



# Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners Resource Guide



**Loyola Marymount University**  
**Center for Equity for**  
**English Learners**

## About CEEL

**Mission:** The Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL), a multi-disciplinary center of Loyola Marymount University's School of Education, ensures equity and excellence in English Learner and Multilingual education by transforming educational systems and practices as collaborative leaders in research, professional learning, and policy to positively impact generations of students and communities.

**Vision:** The field of English Learner and Multilingual education is appropriately funded, enacts research and evidence-based practices, and is fully integrated into the United States education system. Language, literacy, and content instruction for English Learners and Multilingual students is delivered in an equitable and just way. English Learner students and their families are treated with respect and engaged as partners in the education process.



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# Introduction to the Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners Resource Guide

Welcome to the Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners Resource Guide. This guide uplifts student voice as “authentic student input or leadership in instruction, school structures, or education policies that can promote meaningful change in education systems, practice, and/or policy by empowering students as change agents, often working in partnership with adult educators” (Benner et al., 2019, p. 3). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child places emphasis on children’s right to be heard (United Nations, 1989, Article 7). When students are provided with opportunities to share their genuine voice, educators gain deeper understanding and appreciation of students’ cultural, economic, and geographic circumstances that can better serve students’ diverse needs, leading to improved outcomes. Incorporating student voice fosters culturally responsive learning environments, which is especially important for Superdiverse Multilingual Learners to enhance educational equity, access, opportunity, and success (Gay 2018) by validating their “experiences, perspectives, and expertise” (Cook-Sather, p.183). Safir and Dugan (2021) posit that student voices, stories, artifacts, experiences, and observations serve as “primary texts for our own deep learning” (Safir, para. 4, 2023). Listening to student voice is a powerful way to invite students to authentically participate by co-creating and influencing educational decision-making that can impact their outcomes, while providing students with the agency to represent their funds of knowledge to bring student-centered change (Knowledgeworks, 2024; Scarparolo and MacKinnon, 2022).

This guide is intended to provide educators with information about the wide variety of English Learner (EL)<sup>1</sup>/Multilingual adolescents in our schools and the processes that educators can use to design and implement programs and services that build on their assets and support their educational progress and college and career readiness for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Information about these students was obtained through interviews with 26 adolescents conducted by researchers from the Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL) at Loyola Marymount University in 2022 and 2023. The students interviewed represent much of the cultural and linguistic diversity among English/Multilingual Learners, including U.S.-born, immigrant and Newcomer students from varying countries, and a wide range of EL typologies, including varying levels of English proficiency and classification across 10 native languages. We supplement their perspective with curated resources from organizations that advise educators on effective educational programs and research literature on educational practices that support superdiverse adolescents.

As you peruse this guide, you may have questions about its focus on Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners. For example, “Why Superdiverse?” “Why Multilingual Learners?” “Why Adolescents?” We briefly explain these terms through the lens of understanding the educational

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<sup>1</sup> We use the federally recognized term “English Learners (ELs)” to refer to students who are adding English to their home languages from a broad range of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. CEEL encourages more asset-based terms for ELs and uses the term Multilingual Learners, alongside ELs throughout this Guidebook. Multilingualism indicates the ability to speak multiple languages. Multilingual Learners develop or are developing proficiency in both English and one or more other languages, which may be their home language.

experiences and desires of students who speak a language other than English and have the potential to develop proficiency in multiple languages.

### **Why Superdiverse?**

The United States Department of Education reports that in 2021, English Learners in public schools were 10.6% of enrollment.<sup>2</sup> The California Department of Education (CDE) reports that in the 2022-23 school year, state public schools served over 5.8 million students, of whom 1.1 million were English Learners, representing 19% of total enrollment, the largest number of ELs in the U.S. California's English/Multilingual Learners are diverse in many ways, including language, country of origin, and culture. These students speak over 108 different languages, and while over 900,000 (82%) speak Spanish as their primary language, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Arabic, Cantonese, Russian, and Farsi are spoken by over 10,000 students each<sup>3</sup>. In addition to linguistic diversity, English/Multilingual Learner students' countries of origin range from the United States to the countries represented by the wide diversity of languages. Their culture reflects their family traditions in each of these countries. Additionally, the students represent diverse life, education, socio-economic class, identity, and immigration experiences. They reside in urban, suburban, and rural communities located throughout the state. These students are diverse, and the intersection of their diverse backgrounds leads to the use of the term "superdiverse" to highlight the extensive diversity among California's English/Multilingual Learner students.

### **Why Adolescents?**

English/Multilingual Learners in middle school and high school contribute a multitude of assets to the educational environment, enriching the learning experience for all students and fostering a more inclusive and dynamic educational context. However, they often face multiple challenges, including developing their identity and attaining academic and linguistic proficiency in order to have access to and success in post-secondary college and career options.

The adolescents featured in this guide represent a variety of racial and ethnic groups. These minority youth may face perpetual foreigner syndrome, usually based on their physical appearance, even if they were born in the U.S. They may not identify as American, and, instead, be very invested in exploring their ethnic identification and affirmation (Schwartz et al., 2015). Many of these adolescents, particularly Newcomer students and Long-Term English Learners (LTEs), face significant hurdles. Adolescent Newcomer students including immigrants, refugees, and asylees, may have varying levels of prior schooling and English proficiency, may have experienced significant deprivation or trauma prior to their arrival in the U.S., and may face significant economic hurdles and cultural challenges in their new setting in our schools and communities. LTEs are adolescents who have been enrolled in public schools

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. (2024). English Learners in Public Schools. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cgf/english-learners>

<sup>3</sup> California Department of Education, Dataquest (2022-23). <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/DQCensus/EnrELAS.aspx>



for six or more years but have not made sufficient progress to become Reclassified Fluent English Proficient. These adolescents in middle and high school speak conversational English, but they do not meet criteria comparable to English-only students for academic English performance, despite their years of education in California schools. One consequence can be limited access to college preparatory courses or electives due to LTELs' continued enrollment in English Language Development courses. Both Newcomers and LTEL adolescents face the challenge of self-identity and rapid acquisition of English to succeed in their academic preparation for the transition to post-secondary college and career options.

This guide highlights the multiplicity of adolescent, multilingual students' racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds represented in our study. We celebrate that these students broaden our understanding and valuing of this superdiversity. We also acknowledge that the superdiversity of the Adolescent Multilingual Learners is greater than our study and encourage researchers and practitioners to search out, listen, and learn from students with profiles beyond those in this guide. As seen in Table 1 below, the students whose voices we listened to were born in a wide variety of countries, speak various native languages, and are at differing levels of English Language proficiency.

**Table 1. Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners: Native Country, Native Language, and English Learner Status**

Student Pseudonym	Native Country	Native Language	English Learner Status*
<a href="#">Amani</a>	Yemen	Arabic	EL - Novice
<a href="#">Belén</a>	United States of America	English	IFEP
<a href="#">Bisrat</a>	Eritrea	Tigrinya	EL - Novice
<a href="#">Carolina</a>	Venezuela	Spanish	EL
<a href="#">Daniel</a>	United States of America	Vietnamese	LTEL
<a href="#">Diana</a>	United States of America	Spanish	RFEP
<a href="#">Emma</a>	Mexico	Spanish	RFEP
<a href="#">Esrin</a>	Afghanistan	Farsi	LTEL
<a href="#">Francisco</a>	Mexico	Spanish	EL
<a href="#">Gloria</a>	United States of America	Spanish	RFEP
<a href="#">Hector</a>	United States of America	Spanish	RFEP
<a href="#">Hossein</a>	Afghanistan	Farsi	EL - Novice
<a href="#">Jaime</a>	Mexico	Spanish	LTEL
<a href="#">Jasmine</a>	Philippines	Tagalog	RFEP
<a href="#">Jian</a>	China	Cantonese	EL - Novice
<a href="#">Koloa</a>	United States of America	Tongan	RFEP
<a href="#">Leticia</a>	Honduras	Spanish	EL - Novice
<a href="#">María</a>	El Salvador	Spanish	EL - Novice
<a href="#">Miguel</a>	El Salvador	Spanish	EL - Novice
<a href="#">Oscar</a>	Honduras	Spanish	EL - Novice

Student Pseudonym	Native Country	Native Language	English Learner Status*
<a href="#">Pedro</a>	United States of America	Spanish	RFEP
<a href="#">Roberta</a>	Guatemala	Spanish	EL - Novice
<a href="#">Silvia</a>	Guatemala	Acateco	EL - Novice
<a href="#">Tomas</a>	El Salvador	Spanish	EL - Novice
<a href="#">Yolanda</a>	United States of America	Spanish	LTEL
<a href="#">Yuxuan</a>	China	Mandarin	LTEL

\*Note: English Learner Status Terms: EL is English Learner; EL-Novice is English Learner Novice level on Initial English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC); IFEP is Initial Fluent English Proficient; LTEL is Long-Term English Learner; RFEP is Reclassified Fluent English Proficient.

## Why Multilingual Learners?

There are many typologies of students who speak a primary language other than English. In our study, we interviewed current English/Multilingual Learners, such as many recently arrived students who are emerging English Learners, more advanced English Learners, Long-Term English Learners (LTEL), and former English Learners who are Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP). These students are known collectively as “Ever ELs.” A few students in our study entered school fluent in both their home language and English and are known as Initial Fluent English Proficient students (IFEP). Understanding the experiences of these students with diverse language profiles is important for educators to enhance their strengths, to meet their needs, and to fulfill California’s commitment to educational programs that successfully prepare them for their future. In 2017, California adopted the California English Learner Roadmap: Strengthening Comprehensive Educational Policies, Programs and Practices for English Learners<sup>4</sup>, a new policy to guide the design and implementation of effective educational programs for English Learners. Many schools and districts have made significant progress in implementing key aspects of the EL Roadmap; however, underachievement persists on state assessments of academic performance and college and career readiness.

## Purpose

The Superdiverse Multilingual Learners Resource Guide is designed to support educators and policymakers to develop and implement effective programs and services for multilingual students by providing student profiles, tools, and resources to accomplish three essential purposes:

1. Orient educators to the importance of listening to the voices of Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners to deepen their understanding of the complexity of the students’ backgrounds and experiences and to recognize their linguistic, cultural, and educational assets and challenges.

<sup>4</sup> California Department of Education. (2017). *California English Learner Roadmap. Strengthening Comprehensive Policies, Programs and Practices for English Learners*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/SP/el/rm/elroadmappolicy.asp>



2. Support educators to learn about the diverse profiles of the Multilingual Learner students' experiences and outcomes in their local context.
3. Guide policymakers and educators to sponsor, design and implement enhanced educational programs and services for the superdiverse Multilingual Learners they serve.

## **How We Learned from Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners**

Rather than characterizing student diversity across static demographics of race, ethnicity, language, and socio-economic indicators, we apply the concept of superdiversity to “extend beyond traditional notions of diversity and which crosses boundaries of language, culture, generational immigration patterns, socio-economic class, and individual identities” (Alvarez-Pérez & Harris, 2022)<sup>5</sup>. Superdiverse English/Multilingual Learner adolescents can be found in large, concentrated numbers in districts receiving significant numbers of Newcomer students from various countries as well as in districts that have struggled to meet the educational needs of Long-Term English Learners. Superdiverse Multilingual Learners are also present in smaller numbers and may be “unseen,” particularly in districts with fewer Newcomer arrivals or Long-Term English Learners. As educators we are committed to meeting the needs of all our Superdiverse Multilingual Learner students, whether it is hundreds or a handful.

To address the knowledge gap about California’s diverse secondary students, we posed the following question: What are the school experiences of a variety of profiles of culturally and linguistically diverse adolescents in California? To better learn about our diverse students, we began with an environmental scan of district EL enrollment data to identify potential districts for participation. Northern and Southern California districts agreed to participate in the study. These districts represented much of the cultural and linguistic diversity among Multilingual Learners as described above. In addition to those typologies, we developed the following criteria for selection of students to be interviewed:

- Students in grades 7-12 in fall 2022 or 2023, based on interview timelines
- Proportionate number of males and females
- Representative of the major race/ethnic groups in the district
- Representative of all language typologies in the district: Initial Fluent English Proficient, English Learners, Reclassified Fluent English Proficient
- For the EL student group, inclusion of both recent immigrants/recent arrivals and Long-Term English Learners

All identifying and demographic information remained confidential. We gathered parent consent and student assent and interviewed 26 adolescents in middle and high school about their experiences.

During the interviews, students shared what was important to them and provided insights about what educators are doing well and what they can do better to support them in the post-pandemic era. We

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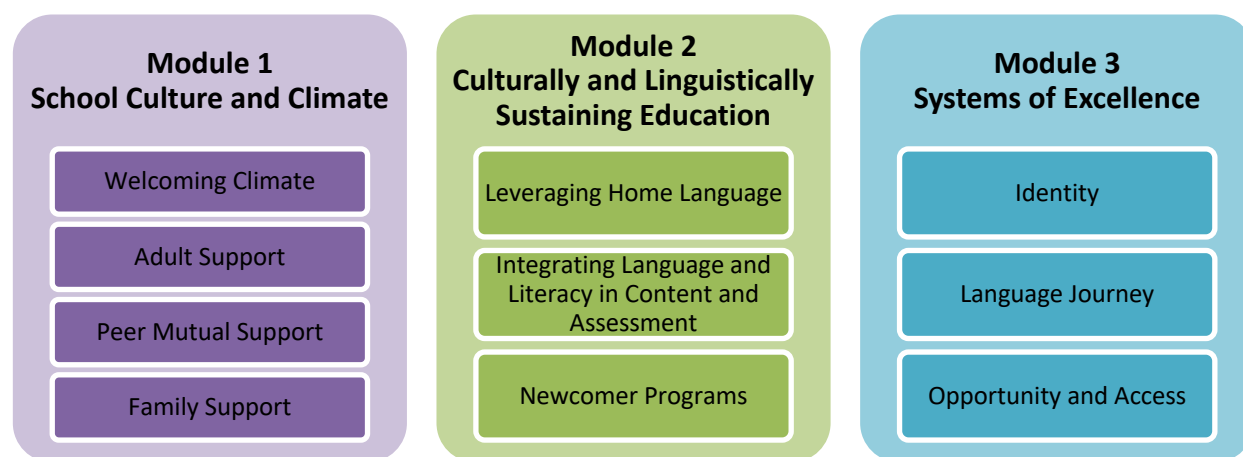
<sup>5</sup> Alvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension. A qualitative approach with second generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi-org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

used qualitative analysis<sup>6</sup> to create analytic memos that synthesized interview data. Based on this analysis, we created individual student profiles that highlight key experiences of these students. The profiles uplift students' voices and document the experiences of these Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners and yielded shared experiences and perspectives. We then engaged in multiple rounds of analysis and reflection on the memos to identify emerging modules<sup>7</sup> and the elements that comprised them. We organized these modules and elements into three thematic modules, each including the elements that many students expressed.

## How to Use the Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners Resource Guide

We center this resource guide on the voices of the Superdiverse Multilingual Learner adolescent students we interviewed. Their voices yielded important insights about their educational experiences, some beneficial and others challenging, that we describe in individual profiles that summarize their comments. We categorized our findings into three overarching thematic modules and the corresponding elements within each module shown in Figure 1 below. The student profiles are organized into thematic modules that reflect shared experiences and perspectives across groups of students. Additionally, we compared the thematic modules and elements with advice from educational organizations and research literature focused on Multilingual Learners; we found many similarities and some differences.

**Figure 1. Modules and Corresponding Elements**



We designed the resource guide to be used in multiple ways to support educators in a variety of roles in implementing effective programs and services for multilingual students. University preservice programs can align the modules with their program and/or course objectives in support of educator candidate learning outcomes, ensuring pre-service educators are equipped to support Superdiverse Multilingual

<sup>6</sup> Saldaña, J. & Omasta, M. (2022). *Qualitative research: Analyzing life*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Sage.

<sup>7</sup> Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Sage.

Learners. School district and site leaders can engage colleagues in studying the student profiles and applying the tools within the modules during monthly instructional professional learning sessions and can align this work with their district’s equity strategic planning. Teacher leaders and coaches can also engage colleagues in learning from the profiles and applying the tools to equity school plans and implementation with students. Policymakers can use the lessons learned from our students’ profiles to sponsor legislation to increase support for Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners and influence legislative decision making and funding. Figure 2 below highlights examples of how educational professionals and policymakers can use this Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners Resource Guide.

**Figure 2. Superdiverse Multilingual Learners Resource Guide – Educational Role and Applied Uses**

Educator Preparation: Preservice Programming	Educator preparation professionals can align Resource Guide modules with course objectives in support of educator candidate learning outcomes, equipping preservice educators (e.g. teachers, counselors, administrators) to support superdiverse adolescent multilingual learners.
District and Site Leaders	District and site leaders can use the modules during monthly instructional leader professional learning sessions aligning this equity work with strategic planning (e.g., Local Control Accountability Plan, English Learner Master Plan, site plans, and state and federal school improvement plans).
Teacher Leaders	Teacher leaders and coaches can engage and support colleagues in application of the modules with their students to enhance their educational experiences and options.
Policymakers	Policymakers can utilize the students’ profiles to influence legislative decision making, funding allocations, and policy initiatives.




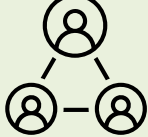
The Superdiversity Adolescent Multilingual Learners Resource Guide serves as a powerful tool to center the voices of our superdiverse students in planning and facilitating their educational programming. Practitioners and researchers can use this guidebook as a model for their own Participatory Action Research and Research Practice Partnerships that uplift student voice as a foundation for equity action. Additionally, the resources and references in the appendix provide a robust collection of toolkits, strategies, knowledge building resources, and professional organizations to support your inquiry.

The resource guide presents each of the modules and the corresponding elements that pertain to it in separate sections that can be used either individually for a deep dive into the module or sequentially for an overall understanding of the students’ perspectives. Each module begins with profiles of students who speak to the elements of the module. We include reflective questions to deepen understanding of

the implications for educational systems. Each module provides a 3-step process to Listen, Learn, and Lead for the purpose of designing an Equity Action Plan to positively impact each reader's organization.

Additionally, the following tools and resources support the Listen, Learn, and Lead process to move from understanding of the profile students' perspectives to understanding one's own context of strengths and needs, and ultimately to implementation of a collaboratively and strategically designed Equity Action Plan. As shown in Figure 3 below, the tools for each step in the process facilitate deepening understanding, expanding knowledge, and planning action to increase equity.

**Figure 3. Listen, Learn, and Lead: Tools**

	<b>Tool 1- Listen</b> <b>A self-reflection tool to note key ideas and quotes from students and their impact on the reader's own personal and professional experience.</b>
	<b>Tool 2a – Learn</b> <b>An overview of the module and corresponding elements from the student profiles that can be used to frame an equity action focus area that addresses the multiple elements within a module that your organization should address.</b>
	<b>Tool 2b – Learn</b> <b>A checklist of information sources to consider for gathering information from your own organization to guide the development of your Equity Action Plan.</b>
	<b>Tool 3 – Lead</b> <b>An Equity Action planning tool to note:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the module, corresponding elements, and key reflections from the profiles</li> <li>• information gathered from your own interviews and information</li> <li>• key considerations and steps to develop your Equity Action Plan</li> </ul>

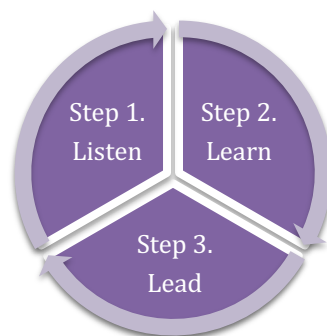
The next step in using this resource guide is to use the tools and resources as you explore each of the three modules and their elements to support your inquiry and application of student voices in framing educational improvement initiatives. We begin with Module 1. School Culture and Climate.

