70 percent of districts scored "Good" or "Exemplary" for their descriptions of the strategies and materials they would use to deliver designated ELD supports, just 27 percent of districts mentioned providing their ELs with daily live designated ELD instruction. Another 24 percent of districts mentioned providing weekly live designated ELD instruction. Notably, however, most of the districts that guaranteed time for live ELD instruction did not specify how much time would be provided. This ambiguity raises questions about the depth of these commitments in practice.

Meanwhile, 34 percent of district LCPs outlined evidence-based strategies they would use for integrated ELD supports in some core subjects—and another 22 percent described evidence-based integrated ELD strategies for use across all core subjects. However, one in nine districts did not mention integrated ELD at all. Given that integrated ELD supports are mandated for ELs, this is deeply concerning.

Similarly, 22 percent of district plans made no mention of professional development that would help teachers to deliver these ELD services. And a further 42 percent shared only "Weak" evidence that they would offer such professional learning opportunities.

No Evidence — 2%
Exemplar — 10%
Good — 34%
Weak — 54%

	Exemplar	Good	Weak	No Evidence
Designated ELD Strategies and Materials	34%	37%	22%	7%
Designated ELD Instructional Time	27%	24%	41%	7%
Integrated ELD Strategies	22%	34%	32%	12%
ELD Professional Development	15%	20%	44%	22%

■ Exemplar ■ Good ■ Weak ■ No Evindence

PROMISING PRACTICES

When schools shifted to distance learning last spring, ELD services did not always survive the instructional model change. If this was understandable in the early stages of the crisis, it was unacceptable by the fall. These legally-required services are essential to EL success. If districts offer halfhearted integrated and designated ELD services—or overlook them altogether—ELs will struggle.

Calexico Union School District: **Guaranteed Time for Live ELD Instruction.** The district delineates specific times and amounts of live ELD instruction that ELs will receive. For elementary ELs, the district planned 30 minutes of live ELD instruction four days per week, as well as asynchronous ELD on the fifth day. In addition, LTELs and students at risk of becoming LTELs received an additional intervention ELD class. Most secondary ELs also receive designated ELD in one of their six periods, with all newcomer students being guaranteed daily designated ELD instruction.

San Diego Unified School District: **Educator Support for Designated and Integrated ELD.** The district described the delivery of ELD through a "push-in integrated model." This model builds the capacity of a broad range of educators who work with ELs (including teachers, paraeducators, district resource teachers, education specialists, counselors, and administrators) to deliver effective teaching practices that support ELD. Coaching and a co-teaching model also provide additional support for classroom teachers in delivering designated ELD and planning integrated ELD strategies within content courses.

DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

Deliver daily integrated and designated ELD for ELs. While many districts outlined basic strategies and materials for integrated and designated ELD instruction during the pandemic, details and evidence of specific commitments are lacking. Districts must commit to delivering these essential, mandatory supports for ELs. It is crucial to make these commitments explicit, outlining how frequently and how long ELs will receive ELD services. **2021-24 LCAP**

Ensure that ELD professional development is provided to all teachers. ELD cannot be delivered effectively unless all teachers receive PD and support to improve its delivery. Both teachers of ELs and content area teachers should be given professional learning opportunities on ELD strategies, including small group, one-on-one support, and time for collaboration. **2021-24 LCAP**

STATE RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure that the System of Support prioritizes the inclusion of programs and services for ELs.
The System of Support should include, but not be limited to, the implementation of high-quality integrated and designated ELD at all levels of Differentiated Assistance. Districts in need of assistance will benefit from this support to effectively meet the needs of ELs as well as be provided with the opportunity to build the capacity of their educators.

Require designated and integrated ELD as a component of expanded learning investments.
Any statewide investments in expanded learning to address learning loss (including expanded summer and afterschool programs) must prioritize ELs and require designated and integrated ELD as a central component. This additional time for ELD instruction will help to make up for the lost instructional time that might have disproportionately impacted ELs.

Coordinate regional professional learning opportunities focused on designated and integrated ELD.
The state has developed a video series on best practices for designated and integrated ELD. All county offices of education should offer statewide webinars to amplify these promising practices and build district capacity.

