The California English Learner Roadmap:
Strengthening Comprehensive Educational Policies, Programs, and Practices for English Learners

Excerpt
Four Interrelated Principles

Four principles support the vision and provide the foundation of the CA EL Roadmap. These principles are 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, twenty-first century education for the state’s 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 in ensuring the access and achievement of the 1.3 million English learners who attend our schools. The principles address the following themes:

1. Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools
2. Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access
3. System Conditions that Support Effectiveness
4. Alignment and Articulation Within and Across Systems

These principles, and the elements delineated for each, are research- and values-based, and build upon California’s academic content and ELD standards, the California ELA/ELD Framework, Blueprint for Great Schools 1.0 and 2.0, and other state policy and guidance documents. It is important to stress that these principles and elements are not meant to serve as a checklist. Rather, they might be thought of as the strings of an instrument from which music is created. Extending this metaphor, district and school educators are musicians who ultimately must take up these resources and strive together to attain their harmonious implementation.

Principle One: Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools

Pre-schools and schools are responsive to different EL strengths, needs, and identities and support the socio-emotional health and development of English learners. Programs value and build upon the cultural and linguistic assets students bring to their education in safe and affirming school climates. Educators value and build strong family, community, and school partnerships.

Elements:

A. The languages and cultures English learners bring to their education are assets for their own learning and are important contributions to learning communities. These assets are valued and built upon in culturally responsive curriculum and instruction and in programs that support, wherever possible, the development of proficiency in multiple languages.

B. Recognizing that there is no universal EL profile and no one-size-fits-all approach that works for all English learners, programs, curriculum, and instruction must be responsive to different EL student characteristics and experiences. EL students
entering school at the beginning levels of English proficiency have different needs and capacities than do students entering at intermediate or advanced levels. Similarly, students entering in kindergarten have different needs than students entering in later grades. The needs of long term English learners are vastly different from recently arrived students (who in turn vary in their prior formal education). Districts vary considerably in the distribution of these EL profiles, so no single program or instructional approach works for all EL students.

C. **School climates and campuses are affirming, inclusive, and safe.**

D. **Schools value and build strong family and school partnerships.**

E. **Schools and districts develop a collaborative framework for identifying English learners with disabilities and use valid assessment practices. Schools and districts develop appropriate individualized education programs (IEPs) that support culturally and linguistically inclusive practices and provide appropriate training to teachers, thus leveraging expertise specific to English learners. The IEP addresses academic goals that take into account student language development, as called for in state and national policy recommendations.**

**Principle Two: Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access**

English learners engage in intellectually rich, developmentally appropriate learning experiences that foster high levels of English proficiency. These experiences integrate language development, literacy, and content learning as well as provide access for comprehension and participation through native language instruction and scaffolding. English learners have meaningful access to a full standards-based and relevant curriculum and the opportunity to develop proficiency in English and other languages.

**Elements:**

A. Language development occurs in and through subject matter learning and is **integrated** across the curriculum, including integrated ELD and designated content-based ELD (per the ELA/ELD Framework pages 891–892).

---


31 Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) from the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, January 7, 2015. Downloaded from [https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf).
B. Students are provided a rigorous, intellectually rich, standards-based curriculum with instructional scaffolding that increases comprehension and participation and develops student autonomy and mastery.

C. Teaching and learning emphasize engagement, interaction, discourse, inquiry, and critical thinking with the same high expectations for English learners as for all students in each of the content areas.

D. English learners are provided access to the full curriculum along with the provision of appropriate EL supports and services.

E. Students' home language is understood as a means to access subject matter content, as a foundation for developing English, and, where possible, is developed to high levels of literacy and proficiency along with English.

F. Rigorous instructional materials support high levels of intellectual engagement. Explicit scaffolding enables meaningful participation by English learners at different levels of English language proficiency. Integrated language development, content learning, and opportunities for bilingual/biliterate development are appropriate according to the program model.

G. English learners are provided choices of research-based language support/development programs (including options for developing skills in multiple languages) and are enrolled in programs designed to overcome language barriers and provide access to the curriculum.\(^{32}\)

**Principle Three: System Conditions That Support Effectiveness**

Each level of the school system (state, county, district, school, pre-school) has leaders and educators who are knowledgeable of and responsive to the strengths and needs of English learners and their communities and who utilize valid assessment and other data systems that inform instruction and continuous improvement. Each level of the school system provides resources and tiered support to ensure strong programs and build the capacity of teachers and staff to leverage the strengths and meet the needs of English learners.

Elements:

A. **Leaders** establish clear goals and commitments to English learners by providing access, growth toward English proficiency, and academic engagement and achievement. Leaders maintain a systemic focus on continuous improvement and progress toward these goals — over and above compliance via the EL Master Plan and English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) and District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) regulations.\(^{33}\)

B. The school system invests **adequate resources** to support the conditions required to address EL needs.

C. A **system of culturally and linguistically valid and reliable assessment** supports instruction, continuous improvement, and accountability for attainment of English proficiency, biliteracy, and academic achievement.

D. **Capacity building** occurs at all levels of the system, including **leadership development** to understand and address the needs of English learners. **Professional learning** and **collaboration time** are afforded to teachers. The system makes robust efforts to address the teaching shortage and build a **recruitment and development pipeline** of educators skilled in addressing the needs of English learners, including bilingual teachers.