# Module 1. School Culture and Climate

## School Culture and Climate Module and Corresponding Elements

Module 1 focuses on School Culture and Climate. We provide a definition that addresses the relevance of this module for superdiverse adolescents and the corresponding elements that pertain to the module. We then prompt teams to leverage student voice (White et al., 2023) by engaging in a 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead process using the reflection, analysis, and planning tools for each step. The process begins with the use of *Tool 1: Listen – Student Profile Reflections*. This tool is foundational to understanding students' lived experiences and reflecting on how these relate to one's own life and professional experiences (Flint & Jagers, 2021). Next, with *Tool 2a: Learn – Modules and Elements* and *Tool 2b: Learn – Information Sources*, we propose strategies for obtaining information from your own schools, districts, or organizations. To promote equity-focused change in education systems, practice, and/or policy, we introduce *Tool 3: Lead - Equity Action Plan*, intended to assist teams and leaders in developing and refining inquiry questions and processes to increase responsiveness to superdiverse adolescents. The end of this module provides curated practitioner resources related to Culture and Climate to support individual and collective knowledge building. Additionally, the References section of the Resource Guide includes multiple research studies, which also contribute to knowledge building. Figure 4 below provides an overview of this 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead process.

**Figure 4. Listen, Learn, and Lead 3-Step Process**



## School Culture and Climate Definitions

The essence of culture and climate are the beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and the established practices and interactions among the adults, students, and families in the school system. Policies that establish practices for opportunity and access for Multilingual Learners can influence the school environment.

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life and can be identified by indicators of engagement, belonging, and mattering (White et al., 2019). Through policies, practices, and interpersonal interactions, schools develop and communicate beliefs and perceptions about English Learners (Berkowitz, 2017). Figure 5 below provides an overview of the School Culture and Climate module and its corresponding elements.

**Figure 5. School Culture and Climate Module and Corresponding Elements**



### ***Element 1. Welcoming Climate***

Referring to the sense of acceptance, recognition, and engagement that students should experience, a welcoming climate is facilitated by purposeful supportive and positive interactions between adults and students; and particularly for adolescent students who speak various languages, the availability of speakers of other languages for these students who are beginning their English language journey. Research confirms that when affirming classroom communities are formed, students' experiences are honored; activities that students enjoy are incorporated into the curriculum; and social, emotional, and academic learning are supported (Bishop & Harrison, 2020).

### ***Element 2. Adult Support***

Teachers, staff, administrators, family, and community members should cultivate positive connections, emotional support, nurturing environments, academic support, and social interactions among students, adults, and peers (National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, 2023). Supportive adults especially need to cultivate these connections and "effectively navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities among individuals and diverse groups especially in supporting the schooling experiences of diverse English Learners" (California Department of Education, 2020).

### ***Element 3. Peer Mutual Support***

Positive peer relationships provide interpersonal and academic support for students and are essential for a positive school climate (Brown, 2019). Peer relationships are facilitated by adults in a school system and can be developed by providing opportunities for students to establish relationships such as through activities, collaborative classwork, or assignments. Positive peer relationships are linked to belonging, acceptance, and achievement. Research in this area shows the positive effects of peer



relationships, especially for diverse adolescents’ linguistic and academic development as well as overall wellbeing (Carhill Poza et al., 2015).

#### ***Element 4. Family Support and Engagement***

A collaborative partnership between families and schools benefits student learning and engagement and includes intentional outreach to families in meaningful ways that honor and validate their voice, culture, funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992), and language to engage in collaborative support for children’s learning and development in equitable environments (Mapp & Bergman, 2019).

Table 2 below presents the students who spoke about school culture and climate as well as their language and cultural background. Click on the student’s name to access the full profile.

**Table 2. School Culture and Climate Profile Overview**

School Culture and Climate Profile Overview		
Element	Student Pseudonym	Language and Cultural Background Spotlight
Welcoming Climate	<a href="#">Jaime</a>	11 <sup>th</sup> grade LTEL born in the U.S. who reflects on the welcoming and safe school environment challenges
	<a href="#">María</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from El Salvador who shares her experience on her first day of school in the U.S.
	<a href="#">Miguel</a>	10 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from El Salvador who highlights the importance of a welcoming environment
	<a href="#">Amani</a>	12 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Yemen who reflects on her experiences in her first year in school in the U.S.
Adult Support	<a href="#">Oscar</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Honduras who reflects on his experiences with his teacher and peers
	<a href="#">Silvia</a>	10 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Guatemala who reflects on adult support and primary language support
	<a href="#">Koloa</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP from Tonga who shares advice for his teachers
	<a href="#">Bisrat</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Eritrea who appreciates his teachers’ support
Peer Mutual Support	<a href="#">Diana</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP born in the U.S. whose home language is Spanish and is motivated by her peers
	<a href="#">Silvia</a>	10 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Guatemala who is supported with schoolwork by her peers
	<a href="#">Yuxuan</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade LTEL from China who values connections with peers
	<a href="#">Bisrat</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Eritrea who enjoys meeting students from other countries
	<a href="#">Pedro</a>	12 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP English Learner who was born in the U.S. and values his family’s support for his education

School Culture and Climate Profile Overview		
Element	Student Pseudonym	Language and Cultural Background Spotlight
Family Support and Engagement	<a href="#">Roberta</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Guatemala who appreciates her parents' advocacy for her
	<a href="#">Daniel</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade LTEL born in the U.S. whose parents are from Vietnam and motivate him to succeed in education
	<a href="#">Leticia</a>	10 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Honduras who is motivated by her parents

### 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead Process and Tools

The tools below will help you implement the 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead process to identify key areas your organization can consider to plan the next steps for moving forward.



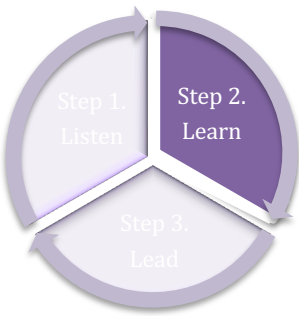
#### ***Step 1. Listen – School Culture and Climate***

**Tool 1. Student Profile Reflections – View [HERE](#)**

#### **Directions for Tool 1. Listen – Student Profile Reflections**

Select an element within the School Culture and Climate module that you are interested in and could be enhanced to provide an improved culture and climate for Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners. From the table above, link to the profiles of the students who spoke about this element to listen to their voices.

- Access and read each of the Student Profiles for the module and corresponding elements you are interested in addressing.
- Using *Tool 1: Student Profile Reflections*, note important comments or views related to this module by this group of culturally and linguistically diverse adolescents.
- Discuss with your team and identify common wonderings/questions.



### ***Step 2. Learn – School Culture and Climate***

**Tool 2a. Learn – Modules and Elements Overview – View [HERE](#)**

**Tool 2b. Learn – Check Sheet for Information Sources – View [HERE](#)**

#### **Directions for Tool 2a. Learn – Modules and Elements Overview**

As you begin to move from reflection to action, it is important to understand how the profiles you read on a specific element relate to the other elements within each module. This will support your decision-making about an equity action focus area that addresses multiple interconnected elements.

Review the modules and their elements and consider how to frame an equity action focus area that addresses the multiple elements within a module that your organization should address.

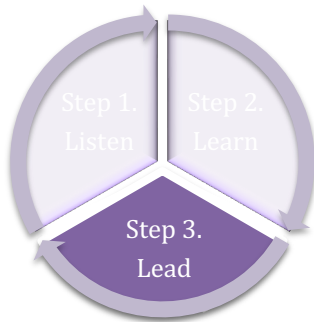
#### **Directions for Tool 2b. Learn – Information Sources**

Learning from student voices (PERTS/Elevate, 2024) involves listening to a wide variety of adolescent EL/MLs across their diverse typologies such as home language, country of origin, racial/ethnic background, and English proficiency. As you complete that process and begin to discern key modules and elements from their conversations that you can address to increase equity for your superdiverse students, it is also important to ask yourself, “What other information should we also consider?” *Tool 2b, Information Sources*, is designed to help you identify and brainstorm two sources of additional information:

“Who” you might consider interviewing or surveying, and  
“What” other information you might gather.

Review the checklist of information sources in Tool 2b. Brainstorm important information sources.

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### ***Step 3. Lead – School Culture and Climate***

**Tool 3. Lead – Equity Action Plan – View [HERE](#)**

#### **Directions for Tool 3. Lead – Equity Action Plan**

Using what you heard from student profiles and learned from additional interviews and information gathered:

1. Use the space above the table on the tool to identify the module and elements you identified as focus areas for developing and implementing an Equity Action Plan.
2. Note in the “Listen” column on the left the key reflections and learnings based on the student profiles you read.
3. Note in the “Learn – Who” column the students and adults you should interview for more information about the culture and climate at your school or district.
4. Note in the “Learn – What” column the additional information you can gather to learn from data about the culture and climate at your school or district.
5. Note in the “Lead” column, who can help with interviews or surveys, who can support access and analysis of needed information, and how you can collaborate with others to design and implement a thorough Equity Action Plan for your school or district.

#### ***Sample Equity Action Plan***

Review the sample Equity Action Plan on the following page. This sample presents only the first row from *Tool 3: Lead – Equity Action Plan*. The Equity Action Plan at the link above includes multiple rows and can be expanded, as needed.

**Directions:**

- Identify the module you will focus on for your Equity Action Plan in the space above the table. Next, list each of the elements you will include in your Equity Action Plan in the first column on the left.
- For each element, note key profile reflections, followed in the next two columns by “who” you will interview or survey, and “what” information you will gather.
- Use the last column on the right to note key considerations and necessary steps to develop an Equity Action Plan for your organization.

**Module: School Culture and Climate**

Elements	Listen Key Profile Reflections	Learn “Who” to Interview/Survey	Learn “What” Information Sources	Lead Equity Action Plan Considerations and Steps
<i>Welcoming Climate</i>	<i>Amani – She appreciates the support from the one teacher at her school who speaks Arabic.</i>  <i>Miguel – He appreciates his Advisory class with other Newcomer students and the award he earned for effort.</i>	<i>Students we should interview:</i>  <i>Adults we should interview:</i>	<i>Classroom visits: Can we observe in an ELD class and a content class?</i>  <i>What supports students to feel they belong in the school?</i>  <i>How are families engaged in their child’s education?</i>	<i>Who can we involve in this project?</i>  <i>How/when can we share what we learned?</i>

---

**School Culture and Climate: Resources and References**

The practitioner resources linked below are organized by the module of Culture and Climate and its associated elements that emerged from the voices of our superdiverse students. Within each module, the practitioner resources are organized first by the elements, and then within each element, resources are identified as Toolkits, Strategies, Knowledge Building, and Professional Organizations. The references linked below are listed in alphabetical order by author and can be perused to find research literature that assists with expanding knowledge about Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners.

**Practitioner Resources – View [HERE](#)**

**References - View [HERE](#)**

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## Module 2. Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education

### Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education Module and Corresponding Elements

Module 2 focuses on Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education. We provide a definition that addresses the relevance of this module and the corresponding elements that pertain to the module. We then prompt teams to leverage student voice (White et al., 2023) by engaging in a 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead process using the reflection, analysis, and planning tools for each step. The process begins with the use of *Tool 1: Listen – Student Profile Reflections*. This tool is foundational to understanding students' lived experiences and reflecting on how these relate to one's own life and professional experiences (Flint & Jagers, 2021). Next, with *Tool 2a: Learn – Modules and Elements*, and *Tool 2b: Learn – Information Sources*, we propose strategies for obtaining information from your own district, school, or organization. To promote equity-focused change in education systems, practice, and/or policy, we introduce *Tool 3: Lead – Equity Action Plan*, intended to assist teams and leaders in developing and refining inquiry questions and processes to increase responsiveness to superdiverse adolescents. The end of this module provides curated resources related to Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education to support individual and collective knowledge building. Additionally, the References section of the Resource Guide includes multiple research studies that also contribute to knowledge building. Figure 6 below provides an overview of this 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead process.

**Figure 6. Listen, Learn, Lead 3-Step Process**

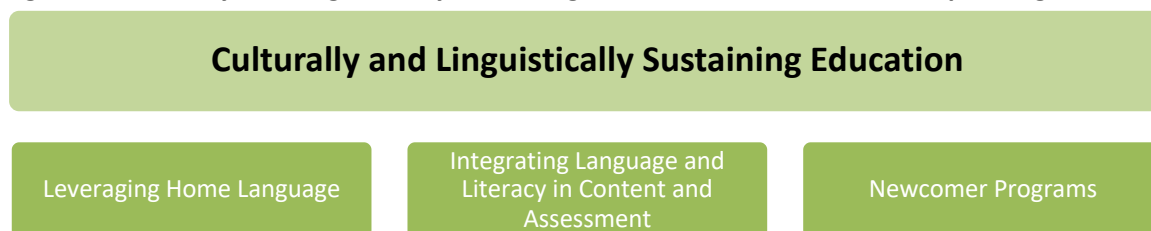




## Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education Definitions

Our definition of culturally and linguistically sustaining education is based on and extends the research related to the importance of culturally relevant education (Gay, 2002; Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014; Paris & Alim, 2017) to recognize the important role that native language plays in the student's development and enactment of culture (Ruiz, 2008). The implications of this research are clear: 1) all students, particularly historically marginalized students of color, merit the right to receive an education that builds on their culture and is focused on paying back the debt of educational systems marked by inequity and lack of inclusivity (Ladson-Billings, 2006); and 2) all students, particularly students who come to school with a native language other than English, merit an education based on the recognition that developing and sustaining their language is a right (Ruiz, 1984) that each Multilingual Learner deserves. Essential components of culturally and linguistically sustaining education include leveraging home language, integrating language and literacy in all aspects of instruction and assessment, and enactment of educational programs, such as Newcomer programs, designed to meet the diverse culture, language, and needs of Multilingual Learners. Figure 7 below provides an overview of the Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education module and its corresponding elements.

**Figure 7. Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education Module and Corresponding Elements**



### ***Element 1. Leveraging Home Language***

When school systems systematically incorporate Multilingual Learners' home languages, they can experience academic success in not only literacy, but also across content areas (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2012). And, in the implementation of systemic incorporation of home languages, the effectiveness of dual language immersion instruction has been demonstrated over 20 years of research (Thomas & Collier, 2019).

### ***Element 2. Integrating Language and Literacy in Content and Assessment***

"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" (California Department of Education, 2018, p. 24). Grade-level and content instruction in all subjects includes language support for ELs through integrated English Language Development, primary language instruction, and translanguaging (California

Department of Education, 2012; Janzen, 2008; Walqui & van Lier, 2010; de Oliveira et al., 2018). The language of assessment meets the student’s primary language and language of instruction (Abedi & Gándara, 2006).

### ***Element 3. Newcomer Programs***

Multi-faceted programs for Newcomer students and their families serve to “help bridge the educational and social-emotional experience of students and to support Newcomer students and their families during, at a minimum, their first year of schooling in the United States” (California Department of Education, 2023). Effective Newcomer programs ensure that students are given opportunities to acclimate to the American education system, while receiving all of the necessary support and services to be successful (California Department of Education, n.d.). Research shows that successful local programs serving Newcomer students are based on the most recent pedagogical research related to integrated language and literacy, are implemented effectively with adequate resources, and are proven effective in overcoming language barriers (California Department of Education, 2023; Umansky et al., 2020).

Table 3 below presents the students who spoke about culturally and linguistically sustaining education and a spotlight of their language and cultural background. Click on their name to access the full profile.

**Table 3. Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education Profile Overview**

Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education Profile Overview		
Element	Student Pseudonym	Language and Cultural Background Spotlight
Leveraging Home Language	<a href="#">Roberta</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Guatemala who appreciates school home language support for herself and her mother
	<a href="#">Tomas</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from El Salvador who faces challenges with home language and schoolwork
	<a href="#">Koloa</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP from Tonga who reflects on overcoming challenges with language
	<a href="#">Amani</a>	12 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Yemen who uplifts advice for home language support at her school
Integrating Language and Literacy in	<a href="#">Belén</a>	10 <sup>th</sup> grade IFEP born in the U.S. who speaks Spanish and reflects on a school project that shared her culture and creativity
	<a href="#">Esrin</a>	11 <sup>th</sup> grade LTEL from Afghanistan who is appreciative of learning about new cultures and the opportunity to share about hers
	<a href="#">Jaime</a>	11 <sup>th</sup> grade LTEL born in the U.S. who strives to preserve his culture and share it with others
	<a href="#">Jian</a>	10 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Tsingtao, China who speaks Cantonese and enjoys cameras and photography
	<a href="#">Koloa</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP from Tonga who reflects on his bilingual journey and is proud of his success on school projects

Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education Profile Overview		
Element	Student Pseudonym	Language and Cultural Background Spotlight
Content and Assessment	<a href="#">Yuxuan</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade LTEL from China who shares his experiences with test taking
Newcomer Programs	<a href="#">Carolina</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Venezuela who reflects on navigating her first day of school in the U.S.
	<a href="#">Francisco</a>	12 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer, born in the U.S. and raised in Mexico, who shares challenges faced on his first day of in-person school
	<a href="#">María</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from El Salvador who reflects on language challenges on her first day of school in the U.S.
	<a href="#">Hossein</a>	11 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Afghanistan who uplifts support and interactions through Newcomer programs

### 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead Process and Tools

The tools below will help you implement the 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead process to identify key areas your organization can consider and to plan the next steps for moving forward.



#### ***Step 1. Listen – Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education***

**Tool 1. Listen – Student Profile Reflections – View [HERE](#)**

#### Directions for using Tool 1. Listen – Student Profile Reflections

Select an element within the Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education module that you are interested in and could be enhanced to provide improved culturally and linguistically sustaining education for Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners. From the table above, link to the profiles of the students to listen to their voices.

- Access and read each of the Student Profiles for the module and corresponding elements you are interested in addressing.
- Using the *Tool 1: Student Profile Reflections*, note important comments or views related to this module and elements by this group of culturally and linguistically diverse adolescents.
- Discuss with your team and identify common wonderings/questions.



### ***Step 2. Learn – Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education***

**Tool 2a. Learn – Modules and Elements Overview – View [HERE](#)**

**Tool 2b. Learn – Check Sheet for Information Sources – View [HERE](#)**

#### **Directions for using Tool 2a. Learn – Modules and Elements Overview**

As you begin to move from reflection to action, it is important to understand how the profiles you read on a specific element relate to the other elements within each module. This will support your decision-making about an equity action focus area that addresses multiple interconnected elements.

Review the modules and their elements and consider how to frame an equity action focus area that addresses the multiple elements within a module that your organization should address.

#### **Directions for Tool 2b. Learn – Information Sources**

Learning from student voices involves continuing to listen to a wide variety of Adolescent Multilingual Learners across their diverse typologies such as home language, country of origin, racial/ethnic background, and English proficiency. As you complete that process and begin to discern key modules and elements from their conversations, it is important to ask yourself, “What other information should we also consider?” *Tool 2b, Information Sources*, will help you identify and brainstorm two sources of additional information:

“Who” you might consider interviewing or surveying, and

“What” other information you might gather.

Review the checklist of information sources in Tool 2b. Brainstorm important information sources.



### ***Step 3. Lead – Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education***

**Tool 3. Lead – Equity Action Plan – View [HERE](#)**

#### **Directions for Tool 3. Lead – Equity Action Plan**

Begin planning based on student profiles and additional interviews and information gathered.

1. Identify the module and elements you identified as focus areas for developing and implementing an Equity Action Plan.
2. Note in the “Listen” column key reflections and learnings based on the student profiles.
3. Note in the “Learn – Who” column the students and adults you should interview for more information about culturally and linguistically sustaining education at your school or district.
4. Note in the “Learn – What” column the additional information you can gather to learn from data about culturally and linguistically sustaining education at your school or district.
5. Note in the “Lead” column, who can help with interviews or surveys, who can support access and analysis of needed information, and how you can collaborate with others to design and implement a thorough Equity Action Plan for your school or district.

### **Sample Equity Action Plan**

Review the sample Equity Action Plan below. This sample presents only the first row from *Tool 3: Lead – Equity Action Plan*. The Equity Action Plan at the link above includes multiple rows and can be expanded, as needed.

#### **Directions:**

- Identify the module you will focus on for your Equity Action Plan in the space above the table. Next, list each of the elements you will include in your Equity Action Plan in the first column on the left.
- For each element, note key profile reflections, followed in the next two columns by “who” you will interview or survey, and “what” information you will gather.
- Use the last column on the right to note key considerations and necessary steps to develop an Equity Action Plan for your organization.