While the U.S. public education generally groups ELs together by one characteristic—their emerging English language proficiencies—obscures this student group's significant heterogeneity. ELs are racially, ethnically, socioeconomically, and linguistically diverse. They enter public schools at different ages and with diverse linguistic proficiencies in their native languages and English.
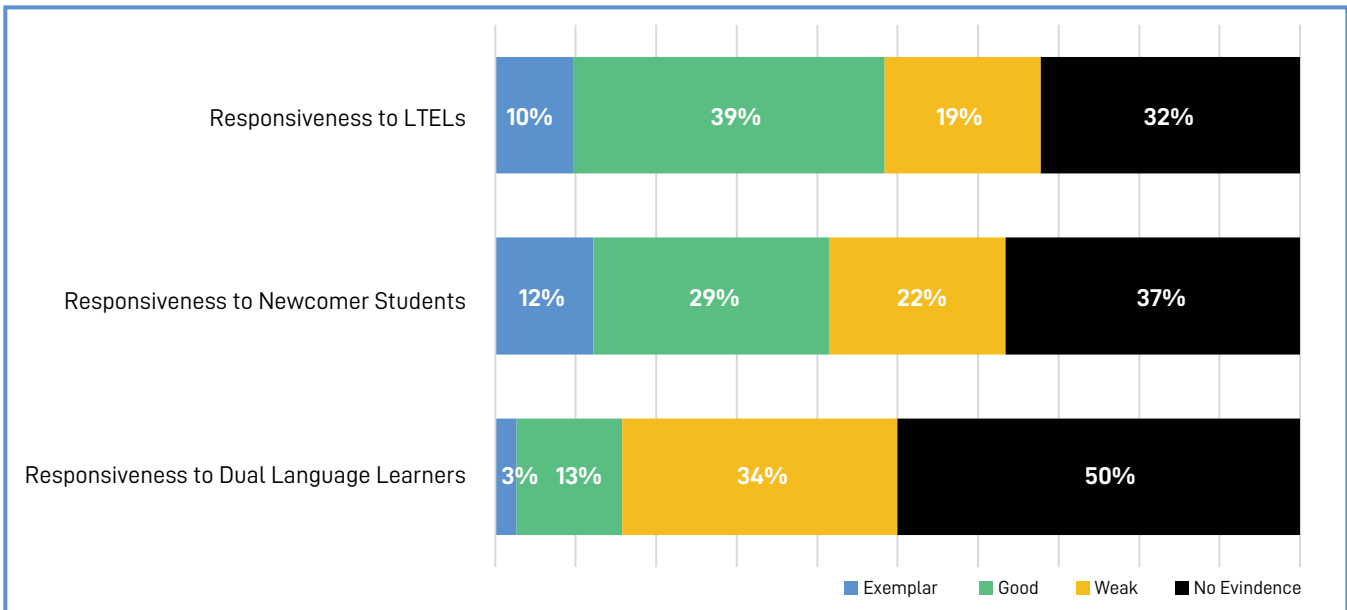
This diversity should inform the instructional models, and strategies schools use to support different groups of ELs. Some practices that are useful for younger ELs—dual language learners or DLLs—are not equally effective with older newcomer EL students or LTELs. Districts must take EL diversity seriously and design their distance learning models with it in mind.

No Evidence 19%

Good 32%

Weak 49%
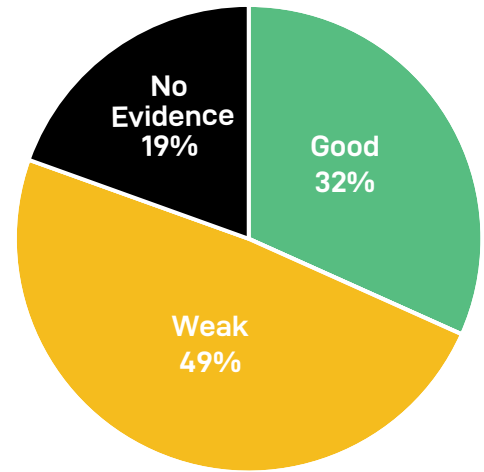
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Reviewers found that districts are struggling with this differentiation. Overall, 68 percent of LCPs were rated "Weak" or "No Evidence" in the overall area of being responsive to EL profiles. The remaining 32 were rated "Good", but no district's plan scored "Exemplary".

Many LCPs lacked any evidence that they engaged with EL diversity in their fall planning. Half of the district plans did not mention any strategies for supporting DLLs, while 37 percent did not mention supports targeted for serving newcomers, and 32 percent offered no mention of plans specific to LTELs.

	Exemplar	Good	Weak	No Evidence
Responsiveness to LTELs	10%	39%	19%	32%
Responsiveness to Newcomer Students	12%	29%	22%	37%
Responsiveness to Dual Language Learners	3%	13%	34%	50%

PROMISING PRACTICES

Districts should differentiate for the different EL profiles. LTELs in the older grades do not have the same needs as younger DLLs just beginning their education, just as newcomer students face a completely different set of challenges as they start their educational journey in a new country.

Oakland Unified School District: **Newcomer Supports.** The district has newcomer teacher leaders at nine schools with a high concentration of newcomers to provide them with small group instruction and support teachers "to embed linguistically and culturally responsive supports." At the secondary level, newcomer assistants provide instruction to small groups of students. In addition, the district has a staff of 12 newcomer social workers that help address basic needs, such as supporting newcomer families to access financial resources during the pandemic.

San Diego Unified School District: **Coaching Team to Support LTELs.** The district "integrated coaching team" analyzes data "to determine action steps needed to support Long Term English Learners" and other students at risk of becoming LTELs. San Diego also committed to providing professional development to help teachers with intervention strategies that best support this group of students.

DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure that newcomer students identified upon enrollment are provided with comprehensive support. District plans should outline specific protocols for placing and supporting newcomer students. Extended learning opportunities are significant for newcomers that might not have enrolled in public schools during the 2020-21 school year. In addition, wrap-around supports can be critical in ensuring that barriers to learning are mitigated. 📷 **2021-24 LCAP**

Ensure programs and supports tailored to meet the needs of LTELs (for Unified and high school districts). Three in four ELs in grades 6-12 are LTELs, meaning that secondary schools must consider specific strategies to meet these students' needs. As schools reopen, extended learning time for LTELs that did not enroll during the 2020-21 school year, and LTELs in transition grades will be critical to their re-engagement. 📷 **2021-24 LCAP**

Enhance support for dual language learners. Research suggests that healthy language development in English and their home language in the early years can significantly improve young DLL long-term academic trajectories. Providing this strong language development can be particularly challenging during distance learning; districts must think creatively to find ways to engage young children and expose them to robust conversations and texts. Moreover, districts should invest LCFF dollars in preschool programs (something that many districts have already done, with evidence of positive student outcomes). 📷 **2021-24 LCAP**

STATE RECOMMENDATIONS

Require the LCAP template to set differentiated growth targets and describe supports for different cohorts of ELs. ELs are not a homogeneous group and have diverse language and academic profiles. This uniqueness is important to acknowledge given that COVID has had a disparate impact on different subsets of ELs. California's funding and accountability systems should recognize this diversity, require districts to set differentiated growth targets, and describe services and professional development to support the various EL cohorts (newcomer, LTELs, DLLs). This type of differentiation is critical if districts are to close gaps in access to opportunity. 📷 **2021-24 LCAP**

Ensure that the System of Support helps districts identify the different typologies of ELs and that their needs are addressed through differentiated assistance. The System of Support should provide technical assistance to districts in analyzing their data to disaggregate the different typologies of ELs and identify which cohorts require intentional and strategic support. Moreover, in delivering differentiated assistance, the needs of LTELs, newcomers, and DLLs must be considered so that districts set strategies and goals to meet their specific needs.

