WHY IS CHANGE NECESSARY NOW?

Deficit views of historically marginalized children, their families, and communities based on race, class, language, and culture persist in education. The COVID-19 pandemic brought this truth into sharp focus, having been preceded by another social evil: racial injustice. Inhumane and unfair systems and policies are evident in police brutality, civil rights violations of peaceful demonstrators, unequal access to health care, and unjust educational policies.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed long-standing inequities and laid bare the true degree to which school systems are currently ill-equipped to meet the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students in the classroom and in outreach to families. Educators have received little guidance or resources to ensure continuity of learning. With long-term implications of COVID-19 likely to last a generation, school systems must respond in this immediate moment. Moving forward, a sustained and strategic collaboration at all levels of the school system is needed to reimagine the way linguistically and culturally diverse students are served in schools.

There are promising trends of achievement when we look at performance of linguistically and culturally diverse students no longer classified as English Learners. There is now a robust research and practice base from which practitioners can draw from to improve the system. Yet, evidence-based practices have not yet reached the hearts and minds of educators in classrooms, schools, and districts. The conditions for linguistically and culturally diverse students to succeed and thrive in school are not yet in place.

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In an increasingly global society, and in a nation that is linguistically and culturally diverse, it behooves us to build on our linguistic capacities and to understand ways to optimize what immigrants and their children bring.”

— Dr. Kenji Hakuta,

Educating Language Minority Students and Affirming Their Equal Rights: Research and Practical Perspectives, EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER, May 2011.


3. This coalition uses the term “linguistically and culturally diverse students” to describe a heterogeneous group of learners that includes students learning in Dual Language contexts, students who are multilingual, and students who are bureaucratically labeled as English learners. These are students for whom language is a reason for their minoritization due to systemic racism, but also for whom language, culture, and literacy are their greatest assets.


5. To see the latest research, see English learners in English Language Arts see English Learners Success Forum’s [English Learners and English Arts Education](https://www.elequity.org/), and Multilingual Students and Mathematics Education.
WHO IS THE COALITION FOR ENGLISH LEARNER EQUITY?

We are a coalition of organizations that have a proven track record of advocacy—conducting research, collaborating with content developers, developing instructional resources and assessments, empowering families and building expertise among practitioners—to ensure that the educational rights of linguistically and culturally diverse students are protected. The Coalition for English Learner Equity (CELE) brings together those who are working toward a shared vision on behalf of these students and their families. We invite organizations to join together and leverage our collective strengths and expertise to face the challenges ahead. To see a current list of CELE member organizations and experts, please visit our website at www.elequity.org.

OUR MISSION

We, individually and collectively, inspire educators at all levels and their systems to advance equity and justice for linguistically and culturally diverse students to co-create a more just and anti-racist world. CELE brings together resources, tools, and research from organizations in diverse disciplines to inform practice in service of linguistically and culturally diverse students and families.

OUR VISION

All linguistically and culturally diverse students will thrive because they are embraced holistically for who they are and the communities they represent. They are provided with enriching learning opportunities grounded in evidence-based educational practices and resources, including technological resources, to meet their goals and aspirations for college, career, civic and global participation.

CORE VALUES

We believe that ALL students, especially linguistically and culturally diverse students, must have...

- Access to an engaging, relevant, and humanizing education—a socio-cultural, human endeavor—which is a universal right, central among all civil rights,
- An education that supports them to become knowledgeable, flexible, resourceful, and independent thinkers,
- A coherent learning experience that empowers them to make sense of the world and to appreciate their power to reason, communicate, and create change,
- Access to curriculum and instruction that integrates and simultaneously develops content knowledge, disciplinary practices, and language and literacy skills that enable them to pursue academic and career pathways of their choice,
- Knowledgeable and caring teachers, schools, and districts that partner with families and caregivers as equals,
- A learning environment that embraces and leverages the linguistic and cultural assets they contribute to their school communities, and
- Support networks that foster a positive identity so that they can make choices based on their interests and aspirations, and be prepared to be agents of change in society.

www.elequity.org
CALL TO ACTION

The Coalition for English Learner Equity calls for all individuals and groups working to improve the education system for linguistically and culturally diverse students to join us in reimagining education and commit to the following based on their areas of expertise. CELE stands ready to support education leaders, teachers, and practitioners in any and all of these endeavors to move all levels of the education system towards a collective mission and vision as articulated in this Statement of Agreement. For resources and tools for specific roles in the education ecosystem, please go to Tools and Resources. We intend to hold our coalition accountable for the changes we want to see.