#### **Module: Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education**

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Listen Key Profile Reflections</b>	<b>Learn “Who” to Interview/Survey</b>	<b>Learn “What” Information Sources</b>	<b>Lead Equity Action Plan Considerations and Steps</b>
<i>Integrating Language and Literacy in Content and Assessment</i>	<i>Belen – She appreciated a school project based on her culture</i>  <i>Kohoa – He uses English at school and Tongan at home</i>	<i>Students we should interview:</i>  <i>Adults we should interview:</i>	<i>Classroom visits: Can we observe in an ELD class and a content class?</i>  <i>Is someone available to translate?</i>  <i>Are students actively engaged?</i>	<i>Who can we involve in this project?</i>  <i>How/when can we share what we learned?</i>

## **Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education: Resources and References**

The resources linked below are organized by the module of Culture and Climate and its associated elements that emerged from the voices of our Superdiverse students. Within each module, the resources are organized first by the elements, and then within each element, resources are identified as Toolkits, Strategies, Knowledge Building, and Professional Organizations. The references linked below are listed in alphabetical order by author and can be perused to find research literature that assists with expanding knowledge about Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners.

**Practitioner Resources – View [HERE](#)**

**References - View [HERE](#)**

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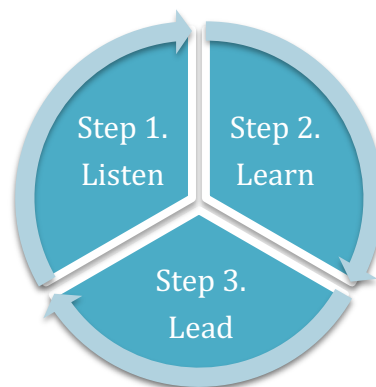


## Module 3. Systems of Excellence

### Systems of Excellence Module and Corresponding Elements

This module focuses on Systems of Excellence. We provide a definition that addresses the relevance of this module for superdiverse adolescents and the corresponding elements that pertain to the module. We then prompt teams to leverage student voice (White et al., 2023) by engaging in a 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead process using the reflection, analysis, and planning tools for each step. The process begins with the use of *Tool 1: Listen – Student Profile Reflections*. This tool is foundational to understanding students' lived experiences and reflecting on how these relate to one's own life and professional experiences (Flint & Jagers, 2021). Next, with *Tool 2a: Learn – Modules and Elements* and *Tool 2b: Learn – Information Sources*, we propose strategies for obtaining information from your own school, district, or organizations. To promote equity-focused change in education systems, practice, and/or policy, we introduce *Tool 3: Lead – Equity Action Planning and Analysis*, intended to assist teams and leaders in developing and refining inquiry questions and processes to increase responsiveness to superdiverse adolescents. The end of this module provides curated resources related to Systems of Excellence to support individual and collective knowledge building. Figure 8 below provides an overview of this 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead process.

**Figure 8. Listen, Learn, and Lead 3-Step Process**

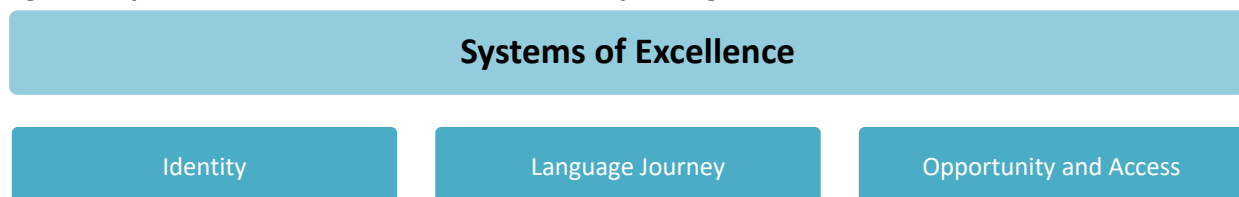


### Systems of Excellence Definitions

In order to ensure equitable, coherent, and effective education for diverse adolescents, the many components of an educational system's policies and practices need to be designed to support superdiverse adolescents, including Multilingual Learners, and monitored to ensure systemic implementation (Colón-Muñiz & Lavadenz, 2016; Reville & Sacks, 2021). This requires an understanding

of the multifaceted aspects of an educational system and the ability to lead and enact exemplary programs that build on the strengths and address the needs of superdiverse adolescent Multilingual Learners. Research continues to show the effectiveness of system-wide reform in contrast to individual initiatives that are not coordinated nor sustained across systems. Figure 9 below provides an overview of the Systems of Excellence module and the elements that pertain to this module.

**Figure 9. Systems of Excellence Module and Corresponding Elements**



### ***Element 1. Identity***

Students' cultural and language identities should be valued and leveraged to empower students for meaningful change in education systems and policy and practices to enhance their equity and excellence in their education. Research shows that uplifting students' identities "requires a reframing of these students against the deficit discourse that is often used to describe their linguistic competencies" (Reyes, 2019), with which "cultural brokering [can be] used to foster belonging as well as resist reductive spaces in a classroom community" (Malsbary, 2014).

### ***Element 2. Language Journey***

Language journey begins with the initial assessment of English language proficiency upon first entrance to school and continues through multiple phases: initial identification as an English Learner, annual progress in language proficiency, Reclassified Fluent English Proficient, and required monitoring of sustained linguistic and academic performance comparable to students whose first language is English. Language journey is enhanced through primary language and dual language programs (Umansky & Dumont, 2021).

### ***Element 3. Opportunity and Access***

Refers to the equitable availability (opportunity) combined with equitable access to the opportunity and the supports needed to fully attain the benefits of the opportunity. Research on this area indicates this as the students' provided "Opportunity to Learn," or "the concept of opportunity and the idea that what students learn or are able to do is shaped, affected by, or somehow a function of the opportunities provided" (Cogan et al., 2019). Opportunity and access for Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners includes rigorous coursework and support for achievement across multiple programmatic options such as Newcomer programs, access to college preparation courses including advanced

placement, International Baccalaureate and college-level courses, career technical preparation, and extracurricular activities.

Table 4 below identifies the students by pseudonym for each element of Systems of Excellence and provides a spotlight of their language and cultural background. Each student's profile can be accessed by clicking on their name to begin use of the Listen, Learn, and Lead tools that are also linked below for easy access.

**Table 4. Systems of Excellence Profile Overview**

Systems of Excellence Profile Overview		
Element	Student Pseudonym	Language and Cultural Background Spotlight
Identity	<a href="#">Hector</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP born in the U.S. whose siblings and family were born in Mexico and who reflects on his language journey and aspirations for the future
	<a href="#">Tomas</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from El Salvador who is a confident learner and helps her peers when they need support
	<a href="#">Yolanda</a>	11 <sup>th</sup> grade LTEL born in the U.S. whose parents were born in Mexico and motivate her
	<a href="#">Koloa</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP from Tonga who shares about his academic mindset and language experience
	<a href="#">Amani</a>	12 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Yemen whose family and cultural background motivates her to succeed in school
Language Journey	<a href="#">Diana</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP born in the U.S. whose home language is Spanish and is proud of her success on a district assessment for English Language Arts
	<a href="#">Emma</a>	7 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP from Zacatecas, Mexico who is proud of her reclassification
	<a href="#">Hector</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP born in the U.S. whose family is from Mexico and appreciates the opportunities from his reclassification
	<a href="#">Daniel</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade LTEL born in the U.S. whose parents are from Vietnam and faces challenges with taking the ELPAC assessment
Opportunity and Access	<a href="#">Belén</a>	10 <sup>th</sup> grade IFEP born in the U.S. whose home language is Spanish and finds support from her counselor
	<a href="#">Gloria</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP born in the U.S. who is a native Spanish speaker and shares her opportunities in AVID classes
	<a href="#">Jasmine</a>	12 <sup>th</sup> grade RFEP who was born in the Philippines and is passionate about her advocacy for herself and other diverse learners' education
	<a href="#">Hossein</a>	11 <sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer from Kunduz, Afghanistan who reflects on differences between his school in Afghanistan and the U.S.

### 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead Process and Tools

The tools below will help you implement the 3-Step Listen, Learn, and Lead process for identify key areas your organization can consider and to plan the next steps for moving forward.



#### ***Step 1. Listen – Systems of Excellence***

**Tool 1. Listen – Student Profile Reflections – View [HERE](#)**

#### **Directions for using Tool 1. Listen – Student Profile Reflections**

Select an element within the Systems of Excellence module that you are interested in and could be enhanced to provide improved systems of excellence for Superdiverse Multilingual Learners. From the table above, link to the profiles of the students who spoke about this element to listen to their voices.

1. Access and read each of the Student Profiles for the module and corresponding elements of which you are interested.
2. Using the *Tool 1: Listen - Student Profile Reflections*, note important comments or views related to this module and element by this group of culturally and linguistically diverse adolescents.
3. Discuss with your team and identify common wonderings/questions.



#### ***Step 2. Learn – Systems of Excellence***

**Tool 2a. Learn - Modules and Elements Overview – View [HERE](#)**

**Tool 2b. Learn - Check Sheet for Information Sources – View [HERE](#)**

### Directions for using Tool 2a. Learn – Modules and Elements Overview

As you begin to move from reflection to action, it is important to understand how the profiles you read on a specific element relate to the other elements within each module. This will support your decision-making about an equity action focus area that addresses multiple interconnected elements.

Review the modules and their elements and consider how to frame an equity action focus area that addresses the multiple elements within a module that your organization should address.

### Directions for using Tool 2b. Learn – Information Sources

Learning from student voices involves continuing to listen to a wide variety of adolescent EL/MLs across their diverse typologies such as home language, country of origin, racial/ethnic background, and English proficiency. As you complete that process and begin to discern key modules and elements from their conversations that you can address to increase equity for your superdiverse students, it is also important to ask yourself, “What other information should we also consider?” *Tool 2b Information Sources*, is designed to help you identify and brainstorm two sources of additional information:

“Who” you might consider interviewing or surveying, and  
“What” other information you might gather.

Review the checklist of information sources below. Feel free to brainstorm other information sources.



#### ***Step 3. Lead – Systems of Excellence***

**Tool 3. Lead – Equity Action Plan – View [HERE](#)**

### Directions for Tool 3. Lead – Equity Action Plan

Using what you heard from student profiles and learned from additional interviews and information:

1. Use the space above the table on the tool to identify the module and elements you identified as focus areas for developing and implementing an Equity Action Plan.
2. Note in the “Listen” column on the left the key reflections and learnings based on the student profiles you read.

- Note in the “Learn - Who” column the students and adults you should interview for more information about the culture and climate at your school or district.
- Note in the “Learn - What” column the additional information you can gather to learn from data about the culture and climate at your school or district.
- Note in the “Lead” column who can help with interviews or surveys, who can support access and analysis of needed information, and how you can collaborate with others to design and implement a thorough Equity Action Plan for your school or district.

### Sample Equity Action Plan

Review the sample Equity Action Plan below. This sample presents only the first row from *Tool 3: Lead – Equity Action Plan*. The Equity Action Plan at the link above includes multiple rows and can be expanded, as needed.

#### Directions:

- Identify the module you will focus on for your Equity Action Plan in the space above the table. Next, list each of the elements you will include in your Equity Action Plan in the first column on the left.
- For each element, note key profile reflections, followed in the next two columns by “who” you will interview or survey, and “what” information you will gather.
- Use the last column on the right to note key considerations and necessary steps to develop an Equity Action Plan for your organization.

#### Module: Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education

Elements	Listen Key Profile Reflections	Learn “Who” to Interview/Survey	Learn “What” Information Sources	Lead Equity Action Plan Considerations and Steps
<i>Language Journey</i>	<i>Emma – She is proud of her reclassification</i>	<i>Students we should interview:</i>	<i>Classroom visits: Can we observe in an ELD class and a content class?</i>	<i>Who can we involve in this project?</i>
	<i>Daniel – He is an LTEL and struggles with taking the ELPAC</i>	<i>Adults we should interview:</i>	<i>How do our designated ELD classes prepare student for reclassification?</i>	<i>How/when can we share what we observed in the classrooms we visited?</i>
			<i>How do our content classes prepare students for reclassification?</i>	



## **Systems of Excellence: Resources and References**

The practitioner resources linked below are organized by the module of Systems of Excellence and its associated elements that emerged from the voices of our Superdiverse students. Within each module, the resources are organized first by the elements, and then within each element, resources are identified as Toolkits, Strategies, Knowledge Building, and Professional Organizations. The references linked below are listed in alphabetical order by author and can be perused to find research literature that assists with expanding knowledge about Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners.

**Practitioner Resources – View [HERE](#)**

**References - View [HERE](#)**

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## **Appendix A - Glossary of Terms**

### **Module: School Culture and Climate**

School policies, practices, and interactions among the adults, students, and families in the school system establish a school's culture and climate. A positive school climate can influence the quality of relationships and well-being of students, staff, and families, which can impact student connectedness, achievement, and attendance (Magby & Cerna, 2023). White et al. (2019) found that climate can be identified by indicators of engagement, belonging, and mattering. Through policies, practices, and interpersonal interactions schools develop and communicate beliefs and perceptions about English Learners (Berkowitz, 2017).

#### **Element 1 - Welcoming Climate**

The sense of acceptance, recognition, and engagement that students should experience, particularly as they enter a new schooling environment, fosters a welcoming climate. It is facilitated by purposeful supportive and positive interactions between adults and students, and, particularly for diverse adolescent students, the availability of speakers of other languages for students who are beginning their English language journey. Research confirms that when affirming classroom communities are formed, students' experiences are honored; activities that students enjoy are incorporated into the curriculum; and social, emotional, and academic learning are supported (Bishop & Harrison, 2020).

#### **Element 2 - Adult Support**

Teachers, staff, administrators, family, and community members should cultivate positive connections, emotional support, nurturing environments, academic support, and social interactions among students, adults, and peers (National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, 2023). Supportive adults especially need to "effectively navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities among individuals and diverse groups" especially in supporting the schooling experiences of diverse English Learners (California Department of Education, 2020).

#### **Element 3 - Peer Mutual Support**

Positive peer relationships provide interpersonal and academic support for students and are essential for a positive school climate (Brown, 2019). Peer relationships are facilitated by adults in a school system and can be developed by providing opportunities for students to establish relationships through activities, collaborative classwork, or assignments. Positive peer relationships are linked to belonging, acceptance, and achievement. Research shows the positive effects of peer relationships, especially for diverse adolescents' linguistic and academic development as well as overall wellbeing (Carhill Poza et al., 2015).

#### **Element 4 - Family Support and Engagement**

A collaborative partnership between families and schools that benefits student learning and engagement and includes intentional outreach to families in meaningful ways that honor and validate their voice, culture, funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992) and language to engage in collaborative support learning in equitable environments (Mapp & Bergman, 2019).

## **Module: Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Instruction**

Our definition of culturally and linguistically sustaining education is based on and extends the research related to the importance of culturally relevant education (Gay, 2002; Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014; Paris & Alim, 2017) to recognize the important role that student native language plays both in the development and enactment of culture (Ruiz, 2008). The implications of this research are clear: 1) All students, particularly historically marginalized students of color, merit the right to receive an education that builds on their culture and is focused on paying back the debt of educational systems marked by inequity and lack of inclusivity (Ladson-Billings, 2006); 2) All students, particularly students who come to school with a native language other than English, merit an education based on the recognition that developing and sustaining their language is a right (Ruiz, 1984) that each Multilingual Learner deserves. Essential components of culturally and linguistically sustaining education include leveraging home language, integrating language and literacy in all aspects of instruction and assessment, and enactment of educational programs designed to meet the diverse culture, language, and needs of Multilingual Learners.

### **Element 1 - Leveraging Home Language**

School systems that systematically incorporate Multilingual Learners' home languages can experience academic success in not only literacy, but also across content areas (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2012). The implementation of systemic incorporation of home languages, particularly the effectiveness of dual language immersion instruction, has been demonstrated in over 20 years of research (Collier & Thomas, 2019).

### **Element 2 - Integrating Language and Literacy in Content and Assessment**

Grade-level and content instruction in all subjects (including disciplinary-specific discourse, reading, writing, problem solving in mathematics, science, history-social science, and English Language Arts) includes language support for ELs through integrated English Language Development, primary language instruction, and translanguaging (California Department of Education, 2012; Janzen, 2008; Walqui & van Lier, 2010; de Oliveira et al., 2018).

Three types of assessments include assessments of learning (summative), assessments for learning (formative), and assessments as learning which provide students with opportunities to reflect on their own learning and discuss their learning with peers. Assessment validity can be enhanced when the language of assessment meets the student's primary language and language of instruction (Abedi & Gándara, 2006).

### **Element 3 - Newcomer Programs**

Multi-faceted programs for Newcomer students and their families “help bridge the educational and social-emotional experience of students and to support Newcomer students and families during, at a minimum, their first year of schooling in the United States” (California Department of Education, 2023). Effective Newcomer programs ensure that Newcomer students are given opportunities to acclimate to the American education system and culture, while receiving all of the necessary support and services to be successful (California Department Education, n.d.). Research shows that successful local programs serving Newcomer students are based on the most recent pedagogical research, are implemented effectively with adequate resources, and are proven effective in overcoming language barriers (CDE, 2023; Umansky et al., 2020).

## **Module: Systems of Excellence**

To ensure equitable, coherent, and effective education for superdiverse adolescents, the many components of a district or school’s policies and practices need to be designed to support superdiverse adolescents, including English Learners, and monitored to ensure systemic implementation (Colón-Muñiz & Lavadenz, 2016; Reville & Sacks, 2021). This requires an understanding of the multifaceted aspects of an educational system and the ability to lead and enact exemplary programs that build on the strengths and address the needs of diverse adolescents. Research continues to show the effectiveness of system-wide reform in contrast to individual initiatives that are not coordinated and sustained across systems.

### **Element 1 - Identity**

Students’ cultural and language identities should be valued and leveraged to empower students for meaningful change in education systems and policy and practices to enhance their equity and excellence in their education. Research shows that uplifting students’ identities “requires a reframing of these students against the deficit discourse that is often used to describe their linguistic competencies” (Reyes, 2019, p. 532), with which cultural brokering [can be] used to foster belonging as well as resist reductive spaces in a classroom community. (Malsbary, 2014).

### **Element 2 - Language Journey**

The journey of learning English as a second language begins with the initial assessment of English language proficiency upon first entrance to school and continues to implementation of effective designated and integrated English Language Development, and through monitoring and support for annual progress in language proficiency to become Reclassified Fluent English Proficient. Language journey is enhanced through primary language and dual language programs (Umansky & Dumont, 2021).

### **Element 3 - Opportunity and Access**

Equitable availability (opportunity) combined with equitable access to the opportunity and the supports needed to fully attain the benefits of the opportunity are essential for all students, but most especially for historically underserved students, including Superdiverse Multilingual

Learners. Research on this area describes this as the students' provided "Opportunity to Learn," or "the concept of opportunity and the idea that what students learn or are able to do is shaped, affected by, or somehow a function of the opportunities provided" (Cogan et al., 2019, p. 374). Opportunity and access include rigorous coursework and support for achievement across multiple programmatic options such as Newcomer programs, access to college preparation courses including advanced placement, International Baccalaureate and college-level courses, career technical preparation, and extracurricular activities.



## Appendix B - Resource Guide Tools

### Tool 1. Listen – Student Profile Reflections

**Directions:**

- Access and read each of the Student Profiles for the module/elements for which you are interested.
- Using *Tool 1: Listen - Student Profiles Reflections*, note important quotes and your reflections.
- Discuss with your team and identify common wonderings/questions.

Profile Module and Element \_\_\_\_\_

Student	Key Student Quotes  What are key ideas and experiences the students are uplifting?	My Personal Reflection/Reaction  How do my life and work experiences connect to my selection of these quotes and ideas?

## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

### Tool 2a. Learn – Modules and Elements Overview

Directions: Review the modules and their elements and mark what your school/district will address.

