

SEAL

2024 Annual Report

Building a Multilingual Future 



Scan the QR code and explore our digital version of our annual report, filled with partner videos, stories from the classrooms, and ways to get involved.

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A Letter from SEAL's Executive Director, Dr. Anya Hurwitz

Sixteen years ago, Dr. Laurie Olsen and Sobrato Family Foundation, now known as Sobrato Philanthropies, launched a preschool through third grade comprehensive instructional pilot in three schools focused on redesigning the trajectory of educational success for English Learners through language-rich learning across all subjects. Today, SEAL has served over 50,000 students and 1,600 teachers with our evidence-based, research-backed approach to learning. As we celebrate SEAL's fifth anniversary as an independent nonprofit, I'm proud to present our inaugural annual report.

In the early part of my career, I spent years teaching in California and New York, working closely with students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Despite my efforts, I often felt ill-equipped to fully meet their needs, a haunting feeling that continues to linger today. I have since heard similar stories from other educators countless times. The ubiquitousness of this experience underscores the pressing need for SEAL's mission: to ensure educators and schools have the expertise and resources to create language-rich, inclusive classrooms where every student can learn, thrive and lead.

The past five years have been challenging, particularly with the impact of COVID-19. The pandemic caused instability within schools at every level and continues to have major ramifications on leadership, heightened educator turnover rates, low attendance, mental health, and significant educator pipeline issues. Fragmented state and federal investments, though



well-intentioned, have been difficult to integrate. As a result, many schools have continually struggled to sustain transformative efforts essential for supporting our culturally and linguistically diverse children.

Despite these challenges, SEAL has grown and adapted playing a key role in both state and federal initiatives. These opportunities have enabled us to collaborate with districts across the state to support educators and strengthen the bilingual teacher pipeline. We expanded our reach by releasing an external evaluation of the SEAL Replication Model and three case studies that exemplify deep implementation, as well as developing the P-3 Framework for Centering English Learners. Our strategic plan, launched in 2021, has been instrumental in refining our approach to meet the evolving needs of students and schools, ensuring we remain responsive and impactful in every community we serve.

There's no doubt: the future is multilingual; so many more people and policies acknowledge this vision for the future than when we first started out as a pilot in 2008. But there remains much work to be done to make sure our schools are designed to enact this vision. As SEAL continues to grow from a startup into a fully established organization, we remain focused on working to redesign schools and systems so they have capacity to produce the outcomes our children deserve and our economy and society need.

Thank you for your commitment and belief in our work. I invite you to explore our inaugural annual report and join me in reflecting on the progress we've made together.



Dr. Anya Hurwitz
Executive Director, SEAL

The Need for SEAL

California's incredible linguistic diversity—where 2.3 million children speak over 200 languages and dialects at home—should be a source of strength. Yet, for decades, harmful policies like Proposition 227 silenced multilingualism, forcing English Learners into English-only instruction and depriving them of the benefits of bilingual education. SEAL has been instrumental in working to reverse this narrative, playing a pivotal role in transforming attitudes and restoring support for multilingual learners through evidence-based approaches that yield real results for students, families, and schools.

Today, as SEAL celebrates five years as an independent nonprofit, the urgency of our work has never been greater. Schools face a critical shortage of bilingual teachers, limiting access to multilingual education for countless students. SEAL is meeting this challenge head on, equipping educators, driving systemic change, and championing equity for California's multilingual learners. Discover how SEAL is creating vibrant learning environments and advancing policies to ensure every child's linguistic and cultural identity is celebrated.



60% of California Children 0-5 years old who speak a language other than English at home



86% of K-12 school districts reported that their supply of bilingual teachers was insufficient to meet the staffing needs of planned expansions. (Californians Together)

