MOVING THE CALIFORNIA ENGLISH LEARNER ROADMAP FORWARD: LESSONS LEARNED FROM EL RISE!



Building Awareness, Understanding, Capacity and Connections



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Funded by the California Department of Education, Educator Workforce Investment Grant





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Dedicated to the memory of Alia Congdon

FUNDED BY

California Department of Education, Educator Workforce Investment Grant



EL RISE! ENGLISH LEARNER ROADMAP IMPLEMENTATION FOR SYSTEMIC EXCELLENCE

EL RISE! is a collaboration between Californians Together, SEAL (Sobrato Early Academic Language) and Loyola Marymount University's Center for Equity for English Learners, funded through an Educator Workforce Investment Grant from the California Department of Education to support statewide implementation of the visionary and comprehensive 2017 CA English Learner Roadmap State Board of Education policy. The goals of EL RISE! are:

- Strengthen the capacity of County Offices of Education to support LEAs in planning, professional learning, and continuous improvement processes to centralize and meet the needs of their English learners in alignment with the EL Roadmap;
- Increase educators' knowledge of the EL Roadmap and research-based practices for English learners, and understanding of the implications for multiple roles and levels of the system
- Build skills and strategies for implementing Roadmap-aligned evidence-based practices
- Facilitate the development of shared vision and priorities for local plans and implementation of the EL Roadmap leading to greater coherence
- Support the design, improvement and sustainability of strong research-based language acquisition programs and services for English learners, including dual language programs
- Develop local policies and LEA system mechanisms focused on English learner needs and aligned to the EL Roadmap



CALIFORNIANS TOGETHER was the Lead Agency for EL RISE!

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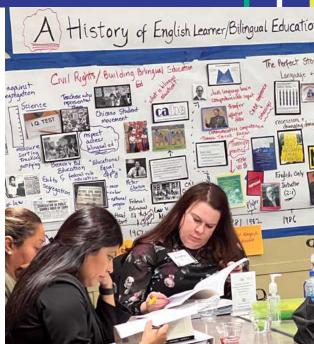
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INTRODUCTION

The California English Learner Roadmap, passed unanimously by the State Board of Education in 2017, was a sea-change from previous state EL policies.

It is aspirational, reaching far beyond the bottomline compliance mandates of previous policies and committing our state to preparing English learners with meaningful access to an intellectually rigorous education that prepares them with the language and academic skills to thrive in a multilingual diverse 21stcentury world. It is principles-based, connecting all levels of the educational system (preschool through graduation) in making meaning of and enacting an aligned implementation of four core research-based principles. It is *comprehensive*, addressing not only ELD instruction and language acquisition program models but all components of schooling that "touch" English learners and play a role in EL success. It is researchbased, holding our schools to know and implement the knowledge base about effective practices for English learners and dual language learners. It is assets-oriented, embracing the cultures and languages students bring to their education as a resource and gift for their learning and contributing to the learning of others.

The EL Roadmap is a state policy for a local control era, committed to ensuring a guarantee of equal educational access but designed to do so through guidance to inform local policy, planning, and services. And finally, the EL Roadmap was not written only for the eyes of the EL Directors and Coordinators throughout the state but explicitly calls upon all educators—preschool through graduation—to give life to its Vision, Mission, and Principles.

The EL Roadmap is a tall order! Coming on the heels of a very narrow, thin, compliance-oriented, and English-only policy that wasn't research-based, the EL Roadmap is a paradigm shift and a sea-change from what was in place for decades before. Any new state policy impacting over a million students requires some dissemination and awareness-building effort. Given its very different design and approach to policy and the 180-degree turn in content from the prior policy, the EL Roadmap would require far more.

In 2020, the California legislature funded \$10 million in 3-year Educator Workforce Investment Grants (EWIG) for EL Roadmap implementation, emphasizing awareness-building and capacity-building. One of those





grants was awarded to Californians Together for the EL RISE! (English Learner Roadmap Implementation for Systemic Excellence) partnership. The month the award was announced was also the month in which the Covid pandemic closed schools across the state and ushered in major disruption in how schooling could/would be delivered to communities hard-hit by illness and death and delivered by educators reeling from the impacts of the pandemic on their own families. It was an inopportune time to roll out a new, complex, and demanding policy.

And yet, what would transpire over those three years is a story of how "just in time" and well-informed guidance can strengthen responses, and how inspiration and aspiration can fuel change, and how good partnerships and resources can result in creative strategies that build capacity even amidst a disrupted system. Despite the pandemic, EL RISE! yields lessons essential for moving forward, speaking to the importance of paying attention to whether and how, and in what conditions this aspirational and comprehensive kind of policy can ensure educational opportunity and access for English learners.

This report, Lessons Learned from EL RISE!, summarizes key findings from the three-year statewide capacity-building effort, shares conclusions about what it will take

at all levels (state, county office, local district, school sites, and classrooms) to meaningfully implement the EL Roadmap, and offers recommendations for continuing work to give life to the promise of the California EL Roadmap policy. The lessons put forth in this publication—and the recommendations flowing from those lessons—were developed over the course of the final year of the grant (2022-2023) in reflection discussions within the EL RISE! Design Team and interviews with individual Design Team members. This report draws from responses to prompts posed to the COE EL RISE! Leads, and content shared in 34 recorded interviews with administrators, partners, and teachers throughout the state in May 2023.

This Lessons Learned from EL RISE! publication is a companion piece to several other "Moving the EL Roadmap Forward" publications emanating from the EL RISE! experience. The Bright Spots Compendium highlights five districts' experiences in implementing the EL Roadmap. The Pivotal Role of the County Offices of Education includes a case study of the Sacramento County Office of Education's infusion of the EL Roadmap cross-departmentally. That publication also features voices and lessons from lead staff in county offices of education across the state.



ABOUT EL RISE!

What is it, and what did it do?

EL RISE! is a partnership of organizations, each with a strong track record, credibility, and reputation for supporting research-based practices, services, and policies for English learners—and with particular complementary areas of expertise to bring to the table for designing and delivering high-quality professional learning, facilitation, and technical assistance as part of the EL RISE! Team. The organizations include Californians Together, SEAL (Sobrato Early Academic Language), and LMU's Center for Equity for English Learners.

A Design Team of representatives of the EL RISE! partner organizations met regularly to reflect, share emerging lessons, identify needs and emerging concerns, and build shared understanding of what was happening throughout the state with EL Roadmap implementation. The National Resource Center for Asian Languages (NRCAL), Imperial County Office of Education (SELPA), and San Diego County Office of Education provided additional partnerships to create specific professional development offerings.