Modules	Elements
<b>School Culture and Climate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welcoming Climate – Students experience a sense of belonging and mattering (White et al., 2019) through recognition, acceptance, engagement, and availability of adult speakers of other languages.</li> <li>▪ Adult Support – Supportive adults facilitate connections across social, cultural, and languages among students, especially diverse English Learners (CDE, 2020).</li> <li>▪ Peer Mutual Support – Adults support peer relationships through activities and collaborative classwork. Positive peer relationships provide interpersonal and academic support for students (Brown, 2019).</li> <li>▪ Family Support and Engagement – Students rely on family support, expectations, and motivation. Educators engage families and validate their voice, culture, language, and funds of knowledge (Bryan et al., 2020; REL, 2020).</li> </ul>
<b>Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leveraging Home Language – Instruction systemically incorporates Multilingual Learners' home languages in literacy across content areas and develops proficiency in multiple languages (Academic and Linguistic Demands, n.d.; CDE, 2018; Collier &amp; Thomas, 2019; Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching, CDE, n.d.; Flint &amp; Jagers, 2021).</li> <li>▪ Integrating Language Literacy in Content and Assessment – Grade level and content instruction in all subjects, include disciplinary-specific discourse in culturally responsive curriculum and instruction (Flint &amp; Jagers, 2021). Formative and summative assessments are culturally and linguistically valid and provide students with opportunities to reflect on their own learning and discuss learning with peers (Using Formative Assessment to Help English Language Learners, 2012).</li> <li>▪ Newcomer Programming – These programs bridge the educational and social-emotional experience of students in culturally responsive curriculum, first and second language support, and adequate resources (Greenberg Motamedi et al., 2021).</li> </ul>
<b>Systems of Excellence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identity – Students' cultural and language identities are valued and leveraged to empower students for meaningful change in education systems and policy and practices to enhance their equity and excellence in their education (Umansky et al., 2020).</li> <li>▪ Language Journey – District and school policies and practices ensure appropriate English language classification and progress to reclassification. Instruction includes primary language and dual language programs and designated and integrated English Language Development (Umansky &amp; Dumont, 2021; Thompson, 2017).</li> <li>▪ Opportunity and Access – Policies and practices ensure that students have opportunities, access, and support in college and career preparation courses, pathways, and electives (Callahan &amp; Shifrer, 2016; Hill et al., 2019).</li> </ul>

## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

### Tool 2b. Learn – Information Sources

**Directions:** Review the information sources below. Brainstorm other important information sources.

“Who” to Interview or Survey	“What” Information to Gather
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Additional superdiverse adolescent EL/MLs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parents of superdiverse adolescent EL/MLs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Classroom teachers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Instructional assistants</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School counselors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mental health/school psychologists/social well-being staff</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other school staff</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community-based organization staff</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School administrators</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> District administrators</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student and staff climate surveys</li> </ul>	<p>Observational Data</p> <p>Shadow superdiverse adolescent EL/MLs across various typologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student classroom observations – In what situations are superdiverse adolescent EL/MLs...</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Actively engaged?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Speaking to peers?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Speaking to teachers?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrating they understand English?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Working alone? Working in peer groups?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Is someone available to translate?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do classroom displays highlight diverse languages and cultures?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Does seating arrangement allow group work?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How do students congregate at before/after school? At lunch?</li> </ul>
<p>To what extent is this data inclusive of student, staff, parents, ensuring that all voices are represented and heard?</p>	<p>Student Performance Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How are superdiverse adolescent MLs progressing?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> EL proficiency data</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Course grades</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> On-track course/grade progression</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attendance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Chronic absenteeism</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary referrals, suspension, expulsion</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Samples of students’ work/projects</li> </ul>
<p>Whose voices are missing?</p>	<p>School and District Policies and Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reclassification</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Grading</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Course placement/access</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Master plan development for EL/MLs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic studies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Integrated and designated ELD</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> District strategic plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School site plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> WASC report and recommendations</li> </ul>

## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

### Tool 3. Lead – Equity Action Plan

**Directions:**

- Identify the module you will focus on for your Equity Action Plan in the space above the table. Next, list each of the elements you will include in your Equity Action Plan in the first column on the left.
- For each element, note key profile reflections, followed in the next two columns by “who” you will interview or survey, and “what” information you will gather.
- Use the last column on the right to note key considerations and necessary steps to develop an Equity Action Plan for your organization.

**Module** \_\_\_\_\_

Elements	Listen Key Profile Reflections	Learn “Who” to Interview/Survey	Learn “What” Information Sources	Lead Equity Action Plan Considerations and Steps
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

## Appendix C - Practitioner Resources

These practitioner resources are organized by the modules and elements that emerged from the voices of our Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners. These resources are intended to support the design and implementation of your Equity Action Plan for Multilingual Learners through knowledge building, teaching practices, programming, and community/family support and outreach that prioritize the needs of superdiverse multilingual students. The resources are categorized by: Toolkits, Strategies, Knowledge Building, and Professional Organizations.

Module 1. School Culture and Climate	
<b>Welcoming Climate</b>	<p><b>Toolkits</b></p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 2: Creating Assets-Oriented and Student Responsive Schools <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/</a></p> <p>The Administrators English Learner Roadmap Toolkit series is designed to support administrators as they take up the challenge of leading and supporting the policy’s implementation. Volume 2 focuses on Principle #1 of the EL Roadmap, including understanding diverse typologies of ELs, creating safe and affirming school climates, and building strong family-school-community partnerships. The toolkit offers readings, tools, talking points, and approaches to initiating and supporting dialogue in schools to fulfill the principle.</p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Teacher Toolkits <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-teacher-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-teacher-toolkit/</a></p> <p>These toolkits provide resources for teachers to reflect on classroom practices and plan for implementation of the California English Learner Roadmap and include resources and strategies to create a welcoming climate for English Learners.</p> <p>Core Social and Emotional Learning Competencies <a href="https://casel.org/core-competencies/">https://casel.org/core-competencies/</a></p> <p>The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) supports educators and policy leaders by providing high quality, evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) resources. SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation.</p> <p>Promising Practices to Support English Learners</p>

[https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22\\_resource-508.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf)

This document was developed by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest English Learners Partnership, a collaboration between REL Southwest and the New Mexico Public Education Department. It includes resources and tools intended to promote a deeper understanding of systems for serving English Learner students and to test and adopt promising practices that may lead to equitable education outcomes for English Learner students in classrooms, schools, and districts.

Welcoming, Registering, and Supporting Newcomer Students: A Toolkit for Educators of Immigrant and Refugee Students in Secondary Schools

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED610689.pdf>

This resource can help educators identify and use research-based policies, practices, and procedures for welcoming and registering Newcomer immigrant and refugee students who are attending secondary schools in the United States and for supporting them once they are in school.

### **Strategies**

Five Ways to Celebrate Your Students' Cultures

[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/five\\_ways\\_to\\_celebrate\\_your\\_students\\_cultures](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/five_ways_to_celebrate_your_students_cultures)

Developing cultural competence can help teachers create more trusting relationships with students and a more positive learning environment.

Making Schools a Welcoming Place for Immigrant Students

<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/ideas/usable-knowledge/23/02/making-schools-welcoming-place-immigrant-students>

Strategies to ensure schools understand the presence of immigrant students' potential.

PERTS/Elevate

<https://elevate-support.perts.net/support/solutions/articles/67000675309-what-are-learning-conditions-elevate->

Student survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to understand the factors or circumstances that exist in students' classrooms that support or hinder their ability to learn. How English Learners experience their classrooms' learning conditions can significantly impact achievement. Survey data helps educators understand the extent to which students experience critical learning conditions: Affirming Identities, Classroom Community, Feedback for Growth, Meaningful Work, Student Voice, Teacher Caring.

SEL for English Language Learners: What Educators Need to Know

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/sel-english-language-learners-what-educators-need-know>

This article offers an introduction to SEL along with helpful resources from organizations such as the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). In addition, this article also shares ideas on how to ensure that English Learners can fully participate in SEL lessons and activities.

Supporting English Learners in the Middle: Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Practices to Support Student Identity Development and Sense of Belonging  
<https://www.amle.org/research/supporting-english-learners-in-the-middle-culturally-responsive-and-sustaining-practices-to-support-student-identity-development-and-sense-of-belonging/#:~:text=Another%20way%20to%20support%20ELs,of%20competence%20in%20the%20language.>

Research supported article that highlights supporting English Learners and their linguistic identity development through implementing culture and identity-oriented units of instruction that help English Learners analyze their identities.

YouthTruth

<https://youthtruthsurvey.org/products-services>  
<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/survey/youthtruth-survey>

Survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to better understand school environment and programming perceptions. Student survey (grades 3-12) to measure perceptions of Student Engagement; Academic Challenge; Relationships; Belonging & Peer Collaboration; School Culture; Instructional Methods; College & Career Readiness. Staff survey to measure perceptions of Engagement, Professional Development, and Support. Family survey to measure perceptions of: Engagement, Culture, School Safety, and Resources.

### **Knowledge Building**

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, <https://casel.org/>

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) supports educators and policy leaders by providing high quality, evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) resources. SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation.

Encouraging Latinx Youth to Embrace Ethnic Pride Can Enhance Their Well-Being

<https://www.ucdavis.edu/news/encouraging-latinx-youth-embrace-ethnic-pride-can-enhance-their-well-being>

Study from University of California Davis that found evidence suggesting that increasing ethnic pride and connection to cultural values may significantly improve psychological well-being for Latinx adolescents.

Improving School Climate and Culture for Student and Staff Success

<https://www.wested.org/wested-bulletin/news/june-focus-improving-school-climate-and-culture-for-student-and-staff-success/>

A school climate and culture that is safe and supportive can lead to increased student engagement, attendance, and achievement. This resource highlights a rich variety of services, research, and resources designed to help schools and districts improve climate and culture.

Setting the Tone for the Day, for the School, for the District Through Social Emotional Learning

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/setting-tone-day-school-district-through-social-emotional-learning>

Learn how Virginia's Alexandria City Public Schools formalized social-emotional learning for diverse groups of students of different ages.

### **Professional Organizations**

ASCD

<https://www.ascd.org/>

ASCD is a global education organization focused on empowering educators to advance and elevate learning to meet the needs of all students—equitably and wholly.

California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)

<https://gocabe.org>

CABE promotes equity and student achievement for students with diverse cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds by implementing initiatives and services designed to increase California's capacity to create learning environments that promote multiliteracy and support English Learners.

Californians Together

<https://www.californianstogether.org>

Californians Together is a statewide advocacy coalition of organizations from all segments of the education community including teachers, administrators, board members, parents, and civil rights non-profit groups. Its various member organizations coalesce around the goal of better educating 1.1 million English



	<p>Learners by improving California’s schools and promoting equitable educational policy.</p> <p>Center for Applied Linguistics  <a href="https://www.cal.org/">https://www.cal.org/</a></p> <p>The mission of the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is to promote language learning and cultural understanding by serving as a trusted source for research, resources, and policy analysis. Through its work, CAL seeks solutions to issues involving language and culture as they relate to access and equity in education and society around the globe.</p> <p>Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL)  <a href="https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/">https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/</a></p> <p>The Center for Equity for English Learners enriches and supports the work of schools, school systems, educational/community partners, and policy makers through an assets-based approach. CEEL provides consistent, high-quality services, programs, resources, and professional development that promote equity and excellence for English Learners and advance multilingualism.</p>
<p><b>Adult Support</b></p>	<p><b>Toolkits</b></p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 2: Creating Assets-Oriented &amp; Student Responsive Schools  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-administrator-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-administrator-toolkit/</a></p> <p>The Administrators English Learner Roadmap Toolkit series is designed to support administrators as they take up the challenge of leading and supporting the policy’s implementation. Volume 1, Creating assets-oriented and student responsive schools focuses on Principle #1 of the EL Roadmap, including understanding diverse typologies of ELs, creating safe and affirming school climates, and building strong family-school-community partnerships. The toolkit offers readings, tools, talking points, and approaches to initiating and supporting dialogue in schools to fulfill the principle.</p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Teacher Toolkits  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-teacher-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-teacher-toolkit/</a></p> <p>Toolkits provide resources for teachers to reflect on classroom practices and plan for implementation of the California English Learner Roadmap and includes resources and strategies to ensure positive adult support for English Learners.</p> <p>Promising Practices to Support English Learners</p>

[https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22\\_resource-508.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf)

This document was developed by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest English Learners Partnership, a collaboration between REL Southwest and the New Mexico Public Education Department with resources and tools intended to promote a deeper understanding of systems for serving English Learner students and to test and adopt promising practices that may lead to equitable education outcomes for English Learner students in classrooms, schools, and districts.

### **Strategies**

10 Strategies for Building Relationships with ELLs

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/building-relationships-ells>

Resource that discusses how to build authentic relationships with English Learners and how to connect students' experiences to meaningful instruction. Part of a Strategies for ELL Success guide.

### **Advisory Periods**

Advisories support students' academic and personal development and builds on the idea that as students enter adolescence their need to build healthy relationships with school staff grows. Research points to many positive outcomes for students who have a personal connection to their education. They are more likely to have stronger academic outcomes, better attendance, higher academic expectations, positive self-concept, and make healthier social and lifestyle choices. The following links provide examples and resources of a secondary advisory period in support of English Learners:

<https://www.amle.org/the-challenge-of-advisory-and-why-its-worth-the-effort/>

<https://go.colorincolorado.org/social-and-emotional-support/make-time-student-updates-circle-time-or-advisory>

<https://www.lausd.org/Page/10127#spn-content>

<https://www.wfsd.k12.ny.us/post/~board/posts/post/elementary-advisory-periods-provide-innovative-unique-offerings>

<https://www.fuhdsd.org/academics/curriculum/advisory-curriculum>

<https://chs.centerville.k12.oh.us/learning/advisory>

<https://www.sreb.org/post/supporting-students>

How can Trusting Relationships with Adults Boost Student Success?

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/regions/southwest/pdf/infographics/relsw-infographic11-508.pdf>

Fostering trusting and supportive relationships with students is a promising strategy to help students develop both academic and nonacademic skills. Research suggests that students who connect with at least one trusted adult in school are more resilient and have a stronger sense of well-being.

PERTS/Elevate

<https://elevate-support.perts.net/support/solutions/articles/67000675309-what-are-learning-conditions-elevate->

Student survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to understand the factors or circumstances that exist in students' classrooms that support or hinder their ability to learn. How English Learners experience their classrooms' learning conditions can significantly impact achievement. Survey data helps educators understand the extent to which students experience critical learning conditions: Affirming Identities, Classroom Community, Feedback for Growth, Meaningful Work, Student Voice, Teacher Caring.

Relationship-Building Strategies for the Classroom

[https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page\\_content/attachments/Relationship\\_Building\\_Toolkit.pdf](https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/Relationship_Building_Toolkit.pdf)

Educator-student relationships are key to student success at school. To build relationships, educators must take an intentional approach to ensure all students and families feel heard and seen in their classroom. Strong educator student relationships are a key part of Tier 1 practices that create positive classroom environments.

YouthTruth

<https://youthtruthsurvey.org/products-services>

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/survey/youthtruth-survey>

Survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to better understand school environment and programming perceptions. Student survey (grades 3-12) to measure perceptions of Student Engagement; Academic Challenge; Relationships; Belonging & Peer Collaboration; School Culture; Instructional Methods; College & Career Readiness. Staff survey to measure perceptions of Engagement, Professional Development, and Support. Family survey to measure perceptions of: Engagement, Culture, School Safety, and Resources.

### **Knowledge Building**

Drivers of Human Development: How Relationships and Context Shape Learning and Development

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/10888691.2017.1398650?needAccess=true>

This article synthesizes knowledge on the role of relationships and key macro and micro-contexts – poverty, racism, families, communities, schools, and peers – in supporting and/or undermining the healthy development of children and youth, using a relational developmental systems framework.

Using a Strengths-Based Approach with ELs: Supporting Students Living with Trauma, Violence and Chronic Stress

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/using-strengths-based-approach-els-supporting-students-living-trauma-violence-and-chronic>

Using a strengths-based approach allows educators to draw upon students' internal strengths and capacities, and it can be a particularly powerful practice for English Learners who have experienced trauma, violence, or chronic stress.

### **Professional Organizations**

ASCD

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California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)

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CABE promotes equity and student achievement for students with diverse cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds by implementing initiatives and services designed to increase California's capacity to create learning environments that promote multiliteracy and support English Learners.

Californians Together

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Center for Applied Linguistics

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Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL)

<https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/>

	<p>The Center for Equity for English Learners enriches and supports the work of schools, school systems, educational/community partners, and policy makers through an assets-based approach. CEEL provides consistent, high-quality services, programs, resources, and professional development that promote equity and excellence for English Learners and advance multilingualism.</p>
<b>Peer Mutual Support</b>	<p><b>Toolkits</b></p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 2: Creating Assets-Oriented and Student Responsive Schools  <a href="https://californiantogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/">https://californiantogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/</a></p> <p>The Administrators English Learner Roadmap Toolkit series is designed to support administrators as they take up the challenge of leading and supporting the policy's implementation. Volume 2 focuses on Principle #1 of the EL Roadmap, including understanding diverse typologies of ELs, creating safe and affirming school climates, and building strong family-school-community partnerships. The toolkit offers readings, tools, talking points, and approaches to initiating and supporting dialogue in schools to fulfill the principle.</p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Teacher Toolkits  <a href="https://californiantogether.org/el-roadmap-teacher-toolkit/">https://californiantogether.org/el-roadmap-teacher-toolkit/</a></p> <p>Toolkits provide resources for teachers to reflect on classroom practices and plan for implementation of the California English Learner Roadmap and includes resources and strategies to ensure support for English Learners.</p> <p>Promising Practices to Support English Learners  <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf</a></p> <p>This document was developed by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest English Learners Partnership, a collaboration between REL Southwest and the New Mexico Public Education Department with resources and tools intended to promote a deeper understanding of systems for serving English Learner students and to test and adopt promising practices that may lead to equitable education outcomes for English Learner students in classrooms, schools, and districts.</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>8 Tips to Protect ELLs from Bullying in Your Classroom and School  <a href="https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/8-tips-protect-ells-bullying-your-classroom-and-school">https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/8-tips-protect-ells-bullying-your-classroom-and-school</a></p> <p>English Learners and immigrant students can experience bullying. This resource offers tips for addressing bullying problems that may affect English Learners.</p> <p>PERTS/Elevate</p>

<https://elevate-support.perts.net/support/solutions/articles/67000675309-what-are-learning-conditions-elevate->

Student survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to understand the factors or circumstances that exist in students' classrooms that support or hinder their ability to learn. How English Learners experience their classrooms' learning conditions can significantly impact achievement. Survey data helps educators understand the extent to which students experience critical learning conditions: Affirming Identities, Classroom Community, Feedback for Growth, Meaningful Work, Student Voice, Teacher Caring.

Tips for Promoting Positive Peer-to-Peer Relationships

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/Mod-2-Handout-4-508.pdf>

Four strategies educators can implement to promote positive peer-to-peer relationships.

YouthTruth

<https://youthtruthsurvey.org/products-services>

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/survey/youthtruth-survey>

Survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to better understand school environment and programming perceptions. Student survey (grades 3-12) to measure perceptions of Student Engagement; Academic Challenge; Relationships; Belonging & Peer Collaboration; School Culture; Instructional Methods; College & Career Readiness. Staff survey to measure perceptions of Engagement, Professional Development, and Support. Family survey to measure perceptions of: Engagement, Culture, School Safety, and Resources.

### **Knowledge Building**

Positive Peer Relationships

[https://ggie.berkeley.edu/school-relationships/positive-peer-relationships/#tab\\_1](https://ggie.berkeley.edu/school-relationships/positive-peer-relationships/#tab_1)

Peer relationships play an important role in children's school lives, and relationships with peers become even more influential as children enter adolescence.

Social Inclusion Opportunities for ELLs

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/publications/serving-ell-students-and-families/section-ii-classroom-culture>

Social inclusion assists English Learner students learn the culture of their new community and exposes all students to new ways of thinking, problem solving and living in the world. These social interactions can provide the bridge from "otherness" to "togetherness."

Stories from the Field: Fostering Positive Peer Relationships

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED601208.pdf>

Resource that shares student and educator perspectives about developing and sustaining strong relationships within the classroom and throughout the school.