There is considerable, and mounting evidence that the pandemic is imposing significant stress and even trauma on ELs and their families. This school year hasn't just been defined by the challenges teachers have faced while attempting to deliver instruction. It has also marched through a historically dangerous public health crisis and widespread economic struggles. Schools should recognize that children may be suffering in a range of ways that affect their mental health and wellbeing. Social-emotional supports are more critical now than at any other point in recent memory.
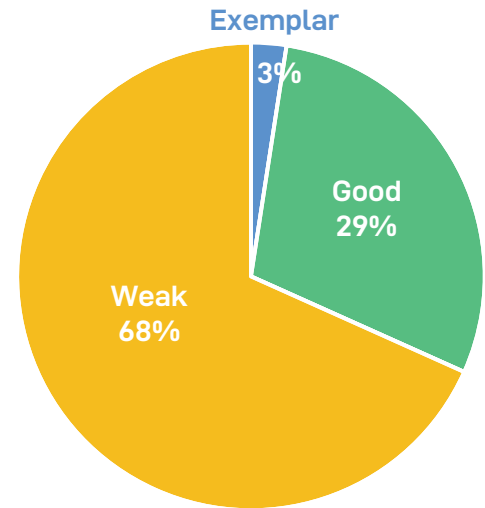

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

While all districts mentioned some level of social-emotional and mental health support for students, more than two-thirds of plans were rated as "Weak" in the overall focus area.

Nearly three-quarters of plans offered "Good" or "Exemplary" materials and strategies for teachers to incorporate social-emotional learning (SEL) in their instruction. Reviewers characterized 59 percent of districts' plans to provide social-emotional support for students as "Weak", largely because the supports were mentioned, but details about availability in the students' home languages were lacking.

Similarly, reviewers found that 66 percent of district LCPs went no further than mentioning mental health support for students, lacking information about availability in students' languages. Finally, 17 percent of districts made no mention of SEL-focused professional development opportunities for staff, and a further 56 percent mentioned these, but without details about how to consider ELs' needs.
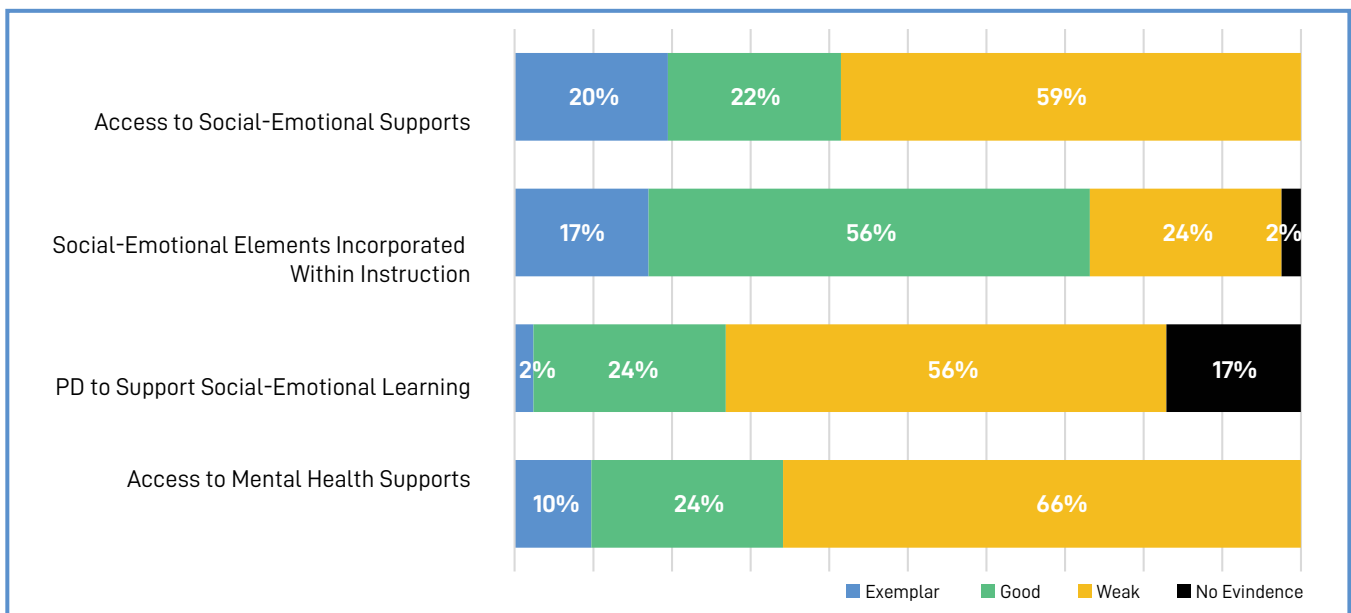
PROMISING PRACTICES

Many districts do not yet appear to have built a full range of strategies and supports that could help ELs and other students navigate the pandemic's many SEL challenges. But some are showing the way.