The goals of the EL RISE! Educator Workforce Investment Grant (EWIG) were to:

- Increase educator knowledge of the CA English Learner Roadmap Policy
- Build skills and strategies for implementing evidence-based practices
- Support development of a shared vision and priorities for local planning
- **Promote** design and sustainability of research-based language acquisition programs, including dual language programs
- Develop local policies and LEA systems focused on EL needs
- Strengthen County Office of Education capacity to support LEAs for English learner success

The design of EL RISE! started with two fundamental commitments in the EL Roadmap policy itself—that every level of the system needs leaders and educators who are knowledgeable and responsive to the strengths and needs of ELs. And, because EL instruction touches every aspect of schooling and cuts across functional and organizational areas of a school system, the entire system must be aligned coherently to address EL needs, leverage assets, and ensure rights.

The EL Roadmap calls upon all educators to embrace responsibility for ELs across roles and levels of the system.

Therefore, the theory of action for EL RISE! was that WHEN ...

We build the capacity of all roles within LEAs to educate all typologies of ELs (newcomers, progressing, dually identified, LTELs, RFEPs, different languages, etc.) through emphasizing assets-oriented instruction, research-based language acquisition programs, culturally responsive environments, and quality linguistic and academic development across all curricular areas;

THEN ...

Teachers and paraeducators will implement effective evidence-based multilingual instructional practices that value and build upon students' cultural and linguistic experiences.

Site leaders will support the implementation of assets-based school-wide systems of multilingual instructional support and welcoming environments.

District leaders will develop and facilitate accountable systems of support to build and sustain quality teaching and meaningful access.

School boards will adopt policy aligned to the ELR and effective EL models and will hold their district systems accountable.

Parents and families will commit as full partners and leaders in the educational system.

Community members and partners will engage to develop and promote sustainable programs leading to a multiliterate California workforce.

AS A RESULT...

English learners will thrive academically, multilingually, and socio-emotionally, and attain college and career readiness for success in a global economy.... "thus ensuring a thriving future for California."

Partnering with COEs

The approach of EL RISE! was to partner with county offices of education. Working with and through a network of 20 partnering county offices of education, EL RISE! designed and delivered 44 different professional

learning modules addressing a comprehensive range of EL education issues, preschool through graduation, and explicitly focusing on a wide range of roles within the system (district leaders, site administrators, classroom teachers, counselors, school board members, IHE faculty, parents, and families). These offerings were delivered multiple times, for a total of 645 sessions facilitated across the 20 COEs. These covered preschool, elementary and secondary levels, and both dual language and English-instructed classrooms. A variety of delivery modalities addressed local contexts and needs and accommodated the realities of a Covidimpacted system. Over the course of the three-year grant, EL RISE! served educators from 547 LEAs and 18 public and private universities across the state, which included:

• Teachers (Preschool -12)	8,037
Paraprofessionals	53
Administrators (Site and District)	2,781
Support Staff	1,723
Counselors	98
School Board Members	187
• Higher Education (Faculty/Leadership)	27

An external evaluation elicited participant feedback surveys at the close of each session. Four out of five (81%) participants reported that EL RISE! increased their skills and strategies for implementing research-based practices to enact the EL Roadmap; almost all (95%) reported that the resources provided through the trainings (e.g., reflection and planning tools, case studies, "playbooks" and toolkits) were useful to them in implementing the policy.

In addition to delivering professional development selected for each region by their COE, EL RISE! selected four County Offices of Education to serve as Anchors committed to infusing a focus on the EL Roadmap across departments within their COE and to working with an Anchor LEA to comprehensively engage in capacity-building across roles and across the district. The purpose of creating these Anchors was to demonstrate more systemic implementation and to develop models and materials that might be useful throughout California. EL RISE! facilitated annual local planning and reflection sessions with teams in the Anchor LEAs and cross-departmental teams in the Anchor COEs.



KEY FINDINGS

Key Findings Summarized

Over the course of the three years working with county offices of education, districts, IHE (Institutes of Higher Education) faculty, early childhood program staff, and teachers, the EL RISE! Design Team learned a lot about what it takes to raise awareness and build capacity to implement the state's EL Roadmap policy. Several overall themes emerged across levels of the system—with important implications for our state, which are highlighted here and expanded below.

- 1 We recognize the deep implications of how the EL Roadmap policy differs from previous policy. The EL Roadmap represents a sea-change in how EL policy is approached. Compared to previous EL policies it signals a mindset paradigm shift in content, and requires more intensive meaning-making, engagement, collaboration, and planning to implement.
- We are facing a basic lack of understanding and capacity for meeting the needs and leveraging the assets of English learners. California educators' current baseline understanding of ELs is inadequate as a foundation for translating the EL Roadmap policy into action and for delivering effective instruction, programs, and services.
- 3 We know EL expertise matters. EL expertise is desperately needed throughout the system and is inadequately staffed.
- We see a lack of alignment and coherence across the system. Result: ELs and EL work remain largely siloed and marginalized, and the comprehensive vision of the EL Roadmap is a challenge to implement.
- We need to focus our leaders' and administrators' attention. When the attention of school leaders and administrators is thoroughly applied, powerful movement occurs, and ELs benefit. All our leaders' energy to achieve intersectionality, form partnerships, and direct investments in time and capacity-building must be concentrated on the four ELR Principles for multiple roles in the system. Simple to say, but not easy to do.

Key Findings Detailed

- We recognize the deep implications of how the EL Roadmap policy differs from previous policy.
 - In the first place, the English Learner Roadmap is a comprehensive policy—touching almost all aspects of schooling and therefore requiring the involvement of multiple roles, departments, and functions within the system. The ELR's wideness in scope applies at a school site, within a district, regionally in the support of county offices of education, and at the state level. By design, the policy, as described in the State Board of Education's guidance document,

"...explicitly focuses on English learners in the context of the state's efforts to improve the educational system, the quality of teaching and learning, and educational outcomes. It centers on standards, curriculum frameworks, assessment, accountability/school improvement, educator quality, early childhood/preschool, social and family support services, and parent/community involvement. Its purpose is to promote local capacity-building and continuous improvement in each of these areas and their interrelationships."

Because of this comprehensiveness, the EL Roadmap is not a policy that can be simply handed to the "State and Federal Programs Coordinator" or the "EL Director" to implement. It requires that people and roles from across the system be involved in understanding the EL Roadmap policy, make sense of how it impacts their specific sectors of work, and come together across those functions and roles to develop a shared understanding of the work and the interrelationships across the system. This is a more complex undertaking and can only occur where leadership creates the conditions and messages the importance of the shared endeavor.

• Secondly, by charge, the EL Roadmap put forth a vision and mission for California schools that leads through aspiration, reaching for the outcomes the state aspires to for English learners, and describing a set of research-based principles to guide all levels of the system towards that promise—as compared to previous prescriptive and compliance-oriented policy approaches. For educators used to focusing on the bottom line of what "we have to do to be in compliance," and seeking direct and clear definitions of required actions, the EL Roadmap is a challenge and a stark contrast—and one that requires a process of meaning-making, reflection and commitment.