The Power of Peer Relationships in Student Growth

<https://www.naesp.org/resource/the-power-of-peer-relationships-in-student-growth/>

Sanford Harmony Academy’s curriculum is built around four focus themes containing strategies to build positive peer relationships: Be Your Best Self, Value Each Other, Learn from Others, and Communicate with Each Other, which align with CASEL core competencies.

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	<p>involving language and culture as they relate to access and equity in education and society around the globe.</p> <p>Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL)  <a href="https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/">https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/</a>  The Center for Equity for English Learners enriches and supports the work of schools, school systems, educational/community partners, and policy makers through an assets-based approach. CEEL provides consistent, high-quality services, programs, resources, and professional development that promote equity and excellence for English Learners and advance multilingualism.</p>
<b>Family Support and Engagement</b>	<p><b>Toolkits</b></p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 2: Creating Assets-Oriented and Student Responsive Schools  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/</a>  The Administrators English Learner Roadmap Toolkit series is designed to support administrators as they take up the challenge of leading and supporting the policy’s implementation. Volume 2 focuses on Principle #1 of the EL Roadmap, including understanding diverse typologies of ELs, creating safe and affirming school climates, and building strong family-school-community partnerships. The toolkit offers readings, tools, talking points, and approaches to initiating and supporting dialogue in schools to fulfill the principle.</p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Teacher Toolkits  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-teacher-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-teacher-toolkit/</a>  Toolkits that provide resources for teachers to reflect on classroom practices and plan for implementation of the California English Learner Roadmap and includes resources and strategies to include family support in classrooms.</p> <p>Family Engagement Toolkit Continuous Improvement through an Equity Lens  <a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/documents/family-engagement.pdf">https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/documents/family-engagement.pdf</a>  This toolkit includes key questions for a district family engagement team to consider, along with equity questions to help the team apply an equity lens to dig deeper and strengthen the engagement of all the diverse groups of families in the district.</p> <p>Family Toolkit, National Clearing House for Language Acquisition  <a href="https://www.ncela.ed.gov/educator-support/toolkits/family-toolkit">https://www.ncela.ed.gov/educator-support/toolkits/family-toolkit</a>  The English Learner Family Toolkit was created to help families choose education services that meet their child’s needs. U.S. educators, elementary and secondary school teachers, principals, and other school staff can also share the toolkit as a resource for English Learners and their families. The English Learner Family Toolkit</p>



consists of six chapters, and each chapter contains five sections: an overview, family and student rights, questions to ask schools, tips, and resources.

#### Promising Practices to Support English Learners

[https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22\\_resource-508.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf)

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#### Resources for Educators and Families

<https://www.nysed.gov/crs/resources>

Following the adoption of the New York State Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework by the Board of Regents, the NYSED developed resources, presentations, surveys, and other tools designed to support the state's commitment to improve learning for all NYS students.

#### Strategies

##### Engaging Families to Better Understand Students: Home Visits

<https://library.belenetwork.org/resources/engaging-families-to-better-understand-students-home-visits/>

Intentional family engagement is a critical aspect of creating a sense of classroom belonging, allowing for a deepening of the teachers' knowledge about their students, and explicitly communicating to students that their teacher cares enough to engage substantively with parents.

##### PERTS/Elevate

<https://elevate-support.perts.net/support/solutions/articles/67000675309-what-are-learning-conditions-elevate->

Student survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to understand the factors or circumstances that exist in students' classrooms that support or hinder their ability to learn. How English Learners experience their classrooms' learning conditions can significantly impact achievement. Survey data helps educators understand the extent to which students experience critical learning conditions: Affirming Identities, Classroom Community, Feedback for Growth, Meaningful Work, Student Voice, Teacher Caring.

	<p>YouthTruth  <a href="https://youthtruthsurvey.org/products-services">https://youthtruthsurvey.org/products-services</a>  <a href="https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/survey/youthtruth-survey">https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/survey/youthtruth-survey</a>  Survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to better understand school environment and programming perceptions. Student survey (grades 3-12) to measure perceptions of Student Engagement; Academic Challenge; Relationships; Belonging &amp; Peer Collaboration; School Culture; Instructional Methods; College &amp; Career Readiness. Staff survey to measure perceptions of Engagement, Professional Development, and Support. Family survey to measure perceptions of: Engagement, Culture, School Safety, and Resources.</p> <p><b>Knowledge Building</b>  Collaborating with Communities and Caregivers: Conditions for Building Authentic Partnerships  <a href="https://library.belenetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/EA-2-Learning-Brief-4.pdf">https://library.belenetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/EA-2-Learning-Brief - 4 .pdf</a>  Resource that focuses on the critical importance of cultivating and sustaining relationships with caregivers and community stakeholders. Given the roles parents and caregivers play in a child’s education as their first educators and their primary educators, this resource focuses on building partnerships that cross the boundaries of schools, communities, and homes.</p> <p>Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA)  <a href="https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/index.html">https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/index.html</a>  This page contains links to the various documents with regards to ESSA including various guides such as Parents Guide to ESSA and various guidance documents including Title III guidance addressing English Learners.</p> <p>Six Reasons Why ELL Family Outreach Is Working in Brockton, MA  <a href="https://www.colorincolorado.org/brockton/ell-family-outreach">https://www.colorincolorado.org/brockton/ell-family-outreach</a>  Learn how a team of multilingual community facilitators is partnering with diverse immigrant families in Brockton, MA and what other school districts can learn from their example.</p> <p><b>Professional Organizations</b>  ASCD  <a href="https://www.ascd.org/">https://www.ascd.org/</a>  ASCD is a <u>global education organization</u> focused on empowering educators to advance and elevate learning to meet the needs of all students—equitably and wholly.  California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)</p>
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	<p><a href="https://gocabe.org">https://gocabe.org</a></p> <p>CABE promotes equity and student achievement for students with diverse cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds by implementing initiatives and services designed to increase California’s capacity to create learning environments that promote multiliteracy and support English Learners.</p> <p>Californians Together</p> <p><a href="https://www.californianstogether.org">https://www.californianstogether.org</a></p> <p>Californians Together is a statewide advocacy coalition of organizations from all segments of the education community including teachers, administrators, board members, parents, and civil rights non-profit groups. Its various member organizations coalesce around the goal of better educating 1.1 million English Learners by improving California's schools and promoting equitable educational policy.</p> <p>Center for Applied Linguistics</p> <p><a href="https://www.cal.org/">https://www.cal.org/</a></p> <p>The mission of the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is to promote language learning and cultural understanding by serving as a trusted source for research, resources, and policy analysis. Through its work, CAL seeks solutions to issues involving language and culture as they relate to access and equity in education and society around the globe.</p> <p>Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL)</p> <p><a href="https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/">https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/</a></p> <p>The Center for Equity for English Learners enriches and supports the work of schools, school systems, educational/community partners, and policy makers through an assets-based approach. CEEL provides consistent, high-quality services, programs, resources, and professional development that promote equity and excellence for English Learners and advance multilingualism.</p>
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## Module 2. Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Education

### Leveraging Home Language

#### Toolkits

California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 3: Ensuring the Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access for ELs.

<https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-administrator-toolkit/>

The Administrators English Learner Roadmap Toolkit series is designed to support administrators as they take up the challenge of leading and supporting the policy's implementation. Volume 3 focuses on Principle #2 of the EL Roadmap, including knowing what intellectual rigor looks like enacted in instruction and examining various forms of ensuring meaningful access for ELs. The toolkit offers readings, tools, talking points, and approaches to initiating and supporting dialogue in schools to fulfill the principle.

California English Learner Roadmap Teacher Toolkits

<https://californianstogether.org/publications-2/#english%20learner%20road%20map>

Toolkits provide resources for teachers to reflect on classroom practices and plan for implementation of the California English Learner Roadmap and includes resources and strategies to leverage students' home language.

Promising Practices to Support English Learners

[https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22\\_resource-508.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf)

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#### Strategies

Supporting Young English Learners at Home

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/Products/Region/west/Resource/100653>

Activities designed for families and caregivers to use with young English Learners at home to leverage cultural and linguistic assets and knowledge to strengthen language development in either the home language or English.

**Knowledge Building**

A Matter of Design: English Learner Program Models in K–12 Education. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/english-learner-program-models-k-12-education>

Sugarman (2018) describes the characteristics of some of the most common program types—dual language, transitional bilingual education, and English only—and examines the factors that shape schools' decisions to use a particular model or set of models. This resource presents a clear and concise comparison table across program types.

Dual Language Learners and English Learners with Disabilities

<https://www.nap.edu/read/24677/chapter/12>

Chapter 10 of this National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) report provides a critical review of the research on dual language learners/English Learners with disabilities through the lens of policy, practice, and research. It focuses on five of the major disability categories—specific learning disabilities (SLDs), intellectual disabilities (IDs), emotional/behavioral disorders (E/BDs), language impairments (LI, including speech/language impairments), and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The presentation of these disability categories is intended to serve as a frame for thinking about implications for policy, practice, and research.

Dual Language Learners: Capacities and Influences on Language Development

<https://www.nap.edu/read/24677/chapter/6>

Report focuses on reviewing the evidence on young children's underlying capacity for dual language development and examining the factors that may influence the full expression of this capacity among dual language learners in the United States.

Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education- Third Edition

<https://www.cal.org/publications/guiding-principles-3/>

This resource provides expertise from a broad range of dual language experts, including practitioners, researchers, administrators, professional development specialists, and others, supported by updated literature reviews and is organized into seven strands: Program Structure, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability, Staff Quality and Professional Development, Family and Community, Support and Resources.

Professional Development Essentials for Educators of Multilingual Learners

[ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-11/UL\\_PDEssentials\\_Dec\\_19\\_final\\_small.pdf](https://ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-11/UL_PDEssentials_Dec_19_final_small.pdf)

Resource designed to assist schools, school districts, state or county offices of education, and professional development providers as they design well-balanced professional development plans for educators of Multilingual Learners.

Programs for English Learners in Grades PK-12

<https://www.nap.edu/read/24677/chapter/9>

An overview of the English-only and bilingual programs that serve English Learners in grades PK-12 and the evaluation research that compares outcomes for English Learners instructed in English-only programs with English Learners instructed in bilingual programs. This is followed by a review of the research on instructional practices for developing English Learners' oral language proficiency in grades K-12. The chapter reviews district-wide practices related to the educational progress of English Learners and examines the role of family engagement in English learners' educational success. A strong example provided the Sobroto Early Academic Literacy Program (SEAL) (p. 256), which promotes an affirming environment to support students' first language, explicitly emphasizing the value of bilingualism and supports students' use of their primary language to discuss their culture, family, and identity.

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<p><b>Integrating Language and Literacy in Content and Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>Integrating Language and Literacy in Content Toolkits</b>  Academic and Linguistic Demands  <a href="https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/english-language-learner-and-multilingual-learner-educator-tools-and-best-practices">https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/english-language-learner-and-multilingual-learner-educator-tools-and-best-practices</a>  A set of tools and resources to create access in English Language Arts for linguistically diverse learners.</p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 3: Ensuring the Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access for ELs.  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/</a>  The Administrators English Learner Roadmap Toolkit series is designed to support administrators as they take up the challenge of leading and supporting the policy’s implementation. Volume 3 focuses on Principle #2 of the EL Roadmap, including knowing what intellectual rigor looks like enacted in instruction and examining various forms of ensuring meaningful access for ELs. The toolkit offers readings, tools, talking points, and approaches to initiating and supporting dialogue in schools to fulfill the principle.</p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Teacher Toolkits  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/publications-2/#english%20learner%20road%20map">https://californianstogether.org/publications-2/#english%20learner%20road%20map</a>  Toolkits that provide resources for teachers to reflect on classroom practices and plan for implementation of the California English Learner Roadmap and includes</p>

resources and strategies to support students' language, literacy, and content knowledge.

#### Promising Practices to Support English Learners

[https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22\\_resource-508.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf)

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#### U.S. Department of Education: English Learner Toolkit

<https://www.ncela.ed.gov/english-learner-toolkit>

Published by OELA, the English Learner Tool Kit (aligned with ESSA) helps state and local education agencies help English Learners by fulfilling these obligations. The Toolkit has 10 chapters and contains an overview, sample tools, and resources.

#### Strategies

##### ELL Strategies and Best Practices

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/ell-strategies-best-practices>

Resource that provides specific ideas and strategies to support English Learners' language and literacy development, tips for planning lessons and the use of language objectives, as well as broader approaches such as using informal assessment and differentiation for varying language levels.

##### PERTS/Elevate

<https://elevate-support.perts.net/support/solutions/articles/67000675309-what-are-learning-conditions-elevate->

Student survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to understand the factors or circumstances that exist in students' classrooms that support or hinder their ability to learn. How English Learners experience their classrooms' learning conditions can significantly impact achievement. Survey data helps educators understand the extent to which students experience critical learning conditions: Affirming Identities, Classroom Community, Feedback for Growth, Meaningful Work, Student Voice, Teacher Caring.

#### Project-Based Learning for English Learners (PBL): Promises and Challenges

[digitalcommons.lmu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=ceel\\_journalarticles](https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=ceel_journalarticles)



	<p>In making the case for the use of PBL methodology with English Learners, this document highlights specific elements and application to the linguistic and cultural needs of students learning an additional language.</p> <p>Supporting ELs in Mathematics  <a href="https://ul.stanford.edu/resource/supporting-ells-mathematics">https://ul.stanford.edu/resource/supporting-ells-mathematics</a></p> <p>The goal of these materials is to illustrate how Common Core aligned math tasks can be used to support math instruction and language development for English Learners in elementary, middle, and high school.</p> <p>YouthTruth  <a href="https://youthtruthsurvey.org/products-services">https://youthtruthsurvey.org/products-services</a>  <a href="https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/survey/youthtruth-survey">https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/survey/youthtruth-survey</a></p> <p>Survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to better understand school environment and programming perceptions. Student survey (grades 3-12) to measure perceptions of Student Engagement; Academic Challenge; Relationships; Belonging &amp; Peer Collaboration; School Culture; Instructional Methods; College &amp; Career Readiness. Staff survey to measure perceptions of Engagement, Professional Development, and Support. Family survey to measure perceptions of: Engagement, Culture, School Safety, and Resources.</p> <p><b>Knowledge Building</b></p> <p>Asset-Based Pedagogy: Student, Family, and Community Engagement for the Academic and Social–Emotional Learning of Multilingual Students  <a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/mleleducationch2.pdf">https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/mleleducationch2.pdf</a></p> <p>Publication includes how asset-based pedagogy promotes the social-emotional and academic development of multilingual students, discusses the tenets of asset-based pedagogy, why it is important, and how teachers can develop this essential knowledge to engage in asset-based practices; examines the associated problems of practice and specific pedagogical needs that educators of multilingual students often encounter; and a description of multiple examples, tools, and resources that have been successful for engaging multilingual students, families, and communities.</p> <p>Communities of Practice/Professional Learning Community Work in Support of EL Success  <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/regions/southwest/publications/pdf/sw_main_031522.pdf">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/regions/southwest/publications/pdf/sw_main_031522.pdf</a></p> <p>This guide details a collaborative framework to support English Learner student instruction. The resource is based on research around promising ways to provide opportunities for teachers of English Learner students to collaborate, share</p>
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	<p>expertise, and build capacity for implementing instructional strategies and integrating language and content across lessons.</p> <p>Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching  <a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ee/responsiveteaching.asp">https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ee/responsiveteaching.asp</a>  Resource from the California Department of Education on Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching to leverage and utilize the cultural learning tools that students bring to the classroom.</p> <p>Culture in the Classroom  <a href="https://www.learningforjustice.org/professional-development/culture-in-the-classroom">https://www.learningforjustice.org/professional-development/culture-in-the-classroom</a>  Learning for Justice.org has resources in support of culture in the classroom and addresses topics such as overcoming stereotypes, culturally relevant curriculum, and honoring home languages.</p> <p>Culturally Responsive ELL Instruction  <a href="https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/publications/serving-ell-students-and-families/section-i-instruction">https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/publications/serving-ell-students-and-families/section-i-instruction</a>  Bringing a culturally responsive lens to instruction benefits every student; for English Learners, this approach can be the difference between engagement and alienation in the classroom.</p> <p>Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework  <a href="https://www.nysed.gov/crs/framework">https://www.nysed.gov/crs/framework</a>  This framework helps educators create student-centered learning environments that affirm racial, linguistic, and cultural identities; prepare students for rigor and independent learning, develop students’ abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of social change.</p> <p>Multilingual Programs and Pedagogy: What Teachers and Administrators Need to Know and Do  <a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/mleleducationch3.pdf">https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/mleleducationch3.pdf</a>  Resource to support educators in understanding the specific models of multilingual education and the essential role of administrators in creating the site and district conditions that support effective design and planning, as well as sustained implementation of quality multilingual programs.</p>
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	<p>Professional Development Essentials for Educators of Multilingual Learners  <a href="https://ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-11/UL_PDEssentials_Dec_19_final_small.pdf">ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-11/UL_PDEssentials_Dec_19_final_small.pdf</a></p> <p>Resource designed to assist schools, school districts, state or county offices of education, and professional development providers as they design well-balanced professional development plans for educators of Multilingual Learners.</p> <p>Supports for Students who are English Learners  <a href="https://annenberg.brown.edu/sites/default/files/EdResearch_for_Recovery_Brief_15.pdf">https://annenberg.brown.edu/sites/default/files/EdResearch_for_Recovery_Brief_15.pdf</a></p> <p>Provides K-12 education decision makers and advocates with an evidence base to ground discussions about how to best serve English Learners during and following the novel coronavirus pandemic. Recognizing longstanding educational inequities, the brief discusses evidence-based practices that district administrators, school leaders, and classroom teachers can use to support English Learners' academic success and linguistic development in an instructional context transformed by COVID-19.</p> <p><b>Professional Organizations</b></p> <p>ASCD  <a href="https://www.ascd.org/">https://www.ascd.org/</a></p> <p>ASCD is a <u>global education organization</u> focused on empowering educators to advance and elevate learning to meet the needs of all students—equitably and wholly.</p> <p>California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)  <a href="https://gocabe.org">https://gocabe.org</a></p> <p>CABE promotes equity and student achievement for students with diverse cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds by implementing initiatives and services designed to increase California's capacity to create learning environments that promote multiliteracy and support English Learners.</p> <p>Californians Together  <a href="https://www.californiantogether.org">https://www.californiantogether.org</a></p> <p>Californians Together is a statewide advocacy coalition of organizations from all segments of the education community including teachers, administrators, board members, parents, and civil rights non-profit groups. Its various member organizations coalesce around the goal of better educating 1.1 million English Learners by improving California's schools and promoting equitable educational policy.</p>
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	<p>Center for Applied Linguistics  <a href="https://www.cal.org/">https://www.cal.org/</a>  The mission of the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is to promote language learning and cultural understanding by serving as a trusted source for research, resources, and policy analysis. Through its work, CAL seeks solutions to issues involving language and culture as they relate to access and equity in education and society around the globe.</p> <p>Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL)  <a href="https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/">https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/</a>  The Center for Equity for English Learners enriches and supports the work of schools, school systems, educational/community partners, and policy makers through an assets-based approach. CEEL provides consistent, high-quality services, programs, resources, and professional development that promote equity and excellence for English Learners and advance multilingualism.</p> <p>U.S. Department of Education. Raise the Bar Initiative  <a href="https://www.ed.gov/raisethebar/">https://www.ed.gov/raisethebar/</a></p> <p><b>Assessments</b></p> <p><b>Toolkits</b>  California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 3: Ensuring the Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access for ELs.  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/</a>  The Administrators English Learner Roadmap Toolkit series is designed to support administrators as they take up the challenge of leading and supporting the policy’s implementation. Volume 3 focuses on Principle #2 of the EL Roadmap, including knowing what intellectual rigor looks like enacted in instruction and examining various forms of ensuring meaningful access for ELs. The toolkit offers readings, tools, talking points, and approaches to initiating and supporting dialogue in schools to fulfill the principle.</p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Teacher Toolkits  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/publications-2/#english%20learner%20road%20map">https://californianstogether.org/publications-2/#english%20learner%20road%20map</a>  Toolkits provide resources for teachers to reflect on classroom practices and plan for implementation of the California English Learner Roadmap and includes resources and strategies to implement valid assessments designed to inform and improve instruction.</p>
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	<p>Guidance On Diagnostic and Formative Assessments  <a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/documents/guidanceonassessments.pdf">https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/documents/guidanceonassessments.pdf</a>  This guidance describes how local educational agencies can use California’s approved assessments to evaluate where students are academically at the start of and throughout the school year. The assessment tools provided include the Smarter Balanced assessment system, which is available to all public school districts, schools, and teachers in California. The guidance also includes a listing of additional tools approved for diagnostic assessment in grade two—all of which measure the state standards and have the capacity to assess student progress across a longer continuum of performance, typically covering the ELA and mathematics domains in K–8 or K–12.</p> <p>Next Generation ESL Toolkit  <a href="https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/esl-toolkit/tools-resources/">https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/esl-toolkit/tools-resources/</a>  A systematic, explicit, and sustained language instruction approach that integrates content area topics and themes to support simultaneous development of language and disciplinary analytical practices.</p> <p>Promising Practices to Support English Learners  <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf</a>  This document was developed by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest English Learners Partnership, a collaboration between REL Southwest and the New Mexico Public Education Department with resources and tools intended to promote a deeper understanding of systems for serving English Learner students and to test and adopt promising practices that may lead to equitable education outcomes for English Learner students in classrooms, schools, and districts.</p> <p>U.S. Department of Education: English Learner Toolkit  <a href="https://www.ncela.ed.gov/english-learner-toolkit">https://www.ncela.ed.gov/english-learner-toolkit</a>  Published by OELA, the English Learner Tool Kit (aligned with ESSA) helps state and local education agencies help English Learners by fulfilling these obligations. The Toolkit has 10 chapters and contains an overview, sample tools, and resources.</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>Assessment Resources  <a href="https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/esl-toolkit/tools-resources/">https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/esl-toolkit/tools-resources/</a>  ESL Best Practices Quick Reference Guide: Formative Assessment and Assessment Framework</p> <p>Show and Tell: A Video Column/Retellings as Formative Assessment</p>
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<https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/retellings-as-formative-assessment>

A strategy to use oral retellings as a method to understand a student's language ability and reading comprehension.

