

MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION POLICY PARTNERS



California Budget
& Policy Center



CALIFORNIANS
TOGETHER
CHAMPIONING THE SUCCESS
OF ENGLISH LEARNERS



Loyola Marymount University
Center for Equity for
English Learners



Dear Partners,

As a collective of organizations and advocates committed to advancing educational equity and opportunity for California's almost one million English learner students and 1.5 million dual language learners,¹ we are deeply concerned by the Trump administration's decision to close the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) within the U.S. Department of Education. For the past 25 years, OELA has played a critical role in supporting states and local educational agencies (LEAs) through technical assistance, policy guidance, and oversight focused specifically on the needs of English learners. The loss of this dedicated office raises serious concerns about the federal government's capacity to effectively support the implementation of high-quality programs for multilingual learners nationwide and is part of a broader pattern of federal cutbacks and aggressive actions negatively impacting multilingual learners.

Regardless of this structural change, federal and state requirements for serving English learners have not changed. The U.S. Department of Education's statutory responsibilities to English learners remain, including administration of Title III, which provides formula grants to all 50 states to help English learners attain English language proficiency and meet academic standards. Districts must continue to:

- identify English learners;
- provide appropriate designated and integrated ELD instruction;
- ensure meaningful access to grade-level curriculum;

¹ There are approximately 926,000 TK-12 English learners (<https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/DQCensus/EnrELAS.aspx?cde=00&agglevel=State&year=2025-26>) and 1.514 million dual language learners ages 0-5 in California (<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/us-state-profiles-young-dlls>).

The Multilingual Education Policy Partners (MEPP), a collective of the organizations signing onto this statement, bring together key leaders in the field of multilingual learner education to strengthen the coherence, coordination, and implementation of California's early childhood through higher education policies in service of multilingual learners.

- provide interpretation, translation, and culturally responsive engagement with families; and
- monitor student progress toward English proficiency and academic success.

In short, schools and districts remain legally obligated and educationally responsible under federal and state civil rights laws to provide English learners with the services and supports they need for meaningful and equitable educational access.

California has long served as a national leader in supporting multilingual learners, and this moment calls on all of us to reaffirm that commitment. The California English Learner Roadmap Policy grounds us in the belief that multilingualism is an asset and that every student deserves access to rigorous, affirming, and high-quality instruction. Even amid federal uncertainty, California must continue to champion and expand policies and practices – like widely available bilingual education programs – that increase opportunities for multilingual learners. And, at a time when many immigrant and newcomer students are experiencing heightened fear and uncertainty, schools must remain safe, welcoming, and affirming environments where every student can learn and belong.

District and school leaders should not interpret the closure of OELA as a signal to reduce staffing, professional learning, bilingual programming, newcomer supports, family engagement services, or accountability for multilingual learner outcomes. Instead, this moment requires an even stronger commitment to ensuring multilingual learners receive the instruction, support, and opportunities they deserve.

Fortunately, California educators and advocates can continue to rely on strong resources and guidance developed by policymakers and practitioners to support these efforts, including:

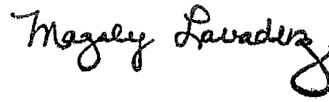
- [California English Learner Roadmap Policy](#)
- [Multilingual learner support resources](#) for practitioners and families from the California Department of Education (CDE)
- Educator Workforce Investment Grant (EWIG) resources through the [Multilingual California Project](#) and [EL RISE!](#)
- [California Newcomer Education and Well-Being](#) (CaNEW) and [California Newcomer Network](#) (CANN)
- [Multilingual Education For All](#) campaign
- [Multilingual Learning Toolkit](#)

English learners enrich our classrooms and communities with their languages, cultures, and perspectives, and we have a collective responsibility to deepen our commitment by investing in research-based practices that support them. **We will continue to advocate to ensure multilingual learners receive the support and high-quality educational opportunities they deserve, and we call on educators, policymakers, and advocates to deepen – not diminish – their commitment to multilingual learners amidst the latest federal decisions.**

Sincerely,



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