Glendale Unified School District: Counseling Resources for Schools and Families. To support schools with the stress imposed by the pandemic, the district brought on 33 social work and counseling interns and has two psychological service providers who are assigned to schools. In addition, the district provides virtual counseling services to students through Telehealth and develops weekly mindfulness videos that are posted on the district website and shared with teachers. To reach and support multilingual families, the district has "health parent forums, parent support groups, and parent helplines in English, Armenian, and Spanish."

West Contra Costa Unified School District: Integrated Homeroom Support During the School Day. Schools conducted social-emotional surveys of students to establish baseline data and track progress multiple times during the school year. The district also established a "homeroom" advisory period at all grade levels to serve as a central component of their distance learning plan, where "teachers will provide social-emotional learning via a variety of curricular options." Families of ELs also "receive direct counselor communications, including referrals and access to available resources," with all information available "with translation or in languages spoken at home."

DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide classified and certificated staff with professional development on strategies for promoting SEL and protecting students' mental wellbeing. All staff who work with students (including counselors and social workers) should receive professional learning opportunities focused on SEL strategies and supporting student mental health. Professional development should also help educators incorporate SEL and trauma-informed practices within instruction. 📄 **2021-24 LCAP**

Hire or assign additional staff dedicated to identifying, monitoring, and engaging vulnerable students who may be struggling with mental health or SEL challenges. Classroom teachers need additional resources to help meet the SEL and mental health needs of their students. Districts should hire dedicated staff, such as counselors and social workers, to guide teachers and engage the most vulnerable students, especially as schools reopen. These staff should also include those who are bilingual and can conduct outreach to multilingual families. 📄 **2021-24 LCAP**

STATE RECOMMENDATIONS

Support coordination of services between county health departments and schools. While districts and schools are stepping up to meet their student and family socio-emotional and mental health needs, they cannot do this alone. State efforts should support stronger coordination between school districts and county health departments in order to bring county resources directly to the populations they are intended to serve. Improved coordination can include stronger representation of district and county office of education stakeholders in county plans for delivering services related to mental health.

Support regional professional learning opportunities for district and school staff focused on trauma-informed instruction and implications for ELs. The California Department of Education has compiled a list of resources to support educators, families, and students focused on building resilience in schools. This presents an opportunity for the state to provide professional learning opportunities for district and school staff that is focused on trauma-informed instruction and implications for ELs and their families. The translation of these resources in multiple home languages is another critical need.

CONCLUSION

Last summer afforded California schools a much-needed chance to pause, take stock, and rethink their pandemic response strategies. While the ongoing uncertainty made it impossible for educators to make firm plans, the chaos of spring school closures provided districts with a clear sense of challenges they might face with fall distance learning. Given the differential, inequitable impacts the pandemic is causing historically marginalized students, particularly ELs, it was critical that they took advantage of this planning time.

This analysis clarifies that, while some districts made real strides in closing digital divides, preparing instructional materials for online distribution, and the like, much remains to be done. Districts and schools can do significantly more to support ELs, their families, and their teachers. This means ensuring that ELs have regular, daily opportunities to engage directly with language and their peers, even during distance learning. It means working with families in linguistically and culturally competent ways to ensure that they understand how they can best help their children succeed under these difficult circumstances. It means connecting families and students with additional resources that support their health and wellbeing. It also means ensuring that teachers have the training and guidance they need to secure their EL students' success.

Very little of this is simple—or easy. But these actions are, in a sense, inescapable. If districts choose to center and support ELs now in distance learning, they will find that these students will be better-positioned to succeed when the pandemic recedes, and schools return to in-person instruction. If they do not focus on these children's needs, they will find that the pandemic's inequities contributed to further opportunity and subsequent achievement gaps. If districts do not act now to support ELs in distance learning and the initial phases of in-person instruction, they will find that they have much more work to do to help these students in the future.

As districts continue to manage the COVID-19 crisis and plan for a recovery, they also have an opportunity to create a more robust system to meet EL needs. Districts are now outlining their programs and services for the next three years (through their 2021-24 LCAP). Therefore, it is critical that they do not lose this opportunity to expand and create robust programs and services to meet EL needs and close opportunity gaps. The ramifications of these decisions can impact English learners for a lifetime.

We encourage districts to look through the recommendations in this report and use the LCAP recommendations in Appendix C to close opportunity gaps for ELs.

APPENDIX A
Rubric for Review of Learning Continuity and Attendance Plans (LCPs)

The goal of this project is to evaluate how well district-approved Learning Continuity and Attendance Plans (LCPs) address the needs of English learners (ELs) across eight focus areas. The LCPs represent the stated and approved plans by school districts about how they will provide all students with access to a quality education during these challenging times. The evaluation and analysis of a sampling of LCPs from across California will highlight strengths and gaps in district planning. The forthcoming policy brief will inform school districts' decision-making and the need to prioritize ELs, some of the most vulnerable students, in their upcoming 2021-24 Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)s.

Below are the eight focus areas for this rubric, along with the LCP sections where evidence for these is more likely to be found. However, it should be noted that evidence for any focus area might be found in multiple sections.