Using Formative Assessment to Help English Language Learners

[https://pdo.ascd.org/lmscourses/PD13OC002/media/ELL\\_CC\\_M4\\_Reading\\_Using\\_Formative01.pdf](https://pdo.ascd.org/lmscourses/PD13OC002/media/ELL_CC_M4_Reading_Using_Formative01.pdf)

ASCD Professional Development Formative Assessment Module materials.

### **Knowledge Building**

Professional Development Essentials for Educators of Multilingual Learners

[ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-11/UL\\_PDEssentials\\_Dec\\_19\\_final\\_small.pdf](http://ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-11/UL_PDEssentials_Dec_19_final_small.pdf)

Resource designed to assist schools, school districts, state or county offices of education, and professional development providers as they design well-balanced professional development plans for educators of Multilingual Learners.

### **Professional Organizations**

ASCD

<https://www.ascd.org/>

ASCD is a global education organization focused on empowering educators to advance and elevate learning to meet the needs of all students—equitably and wholly.

California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)

<https://gocabe.org>

CABE promotes equity and student achievement for students with diverse cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds by implementing initiatives and services designed to increase California's capacity to create learning environments that promote multiliteracy and support English Learners.

Center for Applied Linguistics

<https://www.cal.org/>

The mission of the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is to promote language learning and cultural understanding by serving as a trusted source for research, resources, and policy analysis. Through its work, CAL seeks solutions to issues involving language and culture as they relate to access and equity in education and society around the globe.

	<p>Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL)  <a href="https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/">https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/</a></p> <p>The Center for Equity for English Learners enriches and supports the work of schools, school systems, educational/community partners, and policy makers through an assets-based approach. CEEL provides consistent, high-quality services, programs, resources, and professional development that promote equity and excellence for English Learners and advance multilingualism.</p>
Newcomer Programs	<p><b>Toolkits</b></p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 3: Ensuring the Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access for ELs.  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/</a></p> <p>The Administrators English Learner Roadmap Toolkit series is designed to support administrators as they take up the challenge of leading and supporting the policy's implementation. Volume 3 focuses on Principle #2 of the EL Roadmap, including knowing what intellectual rigor looks like enacted in instruction and examining various forms of ensuring meaningful access for ELs. The toolkit offers readings, tools, talking points, and approaches to initiating and supporting dialogue in schools to fulfill the principle.</p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Teacher Toolkits  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/publications-2/#english%20learner%20road%20map">https://californianstogether.org/publications-2/#english%20learner%20road%20map</a></p> <p>Toolkits provide resources for teachers to reflect on classroom practices and plan for implementation of the California English Learner Roadmap and includes resources and strategies to implement valid assessments designed to inform and improve instruction.</p> <p>Office of English Language Learners and Multilingual Achievement (ELMA)  Oakland Unified School District's Newcomer Toolkit  <a href="https://sites.google.com/ousd.k12.ca.us/Newcomer-toolkit/home">https://sites.google.com/ousd.k12.ca.us/Newcomer-toolkit/home</a></p> <p>Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA)  United States Department of Education: The Newcomer Toolkit  <a href="https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/Newcomers-toolkit/ncomertoolkit.pdf">https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/Newcomers-toolkit/ncomertoolkit.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)  Helping Newcomer Students Succeed in Secondary Schools and Beyond  <a href="https://www.cal.org/publications/helping-Newcomer-students/">https://www.cal.org/publications/helping-Newcomer-students/</a></p>

	<p>Colorín Colorado! ELL Classroom Strategy Library <a href="https://www.colorincolorado.org/ell-strategy-library">https://www.colorincolorado.org/ell-strategy-library</a></p> <p>Colorín Colorado! Supporting Newcomer Students: Resource Gallery <a href="https://www.colorincolorado.org/ell-Newcomer-resources">https://www.colorincolorado.org/ell-Newcomer-resources</a></p> <p>Inspiring Young Learners Simplify Mid-Year Transitions: 5 Free Resources for Newcomer Success! <a href="https://www.inspiringyounglearners.com/free-resources-for-transitioning-Newcomers/">https://www.inspiringyounglearners.com/free-resources-for-transitioning-Newcomers/</a></p> <p>National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE) Lessons from the Field: Supporting Newcomer Students <a href="https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/2023-09/LftFWebinarSeries_48_Newcomer%20Students_2023.09.06.pdf">https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/2023-09/LftFWebinarSeries_48_Newcomer%20Students_2023.09.06.pdf</a></p> <p>Office of English Language Learners and Multilingual Achievement (ELMA) Classroom Strategies <a href="https://sites.google.com/ousd.k12.ca.us/Newcomer-toolkit/instruction/classroom-strategies?authuser=0">https://sites.google.com/ousd.k12.ca.us/Newcomer-toolkit/instruction/classroom-strategies?authuser=0</a></p> <p>Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) Newcomer Education in California <a href="https://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/2023-05/r_finn-may2023.pdf">https://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/2023-05/r_finn-may2023.pdf</a></p> <p>Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) San Juan Unified Newcomer Support: Promising Practices <a href="https://edpolicyinca.org/publications/san-juan-unified-Newcomer-support">https://edpolicyinca.org/publications/san-juan-unified-Newcomer-support</a></p> <p><b>Knowledge Building</b> California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) Professional Learning Services (PLS) <a href="https://www.gocabe.org/pls/">https://www.gocabe.org/pls/</a></p> <p>Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) Building Educational Communities of Inclusion in PreK-12 Settings <a href="https://www.cal.org/publications/building-ed-communities-of-inclusion-cal-webinar/">https://www.cal.org/publications/building-ed-communities-of-inclusion-cal-webinar/</a></p> <p>Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) Newcomers in Your School: Cultural Connections and Instructional Strategies <a href="https://www.cal.org/areas-of-impact/immigrants-and-Newcomers/Newcomers-in-your-school/">https://www.cal.org/areas-of-impact/immigrants-and-Newcomers/Newcomers-in-your-school/</a></p>
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	<p>Immigrant Connections: Supporting Educators and Organizations Trainings  <a href="https://www.immigrantsrefugeesandschools.org/training">https://www.immigrantsrefugeesandschools.org/training</a></p> <p><b>Professional Organizations</b></p> <p>All4Ed  <a href="https://all4ed.org/">https://all4ed.org/</a></p> <p>ALAS: Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents  <a href="https://www.alasedu.org/">https://www.alasedu.org/</a></p> <p>California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)  <a href="https://www.gocabe.org/">https://www.gocabe.org/</a></p> <p>California Newcomer Network (CANN)  <a href="https://www.calnew.net/">https://www.calnew.net/</a></p> <p>Californians Together  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/">https://californianstogether.org/</a></p> <p>Immigrant Connections: Supporting Educators and Organizations  <a href="https://www.immigrantsrefugeesandschools.org/">https://www.immigrantsrefugeesandschools.org/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.immschools.org/">ImmSchools</a>  <a href="https://www.immschools.org/">https://www.immschools.org/</a></p>
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## Module 3. Systems of Excellence

<b>Language Journey</b>	<p><b>Toolkits</b></p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 1: Leading Implementation, Volume 4: Systems Conditions for Implementation, and Volume 5: Aligning and Articulating Practice Across the System <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/</a></p> <p>The Administrators English Learner Roadmap Toolkit series is designed to support administrators as they take up the challenge of leading and supporting the policy's implementation. Volume 1 focuses the vision, mission, principles, and elements of the EL Roadmap and provides mapping and planning tools for administrators. Volume 4 focuses EL Roadmap Principles 3 with an emphasis on teacher collaboration, professional learning, and using data. Volume 5 focuses on EL Roadmap 4 to build coherence and ensure comprehensive EL program pathways across preschool through high school. The toolkits offer readings, tools, talking points, and approaches to initiating and supporting dialogue in schools to fulfill the principles of the EL Roadmap.</p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Teacher Toolkits <a href="https://californianstogether.org/publications-2/#english%20learner%20road%20map">https://californianstogether.org/publications-2/#english%20learner%20road%20map</a></p> <p>Toolkits provide resources for teachers to reflect on classroom practices and plan for implementation of the California English Learner Roadmap and includes resources and strategies for alignment and articulation of practices leading to reclassification.</p> <p>English Learner Toolkit of Strategies, California County Superintendents Educational Services Association <a href="https://cacountysupts.org/?wpfb_dl=7219">https://cacountysupts.org/?wpfb_dl=7219</a></p> <p>This toolkit is designed to provide K-12 classroom teachers, coaches, and teachers on special assignments high leverage strategies to increase the English language proficiency of their English Learners; the toolkit is designed to be used in both Integrated and Designated English Language Development. The strategies address reading, writing, speaking, and listening to prepare English Learners for literacy in the 21st century. The toolkit offers practical ways to engage English learners to develop English language proficiency and grade level content mastery.</p> <p>Promising Practices to Support English Learners <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf</a></p> <p>This document was developed by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest English Learners Partnership, a collaboration between REL Southwest and the New Mexico Public Education Department with resources and tools intended to</p>
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	<p>promote a deeper understanding of systems for serving English Learner students and to test and adopt promising practices that may lead to equitable education outcomes for English Learner students in classrooms, schools, and districts.</p> <p>U.S. Department of Education: English Learner Toolkit  <a href="https://www.nclb.gov/english-learner-toolkit">https://www.nclb.gov/english-learner-toolkit</a>  Published by OELA, the English Learner Tool Kit (aligned with ESSA) helps state and local education agencies help English Learners by fulfilling these obligations. The toolkit has 10 chapters and contains an overview, sample tools, and resources.</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>Designated ELD Fundamentals  <a href="https://ul.stanford.edu/resource/designated-eld-fundamentals">https://ul.stanford.edu/resource/designated-eld-fundamentals</a>  Resource that provides guidance to teachers, instructional coaches, English Learner district leads and curriculum developers to create content materials that are engaging, relevant to their students, and builds their students’ disciplinary and language practices. Although these fundamentals were created with Designated ELD in mind, they can serve to enhance integrated ELD as well.</p> <p>Essential Pedagogies for Integrated and Designated English Language Development in ERWC  <a href="https://writing.csusuccess.org/system/files/essential_pedagogies_i-d_eld_0.pdf">https://writing.csusuccess.org/system/files/essential_pedagogies_i-d_eld_0.pdf</a>  The Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum with integrated and designated instruction incorporates comprehensive English Language Development (ELD) to support English Learners at the Expanding and Bridging levels, so they can be ready for college and the workplace by the end of 12th grade. Comprehensive ELD comprises both integrated and designated ELD instruction as described by the English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework for California Public Schools (ELA/ELD Framework).</p> <p>Integrating ELD into Elementary Settings – ELA, Science, Social Studies  <a href="https://www.wested.org/resources/integrating-eld-into-elementary-settings/?gclid=Cj0KCQiAoKeuBhCoARIsAB4WxtchysUe-sc4FFktj_6BmqSUulzpUnRhrl8CxOgjqNxiqTP1qYKBHDEaAmmrEALw_wcB">https://www.wested.org/resources/integrating-eld-into-elementary-settings/?gclid=Cj0KCQiAoKeuBhCoARIsAB4WxtchysUe-sc4FFktj_6BmqSUulzpUnRhrl8CxOgjqNxiqTP1qYKBHDEaAmmrEALw_wcB</a>  In this archived webinar, learn effective questioning techniques that can be used to design activities and oral interactions for young English learners that promote text-based discussions in English Language Arts, science, and social studies.</p>
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	<p>Principles for the Design of Mathematics Curricula and Mathematical Language Routines  <a href="https://ul.stanford.edu/resource/principles-design-mathematics-curricula-and-mlrs">https://ul.stanford.edu/resource/principles-design-mathematics-curricula-and-mlrs</a>          These principles and accompanying Mathematical Language Routines (MLRs) provide guidance to mathematics teachers for recognizing and supporting students' language development processes in the context of mathematical sense making and provide a framework for organizing strategies and special considerations to support students in learning mathematics practices, content, and language.</p> <p><b>Knowledge Building</b>          ELD/ELA Framework for California Schools, CA Department of Education, 2015          Chapter 8: Assessment  <a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/cf/documents/elaeldfwchapter8.pdf">https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/cf/documents/elaeldfwchapter8.pdf</a>          Chapter 8 of the ELA/ELD Framework provides guidance on assessment by explaining formative, middle, and long-cycle summative assessments. The chapter addresses considerations for assessing English Learners' mid-cycle and for ensuring access on long-cycle assessments. It also discusses the assessment of ELD progress through writing and oral language assessments for English Learners.</p> <p>Focusing Formative Assessment on the Needs of English Language Learners  <a href="https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/1391626953FormativeAssessment_report5-3.pdf">https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/1391626953FormativeAssessment_report5-3.pdf</a>          The authors examine how formative assessment can enhance the teaching and learning of English Learner students. They highlight the opportunities and challenges inherent in integrating formative assessment into instruction for English Learner students around Common Core and other "next generation" standards. To use formative assessment effectively with English Learners, teachers must attend simultaneously to the students' needs both in learning content and skills and in developing the English required to express their learning.</p> <p>Professional Development Essentials for Educators of Multilingual Learners  <a href="https://ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-11/UL_PDEssentials_Dec_19_final_small.pdf">ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-11/UL_PDEssentials_Dec_19_final_small.pdf</a>          Resource designed to assist schools, school districts, state or county offices of education, and professional development providers as they design well-balanced professional development plans for educators of Multilingual Learners.</p> <p>Using Informal Assessments for English Language Learners  <a href="https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/using-informal-assessments-english-language-learners">https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/using-informal-assessments-english-language-learners</a></p>
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Informal assessments allow teachers to regularly monitor the ongoing progress of their English Learner students. By using informal assessments, teachers can target students' specific areas of need and adapt instruction.

### **Professional Organizations**

ASCD

<https://www.ascd.org/>

ASCD is a global education organization focused on empowering educators to advance and elevate learning to meet the needs of all students—equitably and wholly.

California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)

<https://gocabe.org>

CABE promotes equity and student achievement for students with diverse cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds by implementing initiatives and services designed to increase California's capacity to create learning environments that promote multiliteracy and support English Learners.

Californians Together

<https://www.californianstogether.org>

Californians Together is a statewide advocacy coalition of organizations from all segments of the education community including teachers, administrators, board members, parents, and civil rights non-profit groups. Its various member organizations coalesce around the goal of better educating 1.1 million English Learners by improving California's schools and promoting equitable educational policy.

Center for Applied Linguistics

<https://www.cal.org/>

The mission of the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is to promote language learning and cultural understanding by serving as a trusted source for research, resources, and policy analysis. Through its work, CAL seeks solutions to issues involving language and culture as they relate to access and equity in education and society around the globe.

Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL)

<https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/>

The Center for Equity for English Learners enriches and supports the work of schools, school systems, educational/community partners, and policy makers through an assets-based approach. CEEL provides consistent, high-quality services, programs,

	resources, and professional development that promote equity and excellence for English learners and advance multilingualism.
<b>Opportunity and Access</b>	<p><b>Toolkits</b></p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 1: Leading Implementation, Volume 4: Systems Conditions for Implementation, and Volume 5: Aligning and Articulating Practice Across the System <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-administrator-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-administrator-toolkit/</a></p> <p>The Administrators English Learner Roadmap Toolkit series is designed to support administrators as they take up the challenge of leading and supporting the policy’s implementation. Volume 1 focuses the vision, mission, principles, and elements of the EL Roadmap and provides mapping and planning tools for administrators. Volume 4 focuses EL Roadmap Principles 3 with an emphasis on teacher collaboration, professional learning, and using data. Volume 5 focuses on EL Roadmap 4 to build coherence and ensure comprehensive EL program pathways across preschool through high school. The toolkits offer readings, tools, talking points, and approaches to initiating and supporting dialogue in schools to fulfill the principles of the EL Roadmap.</p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap: Toolkits (Elementary, Middle, and High School) <a href="https://californianstogether.org/english-learner-roadmap-toolkits/">https://californianstogether.org/english-learner-roadmap-toolkits/</a></p> <p>These toolkits are designed to help classroom teachers understand and make meaning of the California English Learner Roadmap policy. They include tools for individual and collective assessment of practices through the lens of the English Learner Roadmap principles, enabling teachers to focus on their professional learning needs and priorities. The tools also help teachers think about the kinds of supports and services needed in their school to support English Learners. Each toolkit lists resources teachers can access for their own learning and for their participation in school and district level dialogues about enhancing instructional practices and programs.</p> <p>Promising Practices to Support English Learners <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf</a></p> <p>This document was developed by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest English Learners Partnership, a collaboration between REL Southwest and the New Mexico Public Education Department with resources and tools intended to promote a deeper understanding of systems for serving English Learner students and to test and adopt promising practices that may lead to equitable education outcomes for English Learner students in classrooms, schools, and districts.</p>

U.S. Department of Education: English Learner Toolkit

<https://www.ncela.ed.gov/english-learner-toolkit>

Published by OELA, the English Learner Tool Kit (aligned with ESSA) helps state and local education agencies help English Learners by fulfilling these obligations. The Toolkit has 10 chapters and contains an overview, sample tools, and resources.

### **Strategies**

Ensuring Meaningful Participation in Advanced Coursework and Specialized Programs for Students who are English Learners

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ocr-factsheet-ap-participation-el.pdf>

Many elementary and secondary school districts offer educational programs and services that are specialized or advanced. Examples include Advanced Placement (AP), gifted and talented education, honors, International Baccalaureate (IB), career and technical education, pre-collegiate experiences, career pathways, dual enrollment, dual credit, and concurrent enrollment programs. Such programs are often designed to boost college access, degree attainment, and occupational skills, especially for students typically underrepresented in higher education. However, English Learners have lower participation in such specialized or advanced programs. Students who are English Learners remain entitled to appropriate language assistance services while participating in advanced or special programs.

Implementing the Common Core for English learners

<http://www.cal.org/siop/pdfs/briefs/implementing-common-core-for-english-learners.pdf>

This document addresses five key questions related to effective implementation of state standards with English Learners. The topics addressed represent a synthesis of the questions and concerns raised by educators participating in the Center for Applied Linguistics professional development activities. Included under each question are ideas for classroom strategies to support the implementation of state standards.