The extensive reach of the EL Roadmap, together with its aspirational call-to-action, makes implementation a long-term endeavor. It cannot be achieved in one or even three years. It requires an enduring commitment of focus—challenging in a time of multiple initiatives and new initiatives raining down every year, along with urgency and impatience about showing outcomes. Thoughtful planning about priority areas for starting the work and careful design of metrics and processes for monitoring progress become essential. And creating systems and local policies aligned with the EL Roadmap is needed for sustainability.

The EL Roadmap calls upon educators to implement research-based practices embedded within the Four Principles, which requires capacity-building. Creating the infrastructure for professional learning, building alignment and coherence, and investing time and resources to support meaningful changes in practice become essential in operationalizing the EL Roadmap. The EL Roadmap policy, unlike previous policies, is explicit about calling for these system conditions that make enactment possible. So this policy seeks structural changes, not just strategy change; systems changes, and not just instructional improvements.

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This policy seeks *structural changes*, not just strategy change; systems changes, and not just instructional improvements.

The EL Roadmap is a call to action for all educators and is a state policy intended to inform all levels of the educational system. It is designed to be owned and implemented not just by the EL divisions. The guidance from the State Board of Education written into the policy reads:

"The primary intended audiences are LEAs and the county offices of education as well as other agencies that provide them with technical assistance. But every agency responsible for the education of children, including early childhood educators, institutions of higher education, credentialing bodies, and professional and advocacy organizations are also part of the intended audience... [This policy is] intended to guide all levels of the system towards a coherent and aligned set of practices, services, relationships, and approaches to teaching and learning that together create a powerful, effective, 21st-century education for our English learners. Underlying this systemic application of the Principles is the foundational understanding that simultaneously developing English learners' linguistic and academic capacities is a shared responsibility of all educators, and that all levels of the schooling system have a role to play."

• And finally, the EL Roadmap as an "assets-oriented" policy positioning students' cultures and languages as assets for their learning and reaching for bilingualism/ biliteracy as outcomes of schooling is also a mindset and paradigm shift from previous policies that were shaped during an English-Only era in California. Mindset changes take time, dialogue, and intention to bring about. Mindset change—which includes uncovering and articulating the "why" and sense of urgency—is a critical role of leadership at all levels. It requires continually revisiting and focusing on English learners and their assets.

For all of the above reasons, implementing the EL Roadmap cannot be approached as a casual notification of a new policy or an announcement of new expectations. It requires long-term investments, system changes, and committed leadership. Without those, the EL Roadmap will remain just a lofty vision on paper, only made reality in the few places where willing and committed local leaders make it happen—but out of reach for most of the 1.1 million English learners in our state.

We are facing a basic lack of understanding and capacity for meeting the needs and leveraging the assets of English learners.

Two years after passage of the CA English Learner Roadmap as the new English learner policy for the state, there was still a **widespread lack of awareness** about the EL Roadmap (even among school leaders). Many education leaders had not even heard of the EL Roadmap; others heard about it but didn't know its content or its status as state policy that required attention.

A higher-priority concern is that almost a decade after California's ELD standards had been adopted, COE staff in consultation with education leaders in their regions were still identifying the major challenge that too many teachers and administrators knew almost nothing about ELD standards or their implementation. As a result, professional learning efforts regarding the EL Roadmap needed not only to delve into the policy and the meaning of the Four Principles, but also had to backfill basic understanding about English learners, second language development, the dual language brain, assessing English learner progress, and basic requirements related to equal educational opportunity and access for English learners.

This finding resulted for EL RISE! in adding basic-level offerings about English learners, creating resources that delved into explaining rudimentary second language development and the history of English learner policy and increasing the offerings on integrated and designated ELD. In the third year of EWIG, a new "playbook" and a set of modules for IHE faculty were created by EL RISE! partner LMU CEEL to show the need to infuse an understanding of the EL Roadmap into new teachers' and administrators' preparation.

The lack of knowledge and understanding about English learner issues was particularly striking among district- and site-level administrators, who have to serve in the essential role as policy implementation leaders. EL RISE! created a five-module Administrators series and accompanying Toolkits on leading implementation of the EL Roadmap as a centerpiece of the overall capacity-building approach. Many site and district administrators have not had much professional development on English learner education in general, and the specifics of the EL Roadmap were new to them.

In becoming part of the EL RISE! network of COEs, Lead Staff from each COE were invited to participate in a Training of Trainers (TOT) approach to learning and replicating the Administrators Training. By the end of the three years, not only had EL RISE! directly served over 1,800 administrators through these modules, but multiple COEs were replicating the series to reach even more administrators. In reflecting on the three-year grant, many COE Lead Staff spoke of the importance of having created the focus and space for administrators—pointing out that building the capacity of administrators to lead an EL-focused reform was crucial for sustainability.

While the EWIG projects filled some of the professional learning needs in the state, the full magnitude of the basic foundational gaps in knowledge and understanding across the state's educational workforce speaks to the need for more intensive and widespread initiatives to build a knowledgeable and prepared workforce to leverage the assets and meet English learner students' needs preschool through graduation.

We know EL expertise matters.

LEAs, county offices of education, and the California Department of Education all have some designated staff role(s) responsible for overseeing English learner programs. These positions primarily focus on the implementation and use (including managing and monitoring) of federal funding and mandates related to equal education opportunity—and sometimes funded almost exclusively by federal program funds. The people filling these positions have to become knowledgeable about English learner programs and services, including curriculum and instruction, policies, and research. However, because the focus is primarily on compliance, issues of quality beyond bottom-line compliance—and any initiatives that are not subject to monitoring and accountability—often end up receiving little attention.

English learner expertise is needed at all levels of the system, but it is not always adequately staffed or leveraged. There is often turnover in EL positions at the site, district, and COE levels, and it is common to have new people in key EL positions who lack the expertise or background knowledge to lead this work. Having EL-related responsibilities piled onto many other duties is equally common. Many times, staff with EL expertise are siloed and even marginalized without access to executive leadership. They are not granted a seat at the table where major functional areas, such as data and assessment, accountability, and continuous improvement impact English learners.



Where the voice speaking to and speaking for EL Roadmap implementation is located only within the EL staff, it is challenging to leverage attention to the policy and difficult to engage those aspects of the schooling system called upon in the policy. Furthermore, implementation of the EL Roadmap requires a level of staffing that few sites, districts, or county offices have the bandwidth to provide. At a time when up to one-sixth of California's students are English learners, EL expertise to lead and inform programs and services remains inadequate. Because of deficient investment in staff levels and expertise, English learners across the state continue to experience insufficient access to quality schooling.