FOCUS AREA	LCP SECTIONS
1 **Family Collaboration,** including plans for input in decision-making, accessible communications, staffing support, and opportunities for families to support instruction of their children at home.	• Stakeholder Engagement • Pupil and Family Engagement and Outreach
2 **Continuity of Learning for Equitable Access,** including a plan for access to guaranteed synchronous learning, in-person instruction, the core content, extended learning opportunities, and early childhood education for dual language learners.	• In-Person Instructional Offerings • Continuity of Instruction • Access to Devices and Connectivity • Staff Roles and Responsibilities • Supports for Pupils with Unique Needs
3 **Assessment and Progress Monitoring for Student Achievement,** including core subjects, language development, and attendance.	• Pupil Participation and Progress • Pupil Learning Loss • Effectiveness of Implemented Pupil Learning Loss Strategies • Pupil and Family Engagement and Outreach
4 **Educator Professional Development (PD), including a plan for PD to support ELs,** including a focus on differentiation, social-emotional learning (SEL), ELD, and cultural proficiency/competency.	• Distance Learning Professional Development • Staff Roles and Responsibilities
5 **English Language Development (ELD),** including designated and integrated ELD.	• Distance Learning Professional Development • Staff Roles and Responsibilities • Supports for Pupils with Unique Needs
6 **Responsiveness to EL Profiles,** including Long-Term ELs (LTELs), newcomer students, and dual-language learners.	• Supports for Pupils with Unique Needs
7 **Social-Emotional and Mental Health Support,** including ensuring access and support to incorporate within instruction.	• Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well-Being
8 **Increased or Improved Service,** as demonstrated by increases in funding for ELs proportional to the supplemental and concentration funds they generate.	• Increased or Improved Services for Foster Youth, English Learners, and Low-Income Students

The language in the rubric for each factor and rating was developed, in part, based on 1) language from our review of COVID-19 Operations Written Reports, 2) the seven EL research-aligned rubrics from The LCAP Toolkit: Using Research-based Tools to Promote Equity for English Learners produced by the Center for Equity for English Learners at Loyola Marymount University (2020), and 3) other research, such as a synthesis created by Gándara and Zarate (2014) in the publication titled Seizing the Opportunity to Narrow the Achievement Gap for English Learners: Research-based Recommendations for the Use of LCFF Funds.

Each of the focus areas includes various factors, each of which will be rated with a score ranging from Exemplary, Good, Weak, and No Evidence.

1 Family Collaboration

Districts should ensure that all communications about distance learning and COVID-19 are translated in the students' home language and provide opportunities to partner with families to support the education of their children at home and engage them in district and school decision-making. Districts should consider the specific needs of EL families in their partnership and engagement plans.

	EXEMPLARY	GOOD	WEAK	NO EVIDENCE
Stakeholder Input in Decision-Making	Plans for collecting stakeholder feedback include parents, school staff, students, ongoing meetings of the DELAC, and other parent committees. • *Mentions how feedback informed implementation of distance and in-person learning.* • *Plans consider the needs of multilingual stakeholders, including translations.*	Plans for collecting stakeholder feedback include parents, school staff, students, ongoing meetings of the DELAC, and other parent committees. • *Mentions how feedback informed implementation of distance and in-person learning.*	Plans mention collecting stakeholder feedback.	No mention of collecting stakeholder feedback.
Communication, Including Translations	Plan for oral **AND** written translation of official district policies and plans. • *Includes strategies to reach and inform multilingual families, including two-way communication **AND** bilingual staff.*	Plan for oral **OR** written translation of official district policies and plans. • *Includes strategies to reach and inform multilingual families, including two-way communication **OR** bilingual staff.*	Minimal oral or written translation of official district policies or plans. • *Mentions outreach to multilingual families.*	Does not provide oral and written translation of official district policies or plans. • *Does not mention outreach to multilingual families.*
Staffing to Support Family Engagement	Plan for hiring or staff assignments ensures the needs of EL families are met during distance and in-person learning. • *Identifies clear roles for staff to support stakeholder engagement.* • *Includes the presence of qualified bilingual staff (e.g., office staff, community representatives, parent liaisons, and other classified or certificated personnel).* • *Includes PD focused on engagement.*	Plan for hiring or staff assignments ensures the needs of EL families are met during distance and in-person learning. • *Identifies clear roles for staff to support stakeholder engagement.* • *Includes the presence of qualified bilingual staff (e.g., office staff, community representatives, parent liaisons, and other classified or certificated personnel).*	Mentions hiring, staff assignments, or staff roles to support stakeholder engagement.	No mention of hiring, staff assignments, or staff roles to support stakeholder engagement.
Opportunities to Learn Strategies to Support Instruction at Home	Provides opportunities for families to learn strategies to support instruction of their children at home, • *Delivered in the language spoken by the parents.* • *Families are proactively recruited and identified for this support.*	Provides opportunities for families to learn strategies to support instruction of their children at home. • *Delivered in the language spoken by the parents.*	Mentions opportunities for families to learn strategies to support instruction of their children at home.	No mention of opportunities for families to learn strategies to support instruction of their children at home.

2 Continuity of Learning to Ensure Equitable Access

	EXEMPLARY	GOOD	WEAK	NO EVIDENCE
Synchronous Learning Time	Guidelines and minimum time for **daily** synchronous instruction. • *Dedicated synchronous time for ELs.*	Guidelines and minimum time for **weekly** synchronous instruction • *Dedicated synchronous time for ELs.*	Mentions minimum time for weekly synchronous instruction.	Does not mention minimum time for weekly synchronous instruction.
In-Person Instruction	Plan for in-person instruction is focused on meeting the needs of the most at-risk students. • *Ensures priority for ELs.* • *Specifies how at-risk students will be selected for priority.*	Plan for in-person instruction is focused on meeting the needs of the most at-risk students. • *Ensures priority for ELs.*	Mentions plan for in-person instruction.	No mention of plan for in-person instruction.
Devices and Internet Connectivity	Description of the provision of devices and internet services for every student (one-to-one). • *Follow up to increase student access.* • *Includes specific strategies to build family capacity in the use of devices and technology.*	Description of the provision of devices and internet services for every student (one-to-one). • *Follow up to increase student access.*	Mentions the provision of devices and internet services.	No mention of the provision of devices and internet services.
Preschool Access and Alignment	Description of preschool program(s). • *Activities for DLLs in preschool, including the development of both primary language and English.* • *Explicit alignment plan between preschool and elementary grades.*	Description of preschool program(s). • *Activities for DLLs in preschool, including the development of both primary language and English.*	Mentions preschool program(s).	No mention of preschool program(s).
Extended Learning Time	Description of program(s) and activities to provide extended learning time. • *Specific to the language and academic needs of ELs.* • *Ensures that students identified for learning loss are identified and recruited for these opportunities.*	Description of program(s) and activities to provide extended learning time. • *Specific to the language and academic needs of ELs.*	Mentions program(s) and activities to provide extended learning time.	No mention of program(s) and activities to provide extended learning time.