Multitiered System of Supports (MTSS) for English Learners

<https://mtss4els.org/resources/briefs>

Model demonstration research on MTSS sponsored by the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education.

PBL with English Language Learners: A Vital Need

<https://www.pblworks.org/blog/pbl-english-language-learners-vital-need>

Project-based learning provides English Learners with access to engaging and rigorous learning.

PERTS/Elevate

<https://elevate-support.perts.net/support/solutions/articles/67000675309-what-are-learning-conditions-elevate->

Student survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to understand the factors or circumstances that exist in students' classrooms that support or hinder their ability to learn. How English Learners experience their classrooms' learning conditions can significantly impact achievement. Survey data helps educators understand the extent to which students experience critical learning conditions: Affirming Identities, Classroom Community, Feedback for Growth, Meaningful Work, Student Voice, Teacher Caring.

Preparing English Learners for College and Career: Lessons from Successful High Schools

<https://www.tcpress.com/preparing-english-learners-for-college-and-career-9780807759257>

Resource that highlights creating school communities that prepare English Learners and dual language learners for college and careers; and provides case studies of high-performing high schools with a singular focus on improving outcomes for English Learners, using a school-wide language development college and career readiness.

Redefining Approaches for Engaging English Learners with Mathematical Ideas

<https://www.wested.org/resources/redefining-approaches-for-engaging-english-learners-with-mathematical-ideas/>

The study of secondary mathematics often begins by giving students the vocabulary first, along with definitions, before students have been able to explore the ideas. Pre-teaching definitions can hinder understanding rather than promoting exploration of important mathematical ideas. This brief produced by the National Research & Development Center to Improve Education for Secondary English Learners considers how definitions are currently introduced and used in mathematics education at the secondary level.

Rigorous Lesson Design Exemplar Unit of Instruction

<https://ul.stanford.edu/resource/persuasion-across-time-and-space-instructional-unit>

The goal of this unit is to provide exemplars illustrating how English Language Arts Common Core Standards in Reading Informational Text and Writing Arguments can be used to deepen and accelerate the learning and instruction of English Language Learners, especially at the middle school level. It is based on the notion that English Learners develop conceptual and academic understandings as well as the linguistic resources to express them simultaneously, through participation in rigorous activity



that is well scaffolded. Practices focus student attention and activity on key concepts, which are presented and discussed in their interrelatedness, with invitations for students to engage in higher order thinking throughout. These practices, and the intentional support offered to students throughout the unit, are designed to constitute an apprenticeship for students that over time builds their agency and autonomy.

The Press-In Model: Turning All Students into Readers

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/press-model-turning-all-students-readers>

Learn how one school harnessed the powers of push-in instruction and PLCs to transform their literacy instruction for all students, including English Learners.

YouthTruth

<https://youthtruthsurvey.org/products-services>

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/survey/youthtruth-survey>

Survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to better understand school environment and programming perceptions. Student survey (grades 3-12) to measure perceptions of Student Engagement; Academic Challenge; Relationships; Belonging & Peer Collaboration; School Culture; Instructional Methods; College & Career Readiness. Staff survey to measure perceptions of Engagement, Professional Development, and Support. Family survey to measure perceptions of: Engagement, Culture, School Safety, and Resources.

### **Knowledge Building**

California English Learner Roadmap Principles Overview

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/rm/principles.asp>

One page overview of the four principles of the California English Learner Roadmap.

English Language Learners and the Local Control Funding Formula

[https://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/r\\_munoz\\_jan20.pdf](https://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/r_munoz_jan20.pdf)

PACE report uses data from research undertaken to address how stakeholders (from superintendents to parents) are experiencing the flexibility, accountability, and equity of the LCFF when supporting English Learners, and whether/how they perceive the current budget framework as stimulating creative solutions for English Learners needs. The elaboration of the two case studies presented captures a plurality of voices and fine-grained details about the specific contexts of the participants and their successes, struggles, and expectations.

English Learner Guidance (OELA)

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf>

	<p>Federal guidance document to assist school districts in meeting their legal obligations to ensure that English Learners can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs and services.</p> <p>English Learner Roadmap and Crosswalk to LCAP  <a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/rm/roadmaptolcap.asp">https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/rm/roadmaptolcap.asp</a></p> <p>This crosswalk between the California English Learner Roadmap Policy Principles and the eight Local Control Funding Formula priority areas can help facilitate alignment of local goals and policies with the mission, vision, and principles of the EL Roadmap Policy.</p> <p>Improving Education for Multilingual and English Learner Students: Research to Practice – Chapter 7: Creating Schools and Systems That Support Asset-Based, High-Quality Instruction for Multilingual Learners  <a href="http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/mleleducationch7.pdf">www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/mleleducationch7.pdf</a></p> <p>Chapter 7 of this publication begins by presenting a model for aligned continuous improvement processes that has English Learners at its core to result in positive academic outcomes. The model highlights the importance of (1) attending to organizational culture, (2) focusing on policy and management, and (3) developing educator capability. It concludes with concrete next steps for using the ideas presented in the chapter to facilitate district and school change.</p> <p>Professional Development Essentials for Educators of Multilingual Learners  <a href="http://ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-11/UL_PDEssentials_Dec_19_final_small.pdf">ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-11/UL_PDEssentials_Dec_19_final_small.pdf</a></p> <p>Resource designed to assist schools, school districts, state or county offices of education, and professional development providers as they design well-balanced professional development plans for educators of English Learners.</p> <p><b>Professional Organizations</b></p> <p>ASCD  <a href="https://www.ascd.org/">https://www.ascd.org/</a></p> <p>ASCD is a <u>global education organization</u> focused on empowering educators to advance and elevate learning to meet the needs of all students—equitably and wholly.</p> <p>California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)  <a href="https://gocabe.org">https://gocabe.org</a></p> <p>CABE promotes equity and student achievement for students with diverse cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds by implementing initiatives and services designed to</p>
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	<p>increase California’s capacity to create learning environments that promote multiliteracy and support English Learners.</p> <p>Californians Together  <a href="https://www.californianstogether.org">https://www.californianstogether.org</a>          Californians Together is a statewide advocacy coalition of organizations from all segments of the education community including teachers, administrators, board members, parents, and civil rights non-profit groups. Its various member organizations coalesce around the goal of better educating 1.1 million English Learners by improving California’s schools and promoting equitable educational policy.</p> <p>Center for Applied Linguistics  <a href="https://www.cal.org/">https://www.cal.org/</a>          The mission of the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is to promote language learning and cultural understanding by serving as a trusted source for research, resources, and policy analysis. Through its work, CAL seeks solutions to issues involving language and culture as they relate to access and equity in education and society around the globe.</p> <p>Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL)  <a href="https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/">https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/</a>          The Center for Equity for English Learners enriches and supports the work of schools, school systems, educational/community partners, and policy makers through an assets-based approach. CEEL provides consistent, high-quality services, programs, resources, and professional development that promote equity and excellence for English Learners and advance multilingualism.</p>
<p><b>Youth Voice</b></p>	<p><b>Toolkits</b>          California English Learner Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators Volume 1: Leading Implementation, Volume 4: Systems Conditions for Implementation, and Volume 5: Aligning and Articulating Practice Across the System  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/">https://californianstogether.org/el-roadmap-admininistrator-toolkit/</a>          The Administrators English Learner Roadmap Toolkit series is designed to support administrators as they take up the challenge of leading and supporting the policy’s implementation. Volume 1 focuses the vision, mission, principles, and elements of the EL Roadmap and provides mapping and planning tools for administrators. Volume 4 focuses EL Roadmap Principles 3 with an emphasis on teacher collaboration, professional learning, and using data. Volume 5 focuses on EL Roadmap 4 to build coherence and ensure comprehensive EL program pathways across preschool through high school. The toolkits offer readings, tools, talking points, and approaches to</p>

	<p>initiating and supporting dialogue in schools to fulfill the principles of the EL Roadmap.</p> <p>California English Learner Roadmap: Toolkits (Elementary, Middle, and High School)  <a href="https://californianstogether.org/english-learner-roadmap-toolkits/">https://californianstogether.org/english-learner-roadmap-toolkits/</a>  These toolkits are designed to help classroom teachers understand and make meaning of the California English Learner Roadmap policy. They include tools for individual and collective assessment of practices through the lens of the English Learner Roadmap principles, enabling teachers to focus on their professional learning needs and priorities. The tools also help teachers think about the kinds of supports and services needed in their school to support English Learners. Each toolkit lists resources teachers can access for their own learning and for their participation in school and district level dialogues about enhancing instructional practices and programs.</p> <p>Promising Practices to Support English Learners  <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/training-coaching/sw5.2.22_resource-508.pdf</a>  This document was developed by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest English Learners Partnership, a collaboration between REL Southwest and the New Mexico Public Education Department with resources and tools intended to promote a deeper understanding of systems for serving English Learner students and to test and adopt promising practices that may lead to equitable education outcomes for English Learner students in classrooms, schools, and districts.</p> <p>Speak Out, Listen Up! Tools for Using Student Perspectives and Local Data for School Improvement  <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/pdf/REL_2014035.pdf">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/pdf/REL_2014035.pdf</a>  This toolkit offers three tools that educators can use to gather and analyze local data to listen to students on school-related topics or problems: analyzing and interpreting survey results and producing suggestions for school improvement; focus group in which students and educators trade roles as speakers and listeners during a facilitated discussion and jointly develop an action plan, and a digital storytelling process in which students produce and analyze videotaped interviews of other students and then host forums with educators to suggest improvements.</p> <p><b>Strategies</b>  Elevating Student Voice: A Learning Agenda  <a href="https://knowledgeworks.org/resources/recommendations-elevate-student-voice/">https://knowledgeworks.org/resources/recommendations-elevate-student-voice/</a></p>
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	<p>Resources that emphasize the significance of incorporating student input into educational decision-making and offers guidance to organizations on involving students in policymaking, advocacy, research, storytelling, and leadership roles.</p> <p>Including Voice in Education: Addressing Equity Through Student and Family Voice in Classroom Learning  <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/Products/Region/pacific/Resource/70111">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/Products/Region/pacific/Resource/70111</a>  This infographic discusses the ways in which to include student and family voice in creating culturally responsive classrooms.</p> <p>PERTS/Elevate  <a href="https://elevate-support.perts.net/support/solutions/articles/67000675309-what-are-learning-conditions-elevate-">https://elevate-support.perts.net/support/solutions/articles/67000675309-what-are-learning-conditions-elevate-</a>  Student survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to understand the factors or circumstances that exist in students’ classrooms that support or hinder their ability to learn. How English Learners experience their classrooms’ learning conditions can significantly impact achievement. Survey data helps educators understand the extent to which students experience critical learning conditions: Affirming Identities, Classroom Community, Feedback for Growth, Meaningful Work, Student Voice, Teacher Caring.</p> <p>Student Voice Continuum: How to Build Student Power  <a href="https://caljustice.org/resource/student-voice-continuum-how-to-build-student-power/">https://caljustice.org/resource/student-voice-continuum-how-to-build-student-power/</a>  A Student Voice Continuum resource showing how elevating student voice in schools can be used to build engagement and racial equity.</p> <p>YouthTruth  <a href="https://youthtruthsurvey.org/products-services">https://youthtruthsurvey.org/products-services</a>  <a href="https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/survey/youthtruth-survey">https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/survey/youthtruth-survey</a>  Survey instrument that can be disaggregated by English Learners to better understand school environment and programming perceptions. Student survey (grades 3-12) to measure perceptions of Student Engagement; Academic Challenge; Relationships; Belonging &amp; Peer Collaboration; School Culture; Instructional Methods; College &amp; Career Readiness. Staff survey to measure perceptions of Engagement; Relationships; Culture; School Safety; Professional Development &amp; Support. Family survey to measure perceptions of: Engagement; Relationships; Communication &amp; Feedback; Culture; School Safety; Resources.</p>
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### **Knowledge Building**

Creating Inclusive and Effective Environments for Young People: Exploring Youth Voice and Youth-Adult Partnership

<https://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/resources/youth-voice-youth-adult-partnerships-508.pdf>

An effective and evidenced-based way to improve schools, nonprofits, and government agencies is to learn from the perspective of those being served. Research has shown that giving youth a voice results in increased feelings of engagement and ownership. Students who believe they have a voice in school are seven times more likely to be academically motivated than students who do not believe they have a voice.

Shifting the Thinking to Learners with Authentic Voice and Choice

<https://knowledgeworks.org/resources/shifting-thinking-authentic-student-voice-choice/>

Authentic student voice and choice is more than offering choice board or playlists. It's about helping students understand themselves as learners, how to make choices and how to advocate for what they need. How choices are scaffolded and supported is important. Conversations with students are central to authenticity.

### **Professional Organizations**

ASCD

<https://www.ascd.org/>

ASCD is a global education organization focused on empowering educators to advance and elevate learning to meet the needs of all students—equitably and wholly.

California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)

<https://gocabe.org>

CABE promotes equity and student achievement for students with diverse cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds by implementing initiatives and services designed to increase California's capacity to create learning environments that promote multiliteracy and support English Learners.

Californians Together

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Californians Together is a statewide advocacy coalition of organizations from all segments of the education community including teachers, administrators, board members, parents, and civil rights non-profit groups. Its various member organizations coalesce around the goal of better educating 1.1 million English

	<p>Learners by improving California’s schools and promoting equitable educational policy.</p> <p>Center for Applied Linguistics  <a href="https://www.cal.org/">https://www.cal.org/</a></p> <p>The mission of the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is to promote language learning and cultural understanding by serving as a trusted source for research, resources, and policy analysis. Through its work, CAL seeks solutions to issues involving language and culture as they relate to access and equity in education and society around the globe.</p> <p>Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL)  <a href="https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/">https://soe.lmu.edu/centers/ceel/</a></p> <p>The Center for Equity for English Learners enriches and supports the work of schools, school systems, educational/community partners, and policy makers through an assets-based approach. CEEL provides consistent, high-quality services, programs, resources, and professional development that promote equity and excellence for English Learners and advance multilingualism.</p>
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## Appendix D - Student Profiles

# Amani



Loyola Marymount University  
Center for Equity for  
English Learners

## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

### Introduction to our Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learner Profiles

This student profile represents one example of the “Superdiverse” Multilingual Learner student population in California, crossing boundaries of language, culture, generational immigration patterns, socio-economic class, and individual Identities.<sup>8</sup> California has the nation’s most diverse student population, beginning with the youngest English learning students (ages birth to eight or dual language learners),<sup>9</sup> yet much remains to understand the experiences of the state’s Superdiverse Adolescents (ages 12-19).<sup>10</sup> Our profiles of these students uplift both their voices and key highlights of what their experiences mean to them.

### Meet Amani

Amani is a 12<sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer high school student born in Yemen. She attends high school in a Northern California urban low-income community, enrolling over 1,500 students. The school is very diverse, enrolling approximately 40% Latino students, 30% Asian students, and over 20% African American students, and less than 5% White students. Approximately 50% of students are English Learners; about half of these students speak Spanish. The remaining students speak one of more than 15 languages. This is Amani’s first year studying in the United States; she is the first girl in her extended family to attend high school. Amani’s education in her home country includes first grade when she was 5 years old until 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Amani moved to the U.S. two years ago with her two brothers, dedicating a year to take care of them until her mother also arrived in the U.S., before she attended high school. Her home language is Yemeni Arabic, and she has an extensive linguistic repertoire of 22 Arabic accents. Amani began learning English for the first time when she moved to the U.S. by watching television

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<sup>8</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>9</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>10</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeg.12166>



shows prior to her first year attending school. Throughout the interview, Amani expresses how she is an advocate and fighter for her own education and the education of others.

### Youth Identity and Advocacy

Amani's cultural and educational background is very important to her identity. She shares, "I'm the first in school of my family." The opportunity to go to school has always been a priority to Amani, something she describes as difficult for her growing up as a girl in Yemen:

When I first go to school in Yemen, I was 5 years old, 5 years old. Yeah, that was so early, because usually you go to school to the first grade when you're 6 years old. So, I go one year before, and when I go there the learning level was like, I say, it was damage because of, we always have that kind of war, but I fight a lot, and then I was go to teachers. I even go to their home, and I tell them like, "Come to my home because I really wanna learn." But then, when I moved to the high school to the ninth grade, I was the only girl in the class for 3 years, 3 years, yeah, 3 years. I was the only girl in the class, and then I have my classmates are all boys. So that was very challenging for me.

As the first female in her family to attend school, Amani feels a lot of pressure to succeed, but she is intentional in preparing for her future. She shares, "I do my best to become a doctor. That was my goal since I was 5 years old, and I study in Yemen until the 11<sup>th</sup> grade." Newcomer students like Amani should be provided with intentional college and career support to provide them the tools necessary to make steps toward their goals.

**Oh, you know, that girl study, so why you can't study, too? That was my goal.**

Amani is also an advocate for the educational opportunity of others in her community, sharing, "My country, like, that's an Arabic community. The girl doesn't need to study like I tell you so. I was like, no, we need to study, because I remember when I was maybe in second grade, I go to my mom, and she don't know how to read and write in Arabic."

Amani has engaged in youth and academic leadership in her home country, an example of the connection between voice and advocacy.<sup>11</sup> She shares how she taught other women how to read and write:

I was teaching the people who didn't know how to read and write, even in Arabic...I did this for 5 years, like almost 5. And that was very great for me, because I see how those people, like most of them are women, so they will like, "I want to know, because when my, when my baby comes to me and ask me something, I can be able to talk to him and explain to him the math, maybe, and then show him the letters.

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<sup>11</sup> Cook-Sather, A. (2020). Student voice across contexts: Fostering student agency in today's schools. *Theory into Practice*, 59:2, 182-191, DOI: 10.1080/00405841.2019.1705091

Amani has also been a leader for other young students in Yemen where she helped them receive books by, “buying books, print to books, because many times we don’t have books to study. So, we have like one book, and then we go to print it for the students.” Amani also provided support for her teachers sharing, “I was volunteering in the schoolwork. I was always with the teachers [to] help them to mark the quizzes to get ready for the quizzes, or that final test.”

Through her advocacy and leadership in education in her home country, Amani appears to have become a strong and confident learner. Yet she reports facing many challenges when entering the U.S. school system:

I was the only girl who study, and they pretty much lost all the files when they was bombing the schools and all those stuff. So that was very hard, and it’s take two months until they take my documents out, and they were not full.

Amani highlights the effect that these events in her home country had on her ability to attend school in the U.S. due to limitations such as lost educational documents that prevent Newcomers from attending school in the U.S. as soon as they arrive.

### **Language Support and Opportunity**

Amani dedicated her first nine months in the U.S. to learning English through television shows. “The speaking was the only goal for me.” When she started high school in the U.S., she only knew how to speak English, not read, or write it. Amani describes the impact of this limited knowledge of English on her experience taking tests and quizzes in her classes:

Most of the time on the quizzes, I get low score because I don’t know how to read and write. Yeah, like I know the word, but I don’t know how to spell it, right? So, most of the time the spelling be wrong.

Although Amani believes she has the skills and knowledge to solve the math problems on the quizzes, she indicates that language was a barrier for her, and she was not given any support to help her succeed. Given the language barriers she faced, Amani expressed how she wished her school had primary language support for her and other Newcomers<sup>4</sup>:

**I wish in every school there is a person who speak the students’ language.**

I wish in every school there is a person who speak the students’ language, because, like here, many students, too many teachers speak Spanish, and not many people speak Arabic, just one teacher.... So, I feel like, if this calls, have a person home like at least person who know how to type those language, for the students, ‘cause a lot of students like they don’t know how to speak English, right? And they just left learning. And once they have problems they don’t go to the teachers, because if they don’t know how to explain. So, I think that’s going to be good advice.

Although Amani has not been directly provided with primary language support at her school, she did find support from one teacher that speaks Arabic, sharing, “I talk to him, and he was so friendly to me, and he was like, ‘I’ll always be here when you need something.’ Right now, he’s my favorite teacher.”