Part of the theory of action for the EL RISE! EWIG initiative was to build the capacity of the county offices of education to be able to support the implementation of the EL Roadmap. However, it could not simply be a matter of offering TOTs and the materials to enable them to replicate professional learning because staff often didn't have the time or bandwidth to take it on. Moreover, those many staff who were newer to the position did not feel they had adequate expertise to deliver the content—and in many cases were being shifted around to new positions where preparation in EL Roadmap implementation wasn't considered relevant to their role. It was not unusual for new people who had missed the capacity-building opportunity to be placed into the EL positions.

In addition, staff's willingness to be moved out of the EL positions was sometimes influenced by the lower status of that role—a reflection of the marginalization of English learners within the overall system. Even at the California Department of Education, the Multilingual Division staff are funded almost entirely with federal Title III funds. The EL Roadmap is a state policy and needs staff dedicated to the intense state-level effort required to see it implemented and the vision enacted. This level of effort and focus cannot simply be piled on top of obligations related to federal policy. In recognition of the level of effort and expertise needed to respond to English learners and to implement the EL Roadmap, some of the Anchor COEs and Anchor LEAs, as well as those districts in the state in which leadership has taken the EL Roadmap to heart, have ended up adding EL positions as the understanding of the work involved in embracing the vision and principles of the Roadmap developed.

The implications for implementing the EL Roadmap are many.

- *First,* there is a need for specific entry-level professional learning for staff newly placed into responsibility for EL programs and services.
- **Second,** across the levels of the educational system, EL staffing levels have to be adequate to embrace

Implementing the EL Roadmap cannot be approached as a casual notification of a new policy. It requires long-term investments, system changes, and committed leadership. Without those, the EL Roadmap will remain just a lofty vision on paper - out of reach for most of the 1.1 million English learners in our state.

issues of California policy like the EL Roadmap as well as federal compliance.

- *Third,* attention to the status and levels of EL positions should reflect a sense of priority and urgency for the system.
- Fourth, EL positions should have access to the executive tier of leadership and be structured to participate with key departments and staff roles that greatly impact English learner students.

In summary, we know EL expertise matters—and it must be built, supported, and sustained.

We see a lack of alignment and coherence across the system.

The EL Roadmap is comprehensive, and its implementation requires cross-department/crossfunctional collaboration. It is a state policy in a local control era, requiring intersectionality and alignment among the levels of the system from state to regional to local to site. In the three years of the EL RISE! EWIG work, the absence of this collaboration and alignment related to implementing the EL Roadmap was evident. Between pandemic-related investments in recovery, the rollout of Transitional Kindergarten (TK), and the building of an early education workforce for the state's commitment to early education, a focus on community schools, concerns about literacy, the ongoing LCAP and continuous improvement processes, etc., schools have been engaged in developing a plethora of required plans for a large number of state initiatives—very few of them even referencing the EL Roadmap.

This avalanche buried the incentives and narrowed the bandwidth available for district and site leaders to pay attention to the EL Roadmap. The system-wide tsunami flooded out attempts to provide a sense of alignment and coherence from the state level about where and how—and whether—the EL Roadmap is relevant to serving English learners in all of those other arenas. It is resulting instead in a roll out of major initiatives that may fail to serve English learners with the coherent, research-based, assets-oriented promise the EL Roadmap would provide.

Within EL RISE! professional learning for school leaders, administrators regularly expressed surprise as they began to understand the reach and intent of the EL Roadmap and its relevance to all of their other planning.

Connecting the dots to other state and district initiatives was important as they considered strategies for engaging their staff and communities and creating local coherence for English learners. However, in the absence of a clear state-level voice echoing through state initiatives utilizing the EL Roadmap Policy, Vision, and Principles as the framework for educating English learners, it becomes choice and chance whether alignment and coherence will occur. This is particularly true in the absence of activating traditional state level mechanisms to impact local level change (e.g., state monitoring, state active voice, state level centering of EL Roadmap and ELs). Too many local district leaders don't pay attention without the state's clear voice on expectations for EL Roadmap implementation.

5 We need to focus our leaders' and administrators' attention.

There are those educational leaders in California for whom the English Learner Roadmap ignites excitement, hope, and a sense of possibility after experiencing the harms of a more deficit-oriented, narrow, and English-Only era in California education. When they hear about the EL Roadmap's assets-orientation, comprehensive reach, and systems emphasis, these leaders engage their staff, teachers, and community in learning about and making meaning of the Vision and Principles as a basis for planning. Utilizing the resources of EL RISE!, they weave the EL Roadmap into LCAP deliberations, revise EL Master Plans, and create EL Roadmap-aligned strategic goals for ELs. These leaders exemplify what the EL Roadmap had intended.

Representing this work, five districts are highlighted in the EL RISE! publication, *Moving the EL Roadmap Forward: A Compendium of District Bright Spots.* Although they differ and each of those districts made the journey their own by selecting specific priorities and choosing resources that supported their work on those priorities, the common threads are:

- The sense of urgency and importance communicated by top leadership
- The commitment of time and resources to the process of collaboratively and inclusively creating shared understanding and arriving at priorities for implementation
- A significant investment in professional learning for multiple roles, leveraging partnerships with external sources of EL expertise, and
- Creating new structures and system mechanisms to center English learners throughout and across the district.

Across the board, these districts used professional learning resources, tools, and technical assistance to help build their capacity to implement the EL Roadmap meaningfully. Most satisfying have been the indicators of improvement in EL outcomes—increased redesignation, progress toward English proficiency, better grades and increased course passage, and family engagement. This is what the EL Roadmap was designed to make happen. This is what the state's investment in professional learning through the EWIG dollars was meant to support. It makes a difference.



Moving the EL Roadmap Forward Publications:

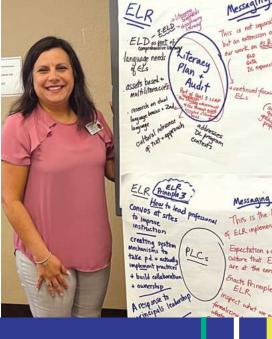
For a picture of comprehensive implementation of the EL Roadmap in county offices of education and districts, see the following publications from EL RISE!

Moving the English Learner Roadmap Forward: The Pivotal Role of County Offices of Education (A Sacramento County Office of Education Case Study and Lessons Learned Throughout the State of California), Californians Together: Long Beach.

Bright Spots: Five Districts Move the English Learner Roadmap Forward—a compendium of successful implementation, Californians Together: Long Beach.