3 Assessment and Progress Monitoring for Student Achievement

Assessments and progress monitoring systems identify the needs of ELs, and additional supports are in place to help meet those needs and close gaps in learning.

	EXEMPLARY	GOOD	WEAK	NO EVIDENCE
Achievement Monitoring in Core Subjects	Plan for monitoring of student progress. • *Includes formative assessments that inform achievement monitoring and instruction in core subjects for ELs.* • *Informs additional support aimed at addressing and preventing learning loss.*	Plan for monitoring of student progress. • *Includes formative assessments that inform achievement monitoring and instruction in core subjects for ELs.*	Mentions monitoring of student progress in core subjects.	No mention of monitoring of student progress in core subjects.
Achievement Monitoring in English Language Progress	Description of summative and formative/diagnostic assessments to measure English language progress for ELs. • *Includes support to incorporate assessments within distance and in-person instruction.*	Description of summative and formative/diagnostic assessments to measure English language progress for ELs.	Mentions assessments to document English language progress for ELs.	No mention of assessments to document English language progress for ELs.
Attendance Monitoring and Intervention	Plan for attendance monitoring and tracking. • *Includes learning recovery strategies for ELs.* • *Plan for additional supports for students that are chronically absent.*	Plan for attendance monitoring and tracking. Includes learning recovery strategies for ELs.	Mentions attendance monitoring and tracking.	No mention of attendance monitoring and tracking.
Does the plan mention how often attendance is reported? If yes, how often (daily, weekly, etc.)?				

4 Educator Professional Development

A comprehensive learning plan for educators of ELs utilizes research-based approaches to engage in professional development, and incorporates California content standards, ELD standards, the English Learner Roadmap, and cultural proficiency. Learning is collaborative with opportunities to plan units and lessons, observe and practice research-based strategies, receive feedback and coaching, and apply strategies to distance and in-person instruction.

	EXEMPLARY	GOOD	WEAK	NO EVIDENCE
Educator PD to Support ELs (in addition to ELD)	PD plan to support ELs that covers teachers and instructional support staff. • *Describes classroom-based applications to support distance and in-person learning.* • *Describes ongoing teacher collaboration.* • *Plan mentions that it covers all grades.*	PD plan to support ELs covers teachers and instructional support staff. • *Describes classroom-based applications to support distance and in-person learning.*	Mentions PD plan to support ELs for teachers OR instructional support staff.	No mention of a PD plan to support ELs for teachers or instructional support staff.
PD on Cultural Proficiency/ Competency	PD activities for certificated and classified staff address elements of cultural proficiency/competency (i.e., cross-cultural interactions, role of culture, and culturally- responsive instruction and curriculum). • *Addresses cultural differences in communication patterns and their impact on EL learning and achievement.*	PD activities for certificated and classified staff address elements of cultural proficiency/ competency (i.e., cross-cultural interactions, role of culture, and culturally-responsive instruction and curriculum).	Mentions PD activities for certificated and classified staff to address cultural proficiency/ competency.	No mention of PD activities for certificated and classified staff to address cultural proficiency/ competency
Staffing to Support EL Student Engagement	Plan for hiring or staff assignments ensures the needs of EL students are met during distance and in-person learning. Includes the presence of qualified classified or certificated bilingual staff (e.g., office staff, community representatives, parent liaisons, and other classified or certificated personnel).	Plan for hiring or staff assignments ensures the needs of EL students are met during distance and in-person learning.	Mentions hiring, staff assignments, or staff roles to support EL student engagement.	No mention of hiring, staff assignments, or staff roles to support EL student engagement.

5 English Language Development (ELD)

English Learners receive a comprehensive English Language Development (ELD) program delivered by prepared teachers, which includes time for designated ELD and for integrated ELD within content-area instruction. ELD teaching and learning is guided by the ELD standards, and ongoing educator development is planned and provided to support effective implementation.

	EXEMPLARY	GOOD	WEAK	NO EVIDENCE
Designated ELD Strategies and Materials	Evidence-based strategies that ensure designated ELD instruction **AND** standards-based ELD curricular materials.	Evidence-based strategies that ensure designated ELD instruction; **OR** standards-based ELD curricular materials.	Mentions designated ELD, but does not meet all of the criteria under "Good."	No mention of designated ELD.
Designated ELD Instructional Time	Guaranteed **daily time** for live synchronous designated ELD instruction • *Intentional asynchronous ELD support.*	Guaranteed **weekly time** for live synchronous designated ELD instruction • *Intentional asynchronous ELD support.*	Mentions designated ELD instruction but does not meet all of the criteria under "Good."	No mention of designated ELD.
Integrated ELD Strategies	Evidence-based strategies that ensure integrated ELD instruction • *Across all core subjects.* • *Intentional Integrated ELD support for synchronous and asynchronous instruction.*	Evidence-based strategies that ensure integrated ELD instruction • *In some core subjects.*	Mentions strategies that support integrated ELD instruction.	No mention of integrated ELD.
ELD Professional Development	PD plan that includes California Content and ELD standards designed for teachers and administrators of ELs. • *Includes both integrated and designated ELD.* • *For integrated ELD, PD on Content and ELD standards is simultaneous.*	PD plan that includes California Content and ELD standards designed for teachers and administrators of ELs. • *Includes both integrated and designated ELD.* • *For integrated ELD, PD on Content and ELD standards is sequential.*	Mentions PD that includes California Content and ELD standards for teachers of ELs.	No mention of PD that includes California Content and ELD standards for teachers of ELs.
If there is guaranteed time for synchronous live designated ELD instruction, how much time per day or week?				