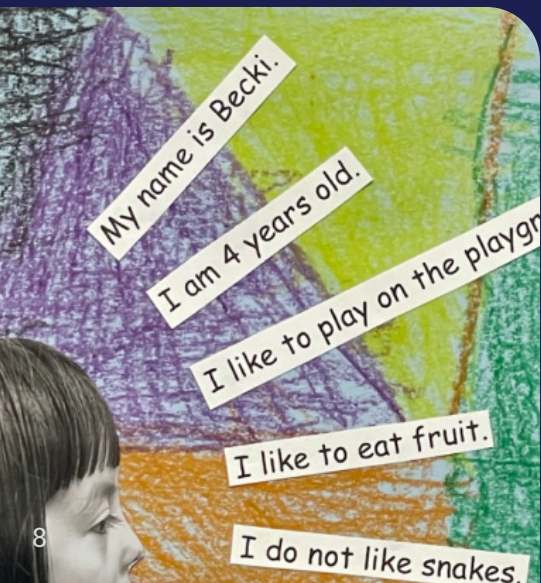


16% of CA English Learners are enrolled in a bilingual or dual-language immersion programs in 2019-20





SEAL empowers multilingual learners to excel academically, socially, and professionally, preparing them to thrive in a globally connected world.



Our Impact

SEAL is proud to support hundreds of schools, empower thousands of educators, and impact tens of thousands of students. With each passing year, SEAL's reach expands as more educators embrace our evidence-based, research-backed approach to help multilingual learners thrive.

2023-2024

34

Preschool LEAs, District and
County Offices

174

Preschool & Elementary Sites

933

Educators Trained

15,000+

Students Served

All Time

67

Preschool LEAs, District and
County Offices

342

Preschool & Elementary Sites

2,400+

Educators Trained

50,000+

Students Served



School District Partners

As more schools and classrooms discover the SEAL impact, we are able to reach more communities throughout California every school year.



SEAL Preschool LEAs

SEAL School Districts

2024 SEAL School Partners

SEAL Preschool LEAs

Azusa Unified School District
Brea Olinda Unified School District
Cutler Orosi Unified School District
Davis Joint Unified School District – Preschools
Earlimart Preschools
Gilroy Unified School District Preschool
Lindsay Unified School District
Long Beach Unified School District – Educare
Los Angeles Unified School District – Preschools
Mexican Alliance Opportunity Foundation
Milpitas Unified School District – CDC
Porterville Unified School District
Rialto Unified School District STATE Preschool
San Bernardino Unified School District
Santa Clara County Office of Education
Redwood City School District – Preschools
San Lorenzo Unified School District – Kidango
San Rafael City Schools – Preschools
Santa Clara Unified School District – Preschools
Twin Rivers Unified School District – Preschools
Visalia Unified School District Office
Williams Unified School District – Colusa County Preschools
Woodland Joint Unified School District
Yolo County Office of Education

SEAL School Districts

Berryessa Union School District
Coalinga-Huron Unified School District
Davis Joint Unified School District
Earlimart Schools District
Evergreen Elementary School District
Fillmore Unified School District
Franklin McKinley School District
Gilroy Unified School District
Golden Plains Unified School District
Los Angeles Unified School District
Milpitas Unified School District
Mountain View School District
Newark Unified School District
Oak Grove School District
San Bruno Park School District
Redwood City School District
San Lorenzo Unified School District
San Rafael City Schools
Santa Clara Unified School District
Twin Rivers Unified School District
Williams Unified School District

2024 School Partners

ABC Unified School District
Azusa Unified School District
Berryessa Union School District
Cutler-Orosi Unified School District
Davis Joint Unified School District
Delhi Unified School District
El Rancho Unified School District
Evergreen Elementary School District
Exeter Unified School District
Firebaugh-Las Deltas Unified School District
Franklin-McKinley School District
Hueneme Elementary School District
Lindsay Unified School District
Little Lake City School District
Los Angeles Unified School District
Merced County Office of Education
Morgan Hill Unified School District
Mountain View School District
Natomas Unified School District
Newark Unified School District
Oak Grove School District
Rio School District
San Rafael City Schools
Santa Clara Unified School District
Tulare County Office of Education
Washington Unified School District (West Sacramento)
West Contra Costa Unified School District
Williams Unified School District
Winters Joint Unified School District
Woodlake Unified School District
Visalia Unified School District
Yolo County Office of Education

Growing and Strengthening **California's Bilingual Educator Workforce**

California faces a significant shortage of bilingual teachers, with 53% of school districts currently reporting inadequate staffing and 86% expecting shortages that will impact future multilingual education initiatives¹. SEAL is leading efforts to address this gap by expanding California's bilingual educator workforce through its comprehensive whole-school approach, targeted professional development and strategic partnerships with districts and county offices.