LESSONS LEARNED: DESIGNING AND DELIVERING CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR ELR IMPLEMENTATION

For three years, EL RISE! designed and delivered capacity-building across the state, in the midst of a disruptive and harmful pandemic. The basic commitment was to offer EL Roadmap learning and strategies that in both content and delivery was responsive and supportive given the conditions and needs in the field. The approach to building capacity of LEAs across California was to deliver assets-oriented, responsive, high-quality instruction and meaningful access for ELs with the following characteristics:

- **Role-specific** focus on the EL Roadmap Four Principles is applied to the responsibilities of various roles P-12 (teachers, paraprofessionals, counselors, site and district leadership, and others).
- **Professional learning content is aligned across multiple roles** within the system to build coherence and critical capacity to enact the Vision and Principles of the ELR at the classroom, school site, district, and county office of education levels.
- The content and delivery of professional learning is responsive to local needs and contexts.
- Specific attention is paid to varied language acquisition program models and pathways P-12, including Designated and Integrated ELD across content areas, Dual Language, and developmental one-way/immersion bilingual programs.
- Particular attention is devoted to ensuring **ELs' diversity,** including DLLs (preschool), LTELs, newcomers, immigrant/refugees, dually-identified students, and different language/cultural groups.
- An aligned network across COEs statewide shares resources and discusses emerging issues, adding to efficiency, coherence, and alignment.
- **Combined emphasis** is placed on building capacity to *strengthen systems* that support effective EL schooling (e.g., leadership development, local LEA and site planning processes, EL Master Plan development, EL responsive LCAPs, and coaching) and *direct professional learning* for multiple roles that are focused on implementing effective practices tailored to support various stages of implementation.

In the course of designing and delivering this professional learning, EL RISE! gained knowledge about professional learning and capacity-building support for educators, district teams, and others to support the implementation of the EL Roadmap. These findings and conclusions are discussed below.

Findings Informing Professional Learning Design & Delivery

There is hunger for learning to better serve ELs, but significant challenges in accessing and delivering professional learning opportunities requires creativity.

Given the pandemic, there was concern that overwhelmed educators in a disrupted system would not sign up for professional development related to a new policy. However, both COE staff and EL RISE! staff were surprised at the response in the first year, and then at the increased participation and demand in the subsequent two years of the grant. What we found was a clear interest and hunger for professional learning and capacity-building regarding English learners. People wanted professional learning, and then they wanted more. As their thirst for knowledge grew, demand increased. The demand expanded even beyond the EL RISE! network of 20 COEs. The pivot to more online offerings and virtual platforms necessitated by the pandemic made it possible to accommodate this increased demand throughout the state. However, serious systemic challenges to participation remained.

- The lack of substitute teachers made the possibility of full release days for teachers unfeasible.
- It became necessary to break modules into shorter chunks of time and schedule them after school which is not available to all teachers.
- While online delivery made it conceivable for people to learn in-person without risking exposure to viruses and having to travel to a central occasion, it required developing online delivery strategies that could maximize engagement and responsiveness across screens.

EL RISE! partners responded to the strong and increased felt-need for professional learning among educators in the field of serving English learners in this new context. Creating mechanisms for educators to access resources from a missed session became essential, as sickness and emergency demands on staff made continuous engagement in a series of modules challenging. Instituting communities of practice microsites with materials and videotaped sessions that could be viewed later became important design elements for maximum flexibility. Those needed to be married with variety of delivery methods,

including a pivot to online professional learning, a mix of synchronous and non-synchronous sessions, and follow-up practice communities shaped around local schedules. By reshaping professional learning offerings around the needs of the field, the EL RISE! partners paved new pathways for moving the EL Roadmap forward – but the local work of building shared vision, planning for alignment and collaborative practices remained a challenge left for local leadership to manage.

The provision of Toolkits and materials as accompaniments to training enhanced implementation and helped to make the EL Roadmap operational.

In addition to attending high-quality online trainings, participants and COE staff praised the tools, materials, and resources that accompanied the professional learning. The capacity-building approach was deliberately bolstered through the design of Toolkits, Playbooks, and other materials that could be used beyond the trainings. These were designed to be an ongoing resource, add depth to what was presented in sessions, and become mechanisms that administrators could use back in their districts and sites to engage others in learning about the EL Roadmap and its application to their own settings. The development of Toolkits and Playbooks required a significant investment of resources, made possible by additional funding beyond the EWIG monies—including contributions from private philanthropy.

To supplement the printed materials and tools from EL RISE! professional development offerings, microsites were created to house all materials (including PowerPoints, resource materials, video recordings, etc.). COE staff and district/site leadership can use this wealth of materials throughout their work to make concrete what it means to implement the Four ELR Principles. When asked about what was useful and what worked by way of building COE capacity to support EL Roadmap implementation, respondents named the quality and range of materials and Toolkits as high on their lists.

The partnership between county offices of education, and the EL RISE! external partners was a key element in the reach and impact of the professional learning and capacity-building.

County offices of education have a specific role in California's system of education. They are a formal

arm of the state's education system that reaches the regional and local levels—providing support for the implementation of state policy and direction. This hub-spoke relationship positions them at a crucial intersection between LEAs and the state. Furthermore, in a local control era, COEs have become essential sources of expertise and support for local policy and practice. Through this positionality, COEs have a welldeveloped understanding of the local context and the established relationships within and among the districts in their region. COE staff know the districts leaders and regularly interact with schools and district offices on a myriad of educational issues. They can almost feel the heartbeats of the communities served by their county's schools. These relationships form the bedrock for capacity-building and for disseminating and supporting the implementation of new policies.

As a result of the EL RISE! grant, COEs were invited to be in the best place to know (listen, hear, and understand) what kind of capacity-building their districts wanted and needed. The COEs could ask EL RISE! for select topics and request the delivery approach that would work for their districts and educators. Furthermore, COEs could provide essential feedback and follow-up. Furthermore, COEs are a fixed part of the system and region, in place long after any specific professional development has come and gone. They are thereby positioned to follow up on implementation and provide ongoing networks and

EL RISE! yields lessons
essential for moving forward,
speaking to the importance
of paying attention to
whether and how, and in what
conditions this aspirational
and comprehensive kind of
policy can ensure educational
opportunity and access for
English learners.

communities of practice. The support of these networks and CoPs became an important part of the approach to EL Roadmap implementation. COE staff seldom, however, have the bandwidth or specific expertise to invest in creating new research-based professional learning.

External providers of EL professional development on their own can design and provide excellent professional learning, but when it's done, they leave. Implementation is a far longer process than a professional learning series, and the presence of a partner on the ground in the region to support that longer process makes a huge difference. However, the EL RISE! team was able to design and deliver responsive, research-based, well-designed professional learning. This relationship with external EL experts and professional development partners was particularly significant for the smaller COEs where the EL staff do not have the bandwidth to design or provide a wide variety of professional learning offerings.

Alignment of professional learning across roles enhances implementation. Smaller LEAs struggle with this.