1. Join this movement by signing our Statement of Agreement or by joining as a member of the coalition.

2. Take a stand against racist policies and practices, examine our unconscious biases, and acknowledge the smog of racism we are socialized to ignore. We do this by:
   a) inspiring reflection on experiences, beliefs, actions, and habits,
   b) sharing relevant stories that inform practice and deepen our understanding of the realities and histories of linguistically and culturally diverse communities,
   c) forming coalitions with students, families, communities, and colleagues across all social, racial, and ethnic groups

3. inclusion in a broad range of academic and career opportunities such as:
   a) High school course pathways that consider students’ interests, backgrounds, and choices
   b) Recruiting linguistically and culturally diverse students into programs where they are under-represented such as STEM

4. Reimagine partnerships with families and caregivers of linguistically and culturally diverse students based on trust, respect and valuing their experiences and histories to create authentic and transparent two-way communication

5. Design content-focused, student-centered, instructionally relevant, and actionable professional learning experiences for all educators to serve linguistically and culturally diverse students and recruit leaders and educators who themselves are linguistically and culturally diverse

6. Showcase practices and strategies to serve students and their families that demonstrate excellence and value the linguistic and cultural assets they have in the classroom and beyond by:
   a) Creating videos and other resources that show examples of high-impact curriculum and instructional practices
   b) Using video in professional learning to demonstrate pedagogical strategies and content that create powerful learning environments for linguistically and culturally diverse students

7. Collaborate and tap into the rich expertise of this coalition to advocate, research, design, and implement policies and practices that advance equity and justice for linguistically and culturally diverse students

www.elequity.org
TOOLS AND RESOURCES

CELE provides specific resources and tools for taking action, organized according to responsibilities and spheres of influence of key stakeholders within the educational system, for the following categories:

- Curriculum and Instruction
- Partnerships with Families and Caregivers
- School Culture and Socioemotional Learning
- Continuous Improvement
- Systems Policies and Governance

We invite you to visit our website often as links to new tools and resources will be added weekly throughout the coming year, and to join our mailing list to be notified of updates.

KEY GUIDING QUESTIONS

These questions to be asked at every level of the system are based on the Castañeda standards, which established the mandated criteria used for education programs that serve language-minority students:

- Are instructional programs for ELs designed based on current research and sound educational theory?
- Is the instructional program effectively implemented with sufficient funding, qualified teachers, high-quality curriculum, and appropriate assessments?
- Are instructional programs evaluated and found to be effective or restructured after periodic review, to ensure the academic success of ELs?
ENVISIONING A SYSTEM WHERE ENGLISH LEARNERS THRIVE IN A WORLD OF CONSTANT CHANGE

Teachers have the agency, knowledge, and support to teach the ways that work best for their students.

Families, Parents, & Caregivers are recognized and valued as partners who provide crucial support for young learners in and outside of school.

Business provide opportunities to learn and support pathways relevant to students.

School Leaders provide an equitable, inclusive vision for learning and empower their staff to fulfill their collective responsibility to support the learning of each student.

Peers recognize each other as resources for learning, help each other make sense of the content they are learning, and to understand the interconnectedness of content and language.

Communities play a key role in connecting formal and informal opportunities for students to continue to learn beyond the classroom.

National Policies support long-term goals and continuous improvement of the ecosystem.

Local Policies are recognized and valued as partners who provide crucial support for young learners in and outside of school.

The English & Multilingual Learner thrives in a world of constant change.

www.elequity.org