SEAL's professional development programs are transforming classrooms, equipping teachers with the tools and confidence to create vibrant, inclusive learning environments. The impact is undeniable—educators across the state report meaningful growth in their ability to support multilingual learners, ensuring students thrive academically and culturally in a multilingual world.



"Participating in SEAL has been one of the best decisions I have made professionally. This is the first year I have felt confident teaching designated ELD and have data to back the efficacy of what I am doing with students. From planning to enacting, to analysis, SEAL has offered a framework for me to make teaching in all content areas relevant and meaningful through language acquisition."

— **3RD GRADE INSTRUCTOR,**
1-3 YEARS EXPERIENCE

Educators' Perceived Knowledge Before and After SEAL Full Model Professional Development Participation²

Increased Usage: Educators using SEAL strategies daily across their curriculum

Before

23%

After

92%

Added Knowledge: Educators knowledgeable on how to build home-to-school connections through classroom and curriculum

Before

51%

After

94%

Improved Comfort: Educators comfortable in designing standards-aligned lessons that incorporate home language

Before

50%

After

93%

Heightened Awareness: Teachers able to focus on contrastive analysis, cognates, and language separation in English lessons

Before

48%

After

81%

¹Californians Together, *Unveiling California's Growing Bilingual Teacher Shortage: Addressing the Urgent Shortage, and Aligning the Workforce to Advances in Pedagogy and Practice in Bilingual Education*

²CEEL/LMU & Wexford Institute (2020), <https://doi.org/10.15365/ceel.seal2020>

SEAL's Holistic Impact

From classroom practice to advocacy, policy and research, SEAL fosters a unique and holistic approach that strengthens school capacity and ensures sustainable, transformative change. Through leadership development, strategic planning, and real-world application, SEAL helps districts create equitable, inclusive learning environments that affirm linguistic and cultural identities while centering student success.

Case studies from districts like Oak Grove and Mountain View highlight the transformative impact of SEAL's partnership-

driven approach. By integrating SEAL's framework into district systems, these schools have strengthened teacher efficacy, deepened family partnerships, and cultivated vibrant, engaging learning environments that support both students and educators. With dedicated resources, aligned initiatives, and ongoing professional development, SEAL is equipping schools and districts to create lasting change and ensure multilingual learners thrive.



Our Impact at a Glance¹

Our work continues to drive transformative change across schools, districts, and communities. By fostering collaboration at every level and empowering educators with evidence-based strategies, SEAL ensures lasting impact. The following 2023–2024 teacher survey data showcases the measurable outcomes of SEAL's efforts, underscoring the strength of a unified and sustainable approach to multilingual education.



89% of teachers report regularly implementing SEAL strategies in their classrooms, helping to create language-rich, student-centered learning environments.



97% of teachers say their curriculum is now more reflective of students' cultural and linguistic identities, fostering inclusivity and equity in the classroom.



95% of teachers observed increased student engagement during integrated and designated English Language Development (ELD) lessons, showcasing the effectiveness of SEAL's approach.



93% of teachers report that students are producing more academic and complex language as a result of SEAL's research-backed strategies.



94% of teachers report that students are more joyful, confident, and actively engaged in their learning as a result of SEAL's support.



87% of teachers are more confident in their ability to support dual-language learners (DLLs) and English learners (ELs), reflecting SEAL's transformative impact on professional development.

¹SEAL End of Year Survey of Teachers (23-24)

Partners, Parents, and Educators Find **SEAL's** Work Impactful



"The partnership between Oak Grove School District and SEAL has been exemplary. We're in a 10 year partnership so far, and the biggest impact that I see has been around teacher efficacy.

SEAL really brought an opportunity for our teachers to work together in understanding the standards and to feel a sense of support and collegiality... All of that collaboration set the stage for the expectation that we need to work together. We're most effective when we are in a collaborative mode...building and refining how we are engaging and impacting academic outcomes for students. That creates a culture of continuous improvement for our system."