As a comprehensive policy, the EL Roadmap addresses the importance of multiple roles (e.g., site and district administrators, classroom teachers, instructional coaches, counselors, paraprofessionals, and school board members) in implementing effective education for English learners. Therefore, professional learning must be available for these various roles, with a shared focus and aligned set of messages addressing the particular functions of each position. Some COEs selected to make only a few EL RISE! offerings available - focusing on just one role (e.g., classroom teachers). However, where the COE elected to host and actively recruit multiple roles to EL RISE! professional learning offerings aligned around the same focus, the impact on implementation was greater. For example, an Administrators Institute on understanding quality ELD accompanying a strand of Teacher Institutes on planning and implementing ELD resulted in more implementation. And, in the Anchor LEAs—where multiple offerings were made available and attended by a critical mass of various roles—implementation of the EL Roadmap was even more noticeable.

An aligned, multilayered approach targeted different

roles and levels of the system. Because the EL Roadmap is so comprehensive, requiring systemic alignment and multiple aspects of the school system to be engaged in implementation, meaningful change relies on **building critical mass and building the capacity of multiple roles.** EL RISE! made this an expected feature of Anchor LEAs but found it a challenge in most other cases to engage participation of that critical mass and layered roles in the system.

We need local planning support in addition to role-specific professional learning.

A capacity-building approach generally focuses on building the understanding, skills, and strategies of specific roles within the schooling system. However, the English Learner Roadmap requires collaborative meaning-making and planning at the site and district levels. In addition to professional development, EL RISE! provided the option of facilitation for local planning support emphasizing the engagement of district cross-role and leadership teams in reflection, dialogue, data review, and planning for implementation of the EL Roadmap. This local planning activity ended up as particularly important in supporting selection of priority areas for focus and strategy – essential given the potentially overwhelming comprehensiveness of the EL Roadmap.

A network of peers is important support for teachers executing new strategies, administrators leading EL Roadmap enactment, and district and COE EL staff supporting implementation.

Within many districts and COEs, particularly the smaller ones, there is just one designated person responsible for English learner programs and services—and usually, much of that role is driven by responsibilities related to federal and state funding, accountability, and programs. It can be a lonely position. For EL Directors/Managers and EL staff people in COEs and districts, a network of their peers offered critical access to new materials, resources, ideas, and support.

But even in larger districts and COEs with more EL staffing, networking with others served as a definite source of encouragement. The state's Bilingual Coordinators Network builds this kind of support into the system for county offices and larger districts. Still,



The English Learner Roadmap is California's official state policy. It is research-based, aspirational, comprehensive, and board-adopted..... Yet the road to enacting its promise has not yet been adequately scoped or supported.

our evaluation and feedback surveys said it was crucial to have the additional opportunity to network related to the task of building awareness and capacity about the EL Roadmap. The importance of networks was also identified as key to the COE's role in supporting regional and local implementation. By creating regional networks, COE Leads spoke of the power of districts being able to learn from and inspire each other. Because the EL Roadmap is such a different kind of policy from what LEAs have faced with other EL policies, learning what it means to implement the Principles from others in similar positions was found to improve uptake.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The English Learner Roadmap is California's official state policy. It is research-based, aspirational, comprehensive, and board-adopted. The English Learner Roadmap is based upon an assets paradigm embracing the cultures and languages of our students. Yet the road to enacting its promise has not yet been adequately scoped or supported. The EL Roadmap threatens to become solely a policy for those students fortunate enough to land in a district with leaders who are not just able but, more importantly, "willing"—leaving behind hundreds of thousands of English learners and leaving intact a system that marginalizes and continues to relegate ELs to partial access and inadequate schooling. Building the capacity and the will to enact the Four Principles of the EL Roadmap throughout California and give life to the Promise of the Roadmap's Vision for the 1.1 million English learners in the state requires action on multiple levels.

The English Learner Roadmap is a Call to Action

To California's Leaders and Institutions

The EL Roadmap is a state policy intended to provide coherent alignment and guidance for designing and delivering effective English learner programs and services at the local level. But without state-level focus, coherence and alignment, making it happen at the local level throughout California is unlikely. The state needs to shore up the foundation around its programs and initiatives that filter across and down state-level divisions for English learner programs to succeed everywhere. We call upon California's leaders to:

- *Message* the urgency of enacting this state policy and build intersectionality, alignment, and coherence across state initiatives and functions utilizing the framework of the Four Principles of the EL Roadmap.
- *Invigorate* a strong communications strategy in and through CDE that the EL Roadmap is state policy and is the basic framework for ensuring the state's 1.1 million English learners access and equal opportunity throughout the educational system.
- **Develop** an internal cross-departmental process within CDE and CCEE for creating a shared understanding of the EL Roadmap and its implications and relevance to departments and functions beyond Multilingual services—including continuous improvement, accountability, differentiated assistance, equity, early childhood education, workforce development, etc.—and enact and model Principles 3 and 4 at the state level!
- **Ensure** the integration of the English Learner Roadmap policy into state monitoring, differentiated assistance, and accountability efforts—including LCAP alignment, integration into the FPM process, etc.
- *Enact* legislation requiring that LEAs develop English Learner Roadmap-aligned EL/ML Master Plans that surpass the "beyond minimal compliance" focus and respond to the aspirational, principles-based call of the EL Roadmap. Such legislation should direct the CDE to develop a state plan for the implementation of the EL Roadmap.
- **Provide** resources and recognize the need for regional and local staffing with EL expertise in leading capacity-building and implementation of the EL Roadmap. These resources would enable COEs and LEAs to incorporate additional staff positions/time, resources, and support to realize the EL Roadmap through adequate investments in professional learning, local planning, and EL expertise staffing.
- **Design and deliver** professional learning for the RELs on implementation of the EL Roadmap, sharing the resources now available and infusing the EL Roadmap into regional support.
- **Review** major education/schooling initiatives for their intersectionality and cross-referencing to the EL Roadmap—utilizing it as the state's framework for addressing ELs.
- Embed the English Learner Roadmap into the state's narrative about equity-focused education.
- **Adopt** a DLL/EL centered P3 Framework aligned to the EL Roadmap to guide the expansion of preschool and Transitional Kindergarten.

To California's Legislature

We ask the California Legislature to use and refer to the EL Roadmap as the basic framework for EL education in California, referencing the Principles, seeking coherence and alignment of new initiatives with the EL Roadmap and ensuring adequate investments of funding for its implementation.

- Provide resources for state-funded staff within CDE to lead the work of EL Roadmap implementation, sponsor convenings, lead the development of a state plan for enactment, and facilitate and model the cross-divisional work for its successful accomplishment at all levels of the system.
- Enact legislation requiring that LEAs develop EL Roadmapaligned EL/ML Master Plans that are "beyond a minimal compliance" focus and respond to the aspirational, principles-based call of the EL Roadmap, and directing the CDE to develop a state plan for implementation of the EL Roadmap.
- Recognize the need and provide resources for regional and local staffing with EL expertise charged with leading capacity-building and implementation of the EL Roadmap. This would enable COEs and LEAs to incorporate additional staff positions/time, resources, and support to realize the EL Roadmap through adequate investments in professional learning, local planning, and EL expertise staffing.