6   Responsiveness to EL Profiles

	EXEMPLARY	GOOD	WEAK	NO EVIDENCE
Responsiveness to LTELs	Specialized ELD supports for LTELs. • *Strategies and supports to provide LTELs with access to the core curriculum (grades 6-12).* • *Educator PD includes strategies for addressing the language, assets, and needs of LTELs during distance and in-person learning.*	Specialized ELD supports for LTELs. • *Strategies and supports to provide LTELs with access to the core curriculum (grades 6-12).*	Mention of supports for LTELs.	No mention of supports for LTELs.
Responsiveness to Newcomer Students	Specialized ELD supports for newcomer students. • *Strategies and supports to provide newcomer students with access to the core curriculum (grades 6-12).* • *Educator PD includes strategies for addressing the language, assets, and needs of newcomer students during distance and in-person learning.*	Specialized ELD supports for newcomer students. • *Strategies and supports to provide newcomer students with access to the core curriculum (grades 6-12).*	Mention of supports for newcomer students.	No mention of supports for newcomer students.
Responsiveness to Dual Language Learners	Provide multilingual supports in English and the home language for students in dual-language programs. • *Educator PD includes strategies for addressing the language, assets, and needs of students in dual language programs during distance and in-person learning.*	Provide multilingual supports in English and the home language for students in dual-language programs.	Mention of supports for students in dual-language programs.	No mention of supports for students in dual language programs.

7 Social-emotional and Mental Health Support

Districts should ensure that social-emotional supports are available for all students and that such supports consider the specific needs of ELs, including making supports available in their home languages.

	EXEMPLARY	GOOD	WEAK	NO EVIDENCE
Access to Social-Emotional Supports	Plan to provide students with social-emotional supports. • *Including availability in the students' home language.* • *Identification of specific students who need and receive these supports.* • *Regular and ongoing check-ins with the most vulnerable students to determine their on-going needs.*	Plan to provide students with social-emotional supports. • *Including availability in the students' home language.*	Mentions social-emotional supports for students.	No mention of social-emotional supports for students.
Social-Emotional Elements Incorporated Within Instruction	Provides educators with curricular supports, resources, **and strategies** for being responsive to students' social-emotional needs, **specific to ELs,** within virtual and in-person instruction.	Provides educators with curricular supports and resources for being responsive to students' social-emotional needs within virtual and in-person instruction.	Mentions curricular supports and resources for being responsive to students.	No mention of curricular supports and resources for being responsive to students.
PD to Support Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)	Provide PD for educators on SEL strategies. • *Includes considerations for ELs.* • *Covers educators across all grades.*	Provides PD for educators on SEL strategies. • *Includes considerations for ELs.*	Mentions PD for educators focused on SEL strategies.	No mention of PD for educators focused on SEL strategies.
Access Mental Health Supports	Provides mental health supports to students. • *Includes trauma-informed practices that acknowledge the impact of COVID on students.* • *Ensures support in the students' home language.* • *Contains plan for identification and ongoing check-ins with the most vulnerable students to connect them to these supports.*	Provides mental health supports to students. • *Includes trauma-informed practices that acknowledge the impact of COVID on students.* • *Ensures support in the students' home language.*	Mentions mental health supports for students.	No mention of mental health supports for students.

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Given that one of the primary purposes of this report is to guide districts as they develop their 2021-24 LCAPs, below is a summary of the recommendations that districts should consider in their LCAP development process:

A Conduct outreach for ELs and their families. Districts must conduct linguistically and culturally competent outreach. All communications to families should be translated into languages they speak and understand. Ideally, staff who speak the languages of ELs and their families can support these efforts. New technology is also becoming available to facilitate two-way multilingual communication, such as new phone apps that simultaneously translate two-way communications with families.

B Include descriptions, plans, and funding for the following:

1 Family engagement, including:

- **Opportunities for family professional learning.** Families need support to understand new platforms, use online learning technology, and learn strategies to support their children's instruction at home. With students spending more of their learning time at home, districts need to continue expanding family professional learning opportunities.

- **How two-way stakeholder engagement will be conducted and evaluated.** Districts should describe the tools being used to support two-way stakeholder engagement (such as apps) and how these tools promote increased accessibility to educators and other school staff. Moreover, districts should describe how these tools' effectiveness would be measured as a way for the state to collect strategies and evidence that can inform the field.

2 Strategies to address learning loss, including:

- **Additional opportunities for students to learn, particularly ELs and other at-risk students.** To address learning gaps, districts should make plans to extend learning time now and into the next school years. To support this, districts should hire dedicated teachers for summer enrichment programs and after-school staff for extended learning focused on meeting ELs' needs, including dual language learners in the early elementary grades and LTELs in the secondary grades.

- **Supports for 1st-grade students that did not attend kindergarten in the 2021-22 school year.** A significant number of students did not enroll in kindergarten during the 2020-21 school year. This makes it likely that many students will arrive in first grade next fall in need of additional support to ensure that they are prepared to succeed. To ensure that these current opportunity gaps do not produce larger achievement gaps in the future, districts should prioritize ELs entering first grade for extended learning opportunities in the summer and expanded learning schedules in the fall.