— JOSE MANZO, RETIRED SUPERINTENDENT OAK GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT & SEAL BOARD MEMBER

"Here, at Delhi Unified School District, we recognize that 96% of our students are considered multilingual. And that means that we want to provide academic experiences that have rigor, but also give value to the culture that they have at home and the languages that they have at home. And SEAL is a model that helps integrate all of that at a level that provides rigorous and transformative experiences for students."

— JOSE KUBES, SUPERINTENDENT DELHI UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

"It has been a very drastic change. I notice that my youngest daughter is more collaborative. I can see the learning she's received through SEAL has made an impact in her life. She is more open, She has more knowledge. She has already presented a project in front of her friends At the age of four! So all these advances I'm seeing in her I didn't see in my eldest daughter."

— ROSA NUNO, PARENT, DELHI UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

"The work that SEAL is doing is instrumental in assuring that teachers are properly trained and prepared to serve multilingual learners, to see their linguistic and cultural talents as assets. SEAL equips teachers with very tangible skills and strategies to help their multilingual learners, and to see multilingual learners through their intersectional identities... Our journey is never an individual journey. It's a journey of an entire family, it's a journey of an entire community."

— FELIZA ORTIZ-LICON, EVP, THE CAMPAIGN FOR COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY; SEAL BOARD MEMBER

"I just love what SEAL is doing. I'm hoping that we can really change the world by making sure that our kids grow up at least bilingual if not multilingual. I'm hoping that we can expand the program so that it's not only in California, but all over the country."

— CHRISTINA BUI, MANAGING DIRECTOR AT ROBERT HALF EXECUTIVE SEARCH

"A lot of immigrant kids or kids that speak multiple languages end up sitting in the back of the classroom and getting lost. To me, there is nothing more important than us celebrating the fact that it makes us smarter, better, faster to speak multiple languages, and makes us more empathetic as human beings because we understand different cultures. We have to shift our schools. That's why I love SEAL. I love that SEAL works at the policy level regionally, but also literally trains teachers because a lot of them aren't multilingual themselves."

— JULIE CASTRO ABRAMS, CEO, HOW WOMEN LEAD; SEAL BOARD MEMBER

Fostering **Rigorous and Joyful Learning** for All Students

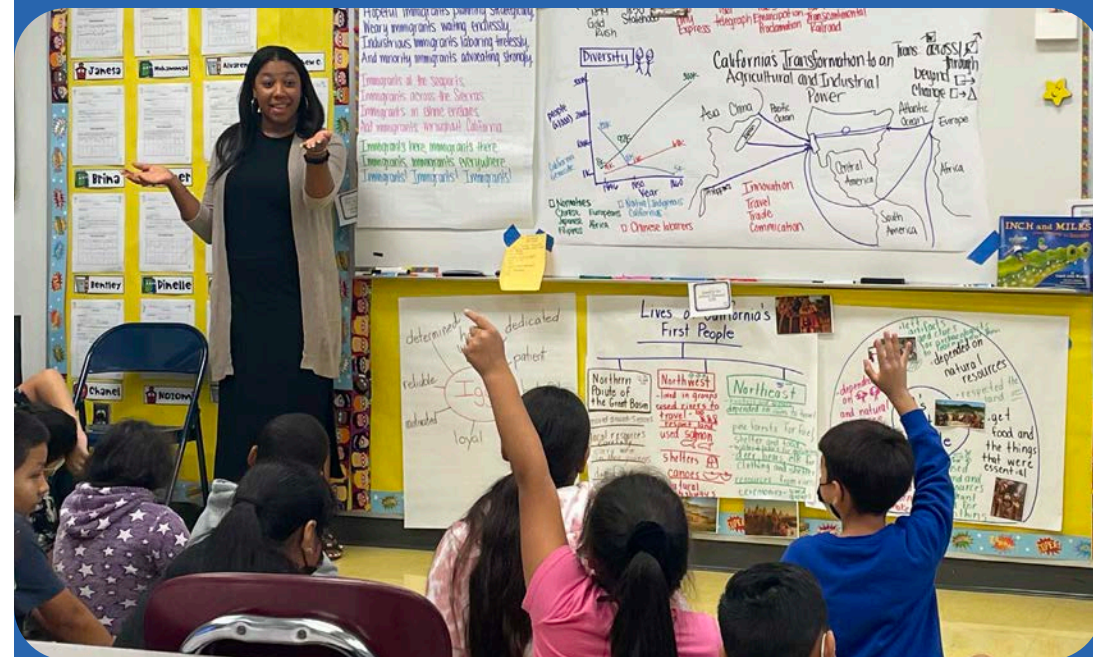
Traditional education systems often fail to accommodate the diverse linguistic backgrounds of multilingual learners. In California, 60% of children 0-5 years old speak a language other than English at home; SEAL has been instrumental in transforming how school systems support these learners. Our approach focuses on creating classrooms that celebrate and elevate students' linguistic and cultural identities, ensuring that all students can thrive in rigorous and joyful learning environments.