To County Offices of Education

We call upon our county offices of education to infuse the EL Roadmap throughout the functions and roles, and to invest in the expertise and staffing needed to build coherent support for LEAs to implement the aspirational and comprehensive Roadmap vision. Building supports includes:

- Engaging in cross-departmental reflection, meaningmaking and planning to apply the Four Principles within the work of each aspect of the county office of education that impacts LEAs and educators working with English learners.
- Ensuring adequate *EL expertise* within the staffing structure of the county office of education so the assets of ELs can be leveraged and needs addressed.
- Supporting/providing professional learning and communities of practice for multiple roles within the schooling system (e.g., administrators, counselors, teachers, coaches, parents) on understanding EL assets and needs, on the ELD standards and implementation of both Designated and Integrated ELD, on starting and building pathway programs to biliteracy, and on strategies

for implementing the EL Roadmap.

 Monitoring and supporting the integration of the English Learner Roadmap policy related to state monitoring, differentiated assistance, and accountability efforts including LCAP alignment.

To District Leaders and Site Leaders

We ask our district and site leaders to voice urgency and commitment toward leveraging the assets of their EL/ML students and families and ensure meaningful access to, and investment in programs and services that build staff capacity across the system, with the ultimate goal of implementing the Principles of the EL roadmap. This includes:

- **Developing** local vision statements, policies, and goals for ELs aligned to the EL Roadmap.
- Utilizing the EL Roadmap Principles in the process of developing the LCAP.
- **Developing** EL Roadmap-aligned Master Plans for ELs, DLLs, and MLs.
- Engaging leadership across the district in collaborative meaning-making of the EL Roadmap Principles and their implications and application to site and district practices.
- *Investing* in professional learning and building an infrastructure of professional learning support (e.g., coaching, instructional rounds, collaborative planning time) focusing on instructional and curricular strategies for implementing the Principles of the EL Roadmap.

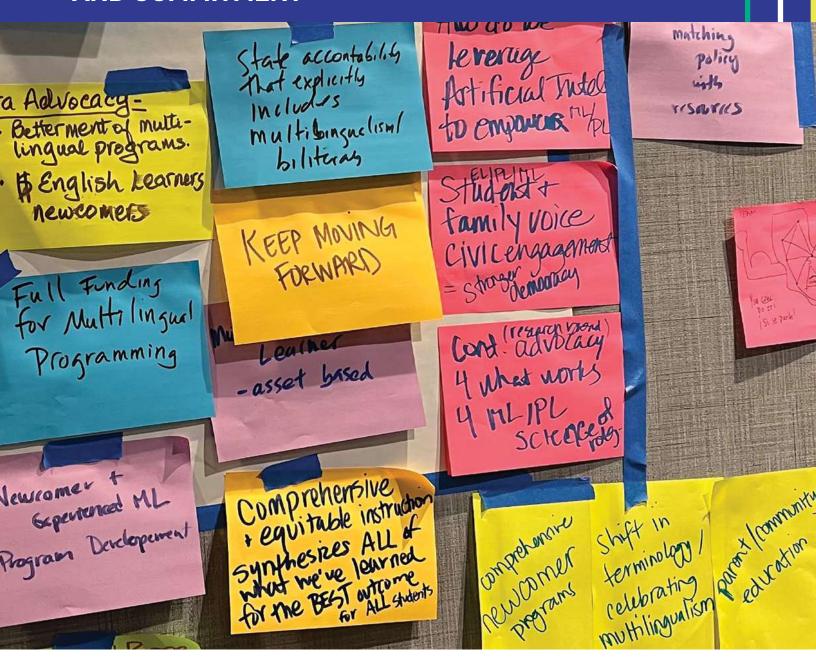
To the Technical Assistance sector, Professional Associations, and Advocacy Organizations

We call upon the Technical Assistance sector, Professional Associations, and Advocacy organizations to embrace the EL Roadmap, use their reach to build awareness and urgency, and excitement about enacting the EL Roadmap among the educators in California, and infuse the Vision and Principles of the EL Roadmap into their agendas for equity-based school improvement in California.

To the Philanthropic Sector

We ask the philanthropic sector to use and refer to the EL Roadmap in EL and equity-focused initiatives as the basic framework for EL education in California and provide investments of funding related to EL Roadmap implementation.

TOGETHER... WITH SERIOUS INTENT AND COMMITMENT



The EL Roadmap Vision and Principles represent a powerful framework.

But without investment in capacity learning, without building intersectionality and infusing it throughout the system, and without accountability, the structure can only bear so much fruit. Let's not waste the possibility and promise of this remarkable policy. Let's create the conditions to support the implementation of this visionary state policy. To close gaps for ELs, to build a coherent and effective system of education for ELs, and to realize the promise of the Principles of the EL Roadmap for the 1.1 million English learners in California requires all of us. It is time to create the schooling system ELs need and deserve.

RESOURCES

Tools and Publications developed and used for EL RISE!

From EL RISE! Partner LMU Center for Equity for English Learners

- The English Learner Master Plan Playbook (LMU-CEEL)
 - The LCAP Toolkit: Using research-based tools to promote equity for English Learners (LMU-CEEL)
 - The English Learner Roadmap Toolkit for Institutes of Higher Education (LMU-CEEL)

From EL RISE! Partner Californians Together

- California EL Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators, Volume I: Leading Implementation
- California EL Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators, Volume 2: Creating Assets-Oriented & Student Responsive Schools
- California EL Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators, Volume 3: Ensuring the Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access for English Learners
- California EL Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators, Volume 4: System Conditions for Implementation
- California EL Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators, Volume 5: Aligning and Articulating Practices Across the System
- California English Learner Roadmap: An Elementary School Teacher Toolkit
- California English Learner Roadmap: A Middle School Teacher Toolkit
- California English Learner Roadmap: A High School Teacher Toolkit
- California English Learner Roadmap: A Reflection Tool for County Offices of Education

EL RISE! County Offices of Education and Anchor LEAs

ANCHOR LEAS

Cutler-Orosi Unified School District EL Monte Union High School District Elk Grove Unified School District Montebello Unified School District Visalia Unified School District Woodland Joint Unified School District

ANCHOR COUNTY OFFICES OF EDUCATION

Los Angeles County Office of Education Tulare County Office of Education Sacramento County Office of Education Yolo County Office of Education

PARTNERING COUNTY OFFICES OF EDUCATION

Butte County Office of Education Contra Costa County Office of Education **Butte County Office of Education** Imperial County Office of Education Kern County Office of Education King County Office of Education Merced County Office of Education Orange County Office of Education Riverside County Office of Education San Mateo County Office of Education San Diego County Office of Education San Joaquin County Office of Education Santa Clara County Office of Education Santa Cruz County Office of Education Solano County Office of Education Stanislaus County Office of Education Ventura County Office of Education