**Principle Four: Alignment and Articulation Within and Across Systems**

English learners experience a coherent, articulated, and aligned set of practices and pathways across grade levels and educational segments, beginning with a strong foundation in early childhood and appropriate identification of strengths and needs, continuing through to reclassification, graduation, higher education, and career opportunities. These pathways foster the skills, language(s), literacy, and knowledge students need for college- and career-readiness and participation in a global, diverse, multilingual, twenty-first century world.

**Elements:**

A. EL educational approaches and programs are designed for continuity, **alignment, and articulation** across grade levels and system segments beginning with a strong foundation in early childhood (preschool), and continuing through elementary and secondary levels onto graduation, postsecondary education, and career preparation.

B. Schools plan schedules and resources to **provide extra time** in school (as needed) and build partnerships with after-school and other entities to provide additional support for English learners, to accommodate the extra challenges they face in learning English and accessing/mastering all academic subject matter.

C. EL educational approaches and programs are designed to be **coherent** across schools within districts, across initiatives, and across the state.

---

These principles and elements provide a set of research-, evidence-, and practice-based considerations that districts can use as they develop strategies and modify local action plans in the process of continuous improvement. As a guide, the table below shows a crosswalk of CA EL Roadmap principles and elements with the LCFF priorities. As these principles and elements are integrated into the communication of district and school systems, educators can shape conversations about priorities both with each other and with parents and community members, and better serve EL students.

**Crosswalk of the CA EL Roadmap Principle and Elements to the LCFF and LCAP**

The CA EL Roadmap sets a common direction for the state and provides guidance for LEAs in local planning and improvement of programs and services for English learners. It was designed to speak to the eight state priorities embedded in the LCFF and LCAP. Local leadership and governing boards will find it useful to consider alignment of local goals and policies with the mission, vision, and principles of the CA EL Roadmap and to use the principles as a lens for assessing strengths and needed improvements in services, programs, and approaches to EL education. The following crosswalk between the CA EL Roadmap principles and the eight state priority areas can facilitate this process.

The Crosswalk can be used in various ways. An LEA might, for example, focus on a priority around implementing state standards. To ensure they are incorporating the needs of English learners in that effort, those working on the LCAP could examine the row of the Crosswalk for Priority Two (State Standards [Conditions of Learning]) and note the way in which each principle (in columns 2–5) has elements that together comprise a comprehensive EL approach for standards implementation. They would find that under Principle One (Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools) Element A and B, it would be important to turn to the sections of the California ELA/ELD Framework that address the different profiles, strengths, and needs within the English learner population (e.g., long term English learners, newcomers, etc.), and might decide to incorporate aspects of the History-Social Studies Framework that speak directly to culturally responsive curriculum and instruction. Continuing across the row of the Crosswalk for that Priority, they would be reminded to consider various research- and evidence-based language acquisition program options. This process would continue across all of the principles for that Priority row.

Another way to utilize the Crosswalk involves an LEA focusing on a particular principle of the CA EL Roadmap. For example, an LEA might elect to work on Alignment and Articulation Within and Across Systems (Principal Four) in order to build coherence. Looking through the lens of the CA EL Roadmap, that LEA would find that there are actions to be considered in each of the LCAP priority areas in order to comprehensively address this challenge. They would find that under Priority One, they need to consider their teacher workforce for early childhood programs and that materials are available and are articulated across grade levels and appropriate to the various language
acquisition program pathways the district offers (e.g., dual language immersion, heritage language, etc.). Under Priority Two, the academic content and performance standards already articulate across grade levels, but the LEA might decide that implementation is uneven across schools and so investing in grade level collaboration across sites around ELD standards implementation would be helpful. This process would continue down each of the priority areas.

The CA EL Roadmap will only be valuable if it is integrated in processes of local reflection, planning, resource allocation, and accountability. By working across the LCAP Priorities and the EL Roadmap principles, districts can move more efficiently and coherently towards developing, implementing, and improving the programs and services English learners need in order to participate, achieve and thrive in California schools.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCAP One</td>
<td>Elements A, C &amp; E</td>
<td>Elements A, B, &amp; D</td>
<td>Elements B &amp; D</td>
<td>Elements A, B, &amp; C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>(Conditions of Learning) Teachers, Materials, Facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCAP Two</td>
<td>Elements A, B &amp; E</td>
<td>Elements A, B, F, &amp; G</td>
<td>Elements B &amp; D</td>
<td>Elements B &amp; C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>(Conditions of Learning)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCAP Three</td>
<td>Elements B, D &amp; E</td>
<td>Element D</td>
<td>Element D</td>
<td>Element C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental</td>
<td>Parental Involvement (Engagement)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCAP Four</td>
<td>Element C</td>
<td>Elements A, B, &amp; C</td>
<td>Elements A &amp; B</td>
<td>Elements B &amp; C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil</td>
<td>(Pupil Outcomes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCAP Five</td>
<td>Elements B, C, &amp; D</td>
<td>Elements E &amp; F</td>
<td>Element D</td>
<td>Element C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil</td>
<td>Pupil Engagement (Engagement)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCAP Six</td>
<td>Elements A &amp; D</td>
<td>Elements A &amp; D</td>
<td>Element D</td>
<td>Element C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>School Climate (Engagement)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCAP Seven</td>
<td>Elements B &amp; D</td>
<td>Elements D, E, &amp; G</td>
<td>Element C &amp; D</td>
<td>Elements B &amp; C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td>Course Access (Conditions of Learning)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCAP Eight</td>
<td>Other Pupil Outcomes (Pupil Outcomes)</td>
<td>Elements A, C, &amp; D</td>
<td>Elements A &amp; C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>