- **Evaluation of the effectiveness of attendance strategies.** Districts should be as clear as possible about their attendance goals and the expected outcomes and effectiveness of interventions they implement to increase student attendance. Plans should include discussions that indicate how these protocols will be targeted to reach and succeed with ELs.

3 **Professional learning offerings, including:**

- **Preparation for all teachers to support ELs.** Districts should set aside—and emphasize—time for ongoing professional development and collaboration between EL teachers and teachers of other content areas to provide designated ELD and integrated ELD in all core subjects. Moreover, these efforts must be described in the LCAP as called for in the 2018 Budget Language (AB 1808), stating that LEAs "shall include specific actions in the Local Control and Accountability Plan related to, at a minimum, the language acquisition programs...provided to pupils and professional development activities specific to English learners."

- **ELD professional development provided to all teachers.** ELD cannot be delivered effectively unless all teachers receive PD and support to improve its delivery. Both teachers of ELs and content area teachers should be given professional learning opportunities on ELD strategies, including small group, one-on-one support, and time for collaboration.

- **Cultural proficiency and competencies.** Professional learning opportunities that support teachers, other school staff, and district leaders to build stronger competencies for navigating cultural and linguistic differences should be required. It is critical that these learning opportunities reach school leaders and are ongoing to ensure continued growth and reflection on practices.

- **Strategies for promoting SEL and protecting students' mental wellbeing for classified and certificated staff.** All staff who work with students (including counselors and social workers) should receive professional learning opportunities focused on SEL strategies and supporting student mental health. Professional development should also help educators incorporate SEL and trauma-informed practices within instruction.

4 **Staff hiring and placement, including:**

- **Classified and certified staff that can support family engagement.** Now, more than ever, districts must prioritize bilingual and culturally relevant/responsive staffing to support better family engagement. Moreover, it is essential to hire and build staff capacity to meet any family engagement goal. This is emphasized by a January 2021 report by the Parent Organizing Network, which mentioned that "it is insufficient to build parents' capacity without simultaneously developing the staff's ability to work with families."

- **Staff responsible for connecting with and supporting ELs.** EL student engagement is essential to their success in distance learning and after schools reopen. If districts do not hire or assign staff to be responsible for connecting with and supporting these students' academic and linguistic development, EL students and their schools will struggle. In hiring, recruitment, and retention strategies, districts should make cultural and linguistic competencies priority factors.

- **Additional staff dedicated to identifying, monitoring, and engaging vulnerable students who may be struggling with mental health or SEL challenges**. Classroom teachers need additional resources to help meet the SEL and mental health needs of their students. Districts should hire dedicated staff, such as counselors and social workers, to guide teachers and engage the most vulnerable students, especially as schools reopen. These staff should also include those who are bilingual and can conduct outreach to multilingual families.

5 **Comprehensive plan to implement and deliver a high-quality curriculum for ELs, including:**

• **Services to support the delivery of a high-quality program for ELs, as required by statute.** Designated and integrated ELD are a legal requirement, and the state LCAP template should require districts to describe these services to support the delivery of a high-quality program for ELs. Moreover, the 2018 Budget Language (AB 1808) makes this an explicit requirement, stating that LEAs "shall include specific actions in the Local Control and Accountability Plan related to, at a minimum, the language acquisition programs...provided to pupils and professional development activities specific to English learners."

• **Monitoring and assessment of ELs' progress toward learning English.** Districts must monitor and assess ELs' progress towards English language proficiency. In doing this, districts should embed formative and observational assessments and ensure that results inform instruction and interventions. It is concerning that 37 percent of districts provided minimal or no mention of how they planned to do this in their LCP.

• **Daily integrated and designated ELD for ELs.** While many districts outlined basic strategies and materials for integrated and designated ELD instruction during the pandemic, details and evidence of specific commitments are lacking. Districts must commit to delivering these essential, mandatory supports for ELs. It is crucial to make these commitments explicit, outlining how frequently and how long ELs will receive ELD services.

6 **Targeted strategies to meet the needs of various cohorts of ELs (including newcomers, LTELs, dual language learners), including:**

• **Comprehensive support for newcomer students identified upon enrollment.** District plans should outline specific protocols for placing and supporting newcomer students. Extended learning opportunities are significant for newcomers that might not have enrolled in public schools during the 2020-21 school year. In addition, wrap-around supports can be critical in ensuring that barriers to learning are mitigated.

• **Programs and supports tailored to meet the needs of LTELs (for unified and high school districts).** Three in four ELs in grades 6-12 are LTELs, meaning that secondary schools must consider specific strategies to meet these students' needs. As schools reopen, extended learning time for LTELs that did not enroll during the 2020-21 school year, and LTELs in transition grades will be critical to their re-engagement.

• **Support for Dual language learners.** Research suggests that healthy language development in English and their home language in the early years can significantly improve young DLL long-term academic trajectories. Providing this strong language development can be particularly challenging during distance learning; districts must think creatively to find ways to engage young children and expose them to robust conversations and texts. Moreover, districts should invest LCFF dollars in preschool programs (something that many districts have already done, with evidence of positive student outcomes).

• **Differentiated growth targets and supports.** ELs are not a homogeneous group and have diverse language and academic profiles. This uniqueness is important to acknowledge given that COVID has had a disparate impact on different subsets of ELs. California's funding and accountability systems should recognize this diversity and districts should set differentiated growth targets, and describe services and professional development to support the various EL cohorts (newcomer, LTELs, DLLs). This type of differentiation is critical if districts are to close gaps in access to opportunity.

It is critical that [districts] do not lose this opportunity to expand and create robust programs and services to meet English learner needs and close opportunity gaps. The ramifications of these decisions can impact ELs for a lifetime.

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