A five-year evaluation of SEAL showed that, despite starting school behind their peers, SEAL students catch up to or surpass their peers in key areas such as language, literacy, math and science. The study also highlighted SEAL's impact on family literacy and cognitive development, demonstrating how a holistic, culturally responsive approach can unlock the potential of multilingual learners and empower entire communities.

¹CEEL/LMU & Wexford Institute (2020), <https://doi.org/10.15365/ceel.seal2020>

During a demo lesson, SEAL Program Coordinator Jennifer Clinkscales encountered a shy English learner whose classmates suggested she wouldn't speak in class. Rather than moving on, Jennifer encouraged the student to participate through a series of interactive activities. By the end of the lesson, the once-silent girl confidently raised her hand to share—her first time speaking up all year. This breakthrough moment empowered the student and inspired the entire class, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment.

Read the full story on the SEAL blog. (QR Code on back cover)



"At my first demo lesson, one student didn't feel totally comfortable in class, so much so that the other students were trying to shield her. She wasn't participating. I saw that class later that school year... That student came up and gave me a hug, and started telling me what they were reading, doing a narrative input, and telling me about the story."

—JENNIFER CLINKSCALES, SEAL PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Our Impact at a Glance¹

Our work continues to drive transformative change across schools, districts, and communities. By fostering collaboration at every level and empowering educators with evidence-based strategies, SEAL ensures lasting impact.

SEAL

79%

California

69%

In fourth grade, SEAL Reclassified Fluent English Proficient students (RFEPs) outperformed California RFEPs by 10 percentage points in ELA.

SEAL

87%

California

69%

In third grade, SEAL RFEPs outperformed California RFEPs by 18 percentage points in math.

Grade K CELDT

36%

35%

26%

3%

Grade 4 ELPAC

3%

15%

28%

19%

35%



Beginning/Minimally Developed



Early Intermediate/Somewhat Developed



Intermediate/Moderately Developed



Early Advanced & Advanced/Well Developed



Reclassified Fluent English Proficient

By fourth grade, most SEAL students who began kindergarten as English Learners had either developed strong English language skills or been reclassified as English proficient, despite starting at beginning or early intermediate levels of fluency.

Driving Educational Equity Through **Policy & Partnerships**

SEAL's dedication to multilingual learners extends far beyond the classroom walls. Through strong advocacy, strategic partnerships, and targeted policy initiatives, we work alongside educators and policymakers to shape a more inclusive and equitable future for all California students. This year, our efforts have brought meaningful changes that uplift multilingual education and expand opportunities statewide. Key highlights include:



Site Visits Offer First-Hand Insights into Multilingual Education

This year, SEAL hosted multiple site visits for over 20 policymakers and education advocates, providing them with direct exposure to effective multilingual education strategies.

Highlights included a visit from U.S. Department of Education Assistant Deputy Secretary and Director, Office of English Language Acquisition, Montserrat Garibay, and California Department of Education (CDE) Deputy Superintendent Sarah Neville Morgan. They explored Marguerite Montgomery Elementary's Two-Way Bilingual Immersion Program to learn first hand about the core elements of the school's eight-year partnership with SEAL.

Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi, Chair of the Assembly Education Committee, spent time in SEAL classrooms at Oak Grove School District, an experience that continues to shape his support for English Learner (EL) advocacy. Representatives from the offices of Senator Marie Alvarado Gil and Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria, as well as key advocates, visited schools in the Delhi Unified School District. SEAL also helped to organize a visit for the California Legislative Staff Education Institute, providing legislative staff an up-close view of successful multilingual education in action and strengthening statewide commitment to these transformative practices.