EL RISE! Professional Learning Resources: Offerings and Materials

Note: Blue are tools and materials; Black are professional development offerings

EL RISE! Partner Organization	EL RISE! Offering/Resource
CalTog	Asset-based Content and Language Instruction for Multilingual Learners in the Secondary Grades Institute
CalTog	Californian EL Roadmap Implementation Guides and Toolkits for Administrators (volumes 1 - 5)
CalTog	Californians Together EL Roadmap Teacher Toolkits (elementary, middle, high)
CalTog	CalTog Fall 2020 Webinars - Administrator Series
SEAL	Centralizing the needs of English Learners: English Language Development (ELD) for Elementary Teachers and Administrators Institute
CSET/UL	Co-Constructing Educator Capacity to Meet the Needs of English Learners for Integrated ELD Math and Designated ELD Educators
CSET/UL	Co-Constructing Educator Capacity to Meet the Needs of English Learners Integrated ELD English Language Arts and Designated ELD Educators
CalTog	County Office Internal Cross Division
SEAL	Creating Conditions for Dual Language Learners to Thrive In Early Education
SDCOE	Developing an English learner Data Dashboard, Systems and Culture
CalTog	Developing and Strengthening Programs and Services to Meet the Needs of Long-Term English Learners
CalTog	Developing and Strengthening Programs and Services to Meet the Needs of Newcomers
SEAL	Dual Language Pedagogy Institute for Elementary Administrators/Leaders
SEAL	Dual Language Pedagogy Institute for Elementary Teachers
SEAL	ELD for Elementary Teachers and Administrators Institute
SEAL	Elementary Coaching to Enact the English Learner Roadmap
SEAL	Elementary Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: Creating the Conditions for English learners to Thrive
SEAL	Elementary English Learner Roadmap 101 Family Webinar-Trainer of Trainer Model
CEEL	English Learner Master Plan Institute: Designing local policy aligned to the California English Learner Roadmap
CEEL	English Learner Master Plan Playbook developed by EL RISE! partner Center for Equity for English Learners (LMU)
SEAL	English Learner Roadmap 101 for School Board Members
CEEL	English Learner Roadmap Aligned LCAP Toolkit Workshop: Using Research-Based Tools to Promote Equity for English Learners
Imperial SELPA	English Learners with Disabilities Community of Practice
CalTog	Harnessing the Power of Instructional Rounds
CEEL	Higher Education Institute: (Re)designing Educator Preparation Focused On Equity For English Learners/ Multilingual students
CalTog	Honoring the Principal's Role in Implementation of the English Learner Roadmap Policy – A Statewide Convening
CDE	Improving Education for Multilingual and English Learner Students: Research to Practice

EL RISE! Partner Organization	EL RISE! Offering/Resource
Imperial SELPA	Improving Outcomes for English Learners with Disabilities
CalTog	Integrated and Designated ELD Strand for Secondary Teachers
SEAL	Integrated and Designated ELD: Elementary Teacher as a Language Coach
CalTog	Leading School Improvements with English learners at the Heart: The ELR for Administrators Strand of Five Modules
SEAL	Leveraging Elementary Academic Texts to Deepen Language Proficiency
CalTog	Local Planning for EL Roadmap Implementation for school/site district teams
CalTog	Meeting the Unique Needs of Newcomers in the Classroom
NRCAL	NRCAL Institute for English Learners / Emergent Bilinguals The California English Learner Roadmap Policy in Action
SDCOE	Orientation to the CA English Learner Roadmap
CalTog	Partnership with Anchor COE
CalTog	Preparing to Lead Integrated and Designated ELD (for Administrators)
SEAL	SEAL Fall 2020 Webinars - Teacher Series
CalTog	Structuring District and School Site Programs to meet the needs of Newcomer Students
SEAL	Summer Learning Lab (SEAL)
CalTog	Superintendents Forums
CalTog	The California English Learner Roadmap Reflection Tool for County Offices of Education
SEAL	The English Learner Roadmap Dual Language Elementary Teacher Strand Modules 1 - 5
SEAL	The English Learner Roadmap Elementary Teacher Strand Modules 1 - 5
CEEL	The English Learner Roadmap Toolkit for Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs)
CEEL	The LCAP Toolkit: Using research-based tools to ensure equity for English Learners
NRCAL	The National Resource Center for Asian Languages Webinar on implementing the EL Roadmap
SEAL	Upper Elementary (Grades 4-6) Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: Creating the Conditions to Prevent LTELS

CalTog = Californians Together

SEAL = Sobrato Early Academic Language

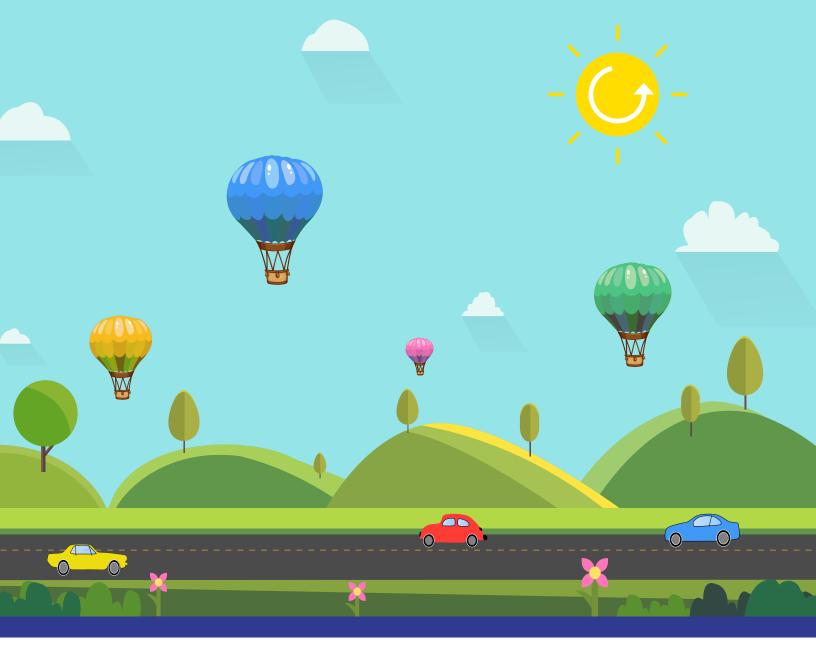
CEEL = Center for Equity for English Learners (Loyola Marymount University)

NRCAL = National Resource Center for Asian Languages

SDCOE = San Diego County Office of Education

CSET/UL = Center to Support Excellence in Teaching/Understanding Language

Imperial SELPA = Imperial County Office of Education





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