Legislative Success and Strategic Partnerships

Our legislative efforts have led to key wins, including the enactment of Assembly Bill (AB) 2268, which exempts Transitional Kindergarten students from the English Language Proficiency Assessment of California (ELPAC) for the 2024-25 school year. Partnering with Sobrato Policy Partners, SEAL has advanced critical policies like AB 370 (Biliteracy), AB 393 (Dual Language Learner Identification), and AB 1127 (Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program), supporting multilingual students and educators statewide.

As IQC Chair, SEAL's Director of Designs for Change, Charice Guerra, guided members to a significant State Board of Education success with the release of new Guidance for Local Instructional Materials Adoptions. This comprehensive resource assists LEAs with links to legislation, sample timelines, diverse student support, and key considerations for implementing instructional materials.

Amplifying Impact Through Publications and National Recognition

SEAL's publications amplify our impact nationwide, with recognition on

prominent platforms. We co-authored Bright Spots: Five Districts Move the English Learner Roadmap Forward to showcase the success of five partner schools as models for effective multilingual education. In 2024, we also released resources like the P3 Framework, focusing on English Learners from preschool through third grade, and Centering Multilingual Families in California Community Schools, which underscores the essential role multilingual families play in building equitable schools.

Most importantly, our publications humanize our work by strengthening our commitment to centering students. Our video, Bilingualism Through the Eyes of a Student, is now a permanent feature at Washington D.C.'s Planet Word Museum, inspiring conversations about multilingualism across ages.

Expanding SEAL's Voice in Policy Circles

SEAL staff hold key roles on influential advisory groups, including the California Instructional Quality Commission and the Bilingual Coordinators Network, where they drive discussions and advocate for policies that advance multilingual education. Through presentations, publications, and testimony, SEAL has become a trusted voice in the field, with staff regularly invited to share their expertise on panels, webinars, and conferences at both state and national levels.



Expanding Our Impact in Multilingual Education



Together with our diverse network of partners, we share a unified goal: to make multilingual education the norm in all schools. Looking ahead, SEAL will strengthen strategic collaborations with organizations specializing in professional learning and curriculum development, leveraging our expertise to shape their practices. By investing in shared growth, we'll amplify the collective impact of multilingual education.



Securing Sustainable Investment in Multilingual Education

While California has established strong policies in support of multilingual education and children, there remains a significant lack of funding for high quality programs. SEAL will continue to advocate for not only increased funding, but stronger assurances that it is used most effectively to benefit multilingual learners. We are diversifying our funding sources to ensure sustainable support for multilingual education, with new donors who share our vision for long-term impact.

Rebuilding Capacity for School-Wide Transformation

In the aftermath of the pandemic, resource constraints and instability have limited schools' capacity to focus on deep and sustainable improvement efforts. Our vision is to help schools develop the conditions needed for comprehensive, school-wide transformations. We will provide schools with the tools to rebuild stronger, more inclusive systems that empower multilingual students to thrive.



With Gratitude to Our Partners

We sincerely thank our long-standing supporters and partners who continue to help us transform multilingual education in California and beyond.

For many of you, your dedication to this work is rooted in your own multilingual and multicultural experiences, which have shaped your lives in meaningful ways. Today, your commitment empowers all learners to have access to culturally and linguistically affirming education, helping them thrive in and out of school.

FUNDING PARTNERS


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Heising-Simons Foundation
Silver Giving Foundation
Charles and Lynn Schusterman
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Sarah Valencia
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Libia Gil
Ruby Takanishi
Poinciana Tilton
Swati Adarkar
Jose Manzo

ADVOCACY PARTNERS

Alliance for a Better Community
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California Association for
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Californians Together
Catalyst California
Early Edge California

National Committee for
Effective Literacy (NCEL)
Parent Institute for Quality
Education (PIQE)
Sobrato Philanthropies
Teach Plus
UNITE-LA



Let's Create a Stronger Future for California's Multilingual Learners Together!

Learn more about how to support our work in 2025 and beyond at seal.org



Scan the QR code and explore our digital version of our annual report, filled with partner videos, stories from the classrooms, and ways to get involved.