### **School Challenges and Supportive Adults**

Amani reflects on how challenging her first month of school in U.S. was, commenting that, “The first month I was like, there is no way I’m going to graduate. It’s no, it’s horrible. I can’t go on anymore. I have depression every hard moment.” Amani’s reflections indicate the importance of support systems for the emotional health of Newcomer and refugee students during such rapid changes in their lives<sup>5</sup>. Although Amani initially struggled with her mental health in adjusting to school in the U.S., she happily mentions that the teachers at her school recognized this and that she eventually received help from a school psychologist:

The teachers here focus that I was sad in those few weeks. They say, “You have something you need to talk to, colleges or something?” I say them like, “No” in the beginning, but then they keep talking me every day, and then I tell them like, you know, “I don’t feel okay.” And they take me to Miss M. She is a psychologist here. So, I like almost talk to her every day, and I have her phone number. She give me her phone number and she say, you know, “I’m going to be here always for you. You can come, talk to me anytime you want.”

A trusted source of emotional support is important for students like Amani who have had to leave their native countries, friends, family, school, and loved ones behind for the opportunity of better living conditions. Amani received emotional support from her teachers who recognized her need and from the school psychologist who helped her feel that she was not alone. Intentional and supportive adult interactions are vital to ensuring Newcomer students like Amani feel welcomed at school and referred

**Actually, I don’t realize how much [more] I feel comfortable in the school.**

to the resources available to them<sup>6</sup>. Because of such supportive adults who looked out for her, Amani confidently states during the interview, “I don’t realize how much [more] I feel comfortable in the school.”

### **Considerations for Supporting California’s Superdiverse Adolescents**

Amani’s commitment to serving others motivates her to reach out to her teachers, continue her learning during a war, teach neighbors who don’t know how to read, and pursue a career in medicine. As a Newcomer in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade, she faces the challenges of learning English to pursue her goals.

- Amani is intentional in preparing for her future and plans to go to college to become a doctor. What systems do schools and districts have in place to ensure all students have access to rigorous, enriching college preparation curriculum?
- Amani experienced challenges in adjusting to her school in her first month, eventually finding support through adults who cared and advocated for her. How can schools ensure their Newcomer programming provides supports to welcome and help Newcomer students adjust right away on their first day, to avoid them falling through the cracks?

# Belén



Loyola Marymount University  
Center for Equity for  
English Learners

## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

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### Meet Belén

Belén is a 10<sup>th</sup> grade high school student born in the United States. She attends a high school enrolling over 600 students in a Southern California suburban low-income community. Over 90% of students are Latino; approximately 20% of students are English Learners and of these, over 95% speak Spanish. Belén participated in an in-person interview at the high school she attends. Belén explained that although her first language is English, the primary language spoken in the home is Spanish. As a child, her Spanish-speaking grandmother was her primary caregiver while her parents worked. Belén’s parents enrolled her in the school district in first grade. Because Spanish was the primary language spoken in the home, she was required to take the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) to determine her English language proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Although Belén tested as Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP), indicating well-developed oral skills, her oral language fluency during the interview suggested a need for continued oral language support. This is similar to many IFEPs who may need linguistic support in their education to continue to bridge toward grade-level English proficiency.

<sup>12</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>13</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>14</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeg.12166>

### Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Belén reflected on how her teachers provide opportunities to engage in culturally responsive projects; she explains about a school project of which she is particularly proud:

**You really got  
to see people  
like you.**

There was this project that we worked on this year in Spanish Speakers II. It was a little altar. If you have loved ones that passed away, you put a picture of them and you put little things they did or what they like to represent them ... we worked on it in class for two weeks, and then we could stay after school to work on it. I like that because everyone in that class felt like a big family, and you really got to see people like you. It was really fun, and I feel like it's a really good thing for culture.

Belén worked on this project with a partner and explained that this project provided an opportunity for her to show her creativity and pride in her accomplishment. "I think it just says how creative I am and how I use my time and the skills I have. We put them in the library. I think they are still up. You guys could go see them." When asked about the project grade, Belén says, "I think [the teacher] graded us pretty good, but honestly we didn't really put as much stuff that represented her, just little foods...we could have added a lot more." Belén further explained that the teacher did not provide feedback during the learning process. When asked about a writing component included in the project, she replies, "No, well just like when they were born and when they died so you could choose to write about it and put it [on] with glue; we didn't do that." Although the student experienced a culturally relevant learning activity, she missed an opportunity to engage in a rigorous, grade-aligned written response, as well as to receive feedback on the project to deepen her learning experience. Belén's reflection on this assignment acknowledged that she could have done "more," yet still received a "pretty good" grade. Further, the expectation of rigorous writing across the disciplines supports a culture of high expectations for all students' academic achievement, especially those who are diverse and/or marginalized.<sup>15</sup>

### Influence of Counselors and Teachers

Belén speaks of the influence of support at school. "A lot has been the counselors, and a lot of the teachers really influence you, and a lot of them motivate you. They want you to go to college and they try to help you with things." Belén also explains:

Especially, we have the Early College Program to help you with college. I think that's really helpful. The counselors tell us about the Early College Program or other programs we can join so it looks good on a college resume ... they were talking to us about how you could take classes and that gives you all your credit. It helps you get ahead of college.

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<sup>15</sup> Santiago Schwarz, V., & Hamman-Ortiz, L. (2020). Systemic functional linguistics, teacher education, and writing outcomes for U.S. elementary English learners: A review of the literature. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 49. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2020.100727>

Belén is excited about participating in the dual credit program, which she would simultaneously earn both high school and college credit. Her desire to participate in this program illustrates the importance of not only providing this opportunity for all students, but also a schoolwide commitment to instruction that ensures both the rigor and support essential to superdiverse students' success in post-secondary education.

**The teachers really influence you and a lot of them motivate you.**

### **Overcoming Challenges**

Belén also faces challenges related to her school experience:

Finals [were challenging] just because of how stressed you are if you do not study for it. You get a lot of anxiety, and you just feel so stressed, and everything bugs you, and gets on your nerves. You just feel worried especially because their grades affect them a lot. Yes, everyone is on edge and really worried about their grade.

When asked about overcoming this challenge, she replied, “I talk with my friends like, ‘How did you do? How do you think you did?’” Belén also stated that what helped most during COVID’s virtual learning was “the teachers actually helping you and reassuring you that if you need help. Or, just seeing other people, like visiting your friends.” Belén explained the impact of teacher-student relationships to support challenges in school, “Sometimes if you are going through a hard time, the teacher knows, and they give you your own space.”

She also observed that during the pandemic, she did not receive “as much schoolwork,” an indicator of the disruption of students’ education and the need to accelerate learning to address achievement and opportunity gaps. Upon returning to the school buildings, Belén commented:

I had a lot of anxiety because I didn’t know how everything was going to be, and if it was going to be different, especially because when I came back it was barely going to be my freshman year, and it was my first time entering high school. I had a lot of anxiety, and I was worried about getting judged by others or not liking my classes, or ‘Is this going to be hard?’ or ‘Who am I going to go with?’ Like, I had a lot of anxiety.

**I had a lot of anxiety because I didn’t know how everything was going to be and if it was going to be different.**

Belén detailed what she heard regarding other students’ experiences: “When they came back, they were socially awkward, or they didn’t know how to talk to me.” Because learning is a social construct, school is a place for students to develop socially and emotionally. When asked about a school experience she likes most, Belén replied:

Rallies, just because they're really fun, and I like to see how kids play and how teachers interact because they choose some of the teachers [to participate]. You get to skip a little bit of class and get lunch earlier.

This statement speaks to the importance of school activities that facilitate fun and curiosity, as well as build community among the student body. Belén's experience also signifies the importance of providing students with safe spaces to receive social-emotional support as they navigate the challenges of high school.<sup>16</sup>

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

Belén enjoys her experience with culturally relevant instruction and extracurricular activities at school but worries about her academic performance and grades. She is excited about participating in the school's Early College Program and appreciates the counselors and teachers who provide support and motivation. At the same time, Belén describes enjoyable lessons that could have been enhanced with higher expectations for knowledge and communication through research and writing. While she generally enjoys school, one can query whether the school's curriculum is adequately preparing her for her college and career interests. Belén's experiences raise important questions and considerations for educators:

- Although Belén experienced a culturally relevant assignment, a writing component was not included. How can schools ensure that all courses include rigorous expectations to deepen and accelerate diverse students' learning experiences?
- Belén expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity to take Early College Program coursework. What are the ways in which schools are providing Superdiverse learners with programmatic equity and access to close achievement and opportunity gaps?
- Many students, including Belén, experienced post-pandemic feelings of anxiety when returning to school buildings. In what ways can schools leverage peer relationships for social-emotional support, as well as networks that include mutual support for academic achievement?

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<sup>16</sup> Thomas, G., & Macnab, N. (2022). Intersectionality, diversity, community, and inclusion: Untangling the knots. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 26(3) 227-244. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1645892>

# Bisrat



Loyola Marymount University  
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### Meet Bisrat

Bisrat is a ninth grade 15-year-old Newcomer from Eritrea, a northeast African country located on the Red Sea Coast that shares a border with Ethiopia. Due to a 30-year war for independence from Ethiopia, Eritreans migrate to other countries because of a lack of basic human rights, political freedom, and educational and job opportunities. Bisrat and his family are recent arrivals to the U.S. and have been here about a month. He attends a high school in Northern California, enrolling over 1,500 students in an urban low-income community. The school is very diverse, enrolling approximately 40% Latino students, 30% Asian students, and over 20% African American students, with less than 5% White students. Approximately 25% of students are English Learners; about half of these speak Spanish. The remaining students speak one of over 15 languages represented in the school. Bisrat speaks Tigrinya and is learning English. His two older sisters, who speak English, accompanied Bisrat to the interview, providing translation so Bisrat could share his perspectives as a newly arrived student.

<sup>17</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>18</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>19</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeg.12166>



## Welcoming Environment

A safe and welcoming environment affirms students' diverse cultural, linguistic, and academic backgrounds and experiences<sup>20</sup>. When Newcomer students experience an assets-based approach and perceive positive responses to Newcomer students, it creates opportunities to build trusting, positive relationships. Bisrat's new school is home to a diverse representation of students from many countries around the world and is well-known for creating welcoming spaces and programs for Newcomer students. The school halls provide a glimpse of this environment by displaying text and images that invite all learners in community, portraying a welcoming environment for all students. Bisrat uplifts his impressions of the school's positive, welcoming environment and what he likes best, "That there are students from different countries, so that's good."

## Family and Teacher Support

Bisrat's transition to a U.S. school has been supported by the adults in his life. School leaders recognize and value family engagement<sup>21</sup> as evidenced by the proactive approach that Bisrat's teacher took when seeking translation for Bisrat's participation in this interview; she immediately reached out to Bisrat's family to ask if they would be able to provide translation support for the interview and his sisters willingly came to the school during the school day to provide support to their younger brother. Bisrat also explained, "My teachers are very supporting and they help me." Bisrat provided several examples of the ways his teachers provide support, "Teachers help me with English language and help with math." He explained that he is taking Algebra and that during the class, "My teacher told me that I did good." He is proud of his achievement in Algebra and receiving positive feedback during class from his teacher.

**Bisrat benefits from positive connections and adult support, "My teacher told me that I did good."**

When asked what has been most difficult for him, he replied, "Just the language. I try my best to study. I just try my best." When comparing school in his home country to schools in the U.S., Bisrat said, "It's better here, but it's just the language." Bisrat explained that in the U.S., there is more opportunity. Because he has been in the U.S. for a month, he was not quite able to articulate his experience with class projects and assignments. However, he feels very comfortable talking about soccer. His eyes lit up when explaining, "I love soccer." He plays soccer in his physical education class and is thinking about playing on the school's soccer team next year. When asked his favorite soccer position, he replied, "striker," the position which scores the team's goals. When asked if he had suggestions to improve the school system for Newcomer students, Bisrat replied, "It's just good as it is right now."

## Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents

Bisrat's experience provides a glimpse of his impressions from four weeks into his arrival to the U.S. He's had a positive experience and feels welcomed into a new school environment. Although he is just beginning to learn English, he was excited to talk about playing soccer during his physical education

<sup>20</sup> National Center on Safe and Supportive Learning Environments (2023). *Engagement: Relationships*. <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/topic-research/engagement/relationships>

<sup>21</sup> Ishimaru, Ann. (2017). From Family Engagement to Equitable Collaboration. *Educational Policy*. 33. 089590481769184. 10.1177/0895904817691841.

class, a sport with which he is familiar and loves to play. This opportunity has likely contributed to a positive, welcoming experience as he transitions to a new country and culture, bridging the familiar with new experiences and learning. Physical education class is an excellent opportunity for students to acquire and rehearse oral language. To support a student like Bisrat, educators and policymakers can consider:

- In what ways can educational systems create and support cross-disciplinary approaches to facilitate collaboration of content area teachers such as physical education and English language development/English language arts teachers to provide an additional layer of oral language support for language learners?
- How can investments in professional learning support physical education, arts, and auxiliary teachers to provide language learners with language learning, social-emotional, and other supports?

# Carolina



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### Meet Carolina

Carolina is an eighth grade Newcomer from Venezuela. Carolina lived in Panama before her arrival in the U.S. In Panama, Carolina participated in online learning during the COVID shutdown. She started schooling in the U.S. one and a half years ago, when schools were deemed safe for everyone to return to the classroom. She attends a small middle school in a low-income suburban community in Southern California with slightly over 250 students combined in grades seven and eight. Over 95 percent of the students are Latino; approximately one-third are English Learners, and of these, over 95% speak Spanish. The school has a program specifically for Newcomer students. Carolina participated in a Zoom interview from her home on an unassigned (no school) day. Carolina spoke loudly, clearly, and confidently in her native Spanish during the conversation and transmitted an air of maturity for her young age.

### Peer and Teacher Support for Newcomer Students

The sudden pivot from in-person to online learning during the COVID pandemic was drastic and prolonged and for most students, returning to the classroom could not come soon enough. For Carolina,

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<sup>22</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>23</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>24</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

the reopening of classrooms in the fall of 2021 was not a return; it was an introduction to school in the U.S. Transmission levels were still high and vaccinations were slowly being rolled out:

**Cuando entré, estaba yo más confundida, pero ahora entiendo un poco más.**

**[When I started, I was very confused, but now I understand a little more.]**

Los primeros días fueron confusos porque no sabía nada de lo que era la escuela acá en los Estados Unidos. Hasta el día de hoy, reconozco que es muy diferente. No sabía de eso, y mis amigas, hice amigas, pocas, pero hice, me ayudaron a saber pues a dónde era mi clase, donde tenía que ir, que teníamos que hacer, y todo eso.

[The first days were confusing because I didn't know anything about school here in the United States. Until today, I admit that it's very different. I didn't know about it, and my friends, I made friends, few, but I did, they helped me to know where my class was, where I had to go, what we had to do and all that.]

The few friends that Carolina was able to make were her lifeline. Carolina continued to make friends with Newcomers like her as the school year continued:

En ese año, entraron otros dos niños más, pero nos hicimos amigos, y me ayudaron. Fueron los que me ayudaron más porque ya sabían que hacer.

[In that year, two other children entered, but we became friends, and they helped me. They were the ones who helped me the most because they already knew what to do.]

Carolina appreciates the support from her peers, which is consistent with research showing the benefits of peer support and relations for immigrant adolescents' academic and social well-being.<sup>25</sup> Her peers are an important part of school support for her. From Carolina's point of view, however, her teachers provide the most support for her in school. When asked what was most helpful for her in school, Carolina points to the teachers who speak Spanish, "Siento que son mis maestros porque me ayudan siempre cuando no entiendo algo en inglés, siendo con la pronunciación o como se dice." [I feel it is my teachers because they always help me when I do not understand something in English, such as with the pronunciation or how something is said.] Carolina provides another example of teacher support in a science class. During a circle discussion the students can share their thoughts in either English or Spanish, whichever they prefer. As a Newcomer student, Carolina benefits from the support of teachers who intentionally support multilingual students.

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<sup>25</sup> Carhill-Poza, A. (2015). Opportunities and outcomes: The role of peers in developing the oral academic English proficiency of adolescent English Learners. *The Modern Language Journal*, 99(4), 678 -695. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12271>

### **Learning to Ask Questions**

Carolina is keenly aware that she has a long way to becoming proficient in learning English. She gave two examples of her most difficult days in school, and they both involved making oral presentations in class. When reflecting on what she has learned from these experiences, Carolina said she is learning to ask questions, speak up, and ask for help, “Hay veces que no pregunto, y se va la clase, y no entiendo mucho. Tengo que preguntar siempre.” [There are times that I don't ask, and the class is over, and I don't understand much. I have to always ask.] Carolina is learning that advocating for herself and speaking up pays off. When thinking of a project that she was particularly proud of, a summary of a book on the planet Mars, Carolina said she constantly stops and asks her teacher for feedback, “Yo hacía como cuatro párrafos, y le preguntaba como si está bien porque no sabía si tenía errores gramaticales, y ella me iba ayudando, poco a poco.” [I did about four paragraphs and asked her if it was okay because I didn't know if I had grammatical errors, and she was helping me little by little.]

### **Aspirations for Higher Education**

College field trips can inspire students to see themselves as fitting into higher education. When she was asked to describe an event, or day that has been the most memorable to her, Carolina recalls a school trip to a university in Los Angeles:

Creo que lo que más me gustó este año fue cuando fuimos de paseo a una universidad que queda por allá en Los Ángeles. Fuimos a ver como el estadio donde jugaban los que son más grandes ya y están en la universidad. Siento que, pues, ellos ya son más grande, y siento que yo quisiera hacer una de ellos cuando sea grande.

[ I think what I liked the most this year was when we went for a field trip to a university that is over there in Los Angeles. We went to see the stadium where those who are already older and are in university played. I feel that they are already bigger, and I feel that I would like to be one of them when I grow up.]

Although she is currently in eighth grade, this trip to a university was a source of inspiration for Carolina who now sees herself as a university student one day.

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

Carolina shows both her vulnerabilities and aspirations at this point in her life. She recognizes she needs to learn more English, but also sees herself as a future university student. Her motivation and proactive outreach to peers for support paint a picture of a young adolescent Newcomer who is realistic about the present and who dreams of her future. Carolina's experiences raise import questions and considerations for educators and policymakers:

- As a Newcomer student, Carolina benefited from a strong support system at school. In what ways do schools ensure a welcoming climate for Newcomer students through peer and staff support beginning with their first day on campus?

- Carolina provided an example of how she demonstrated her learning through a writing assignment. How do schools ensure all Newcomers have access to a rigorous, culturally, and linguistically affirming curriculum?
- Carolina participated in a university visit, igniting thoughts of her future as a university student. To what extent do schools include Newcomer students with these college-going opportunities?

# Daniel



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### Meet Daniel

Daniel is a 14-year-old, ninth grade student enrolled in a grades 6-12 secondary school, which enrolls over 650 students in an urban low-income community in Northern California. Over 80% of the students are Latino, and 10% are African American. Almost 50% of students are English Learners; of these 90% speak Spanish. Daniel’s family is Vietnamese, and he proudly shares that he speaks both, “Vietnamese and English, less English.” He is classified as a Long-Term English Learner (LTEL) student. Daniel was born in Berkeley, California after his parents moved to the United States from Vietnam to visit his grandparents. Daniel explains, “They came to the U.S. because they like to go here and move after my grandparents moved from Vietnam. They want to start a better life. After the Vietnam War ended, ten years later they moved.” Daniel has one older sister who is a sophomore at the same high school he attends.

### Curiosity as a Learner

Adolescent students who are supported by educators who foster curiosity and uplift individual, and collective, student interests have the potential to develop greater persistence and positive attitudes

<sup>26</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>27</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>28</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeg.12166>

about learning<sup>29</sup>. Daniel described his school environment, “It’s very positive,” and said his teachers provide a welcoming environment by giving him positive feedback:

For example, if I get my work done, my teacher will give a positive feedback for me, ‘How am I doing? Well?’ They welcome my culture because they thought my culture was very impressive for them. They think my experience was very perfect that one of my teachers call me very intelligent student. They call me a successful student, and they call me a very curious student.

Daniel agrees with his teachers’ perceptions of his curious nature:

Yes, I like to learn a lot. I curious about the new lesson we learned at school. I was curious about friends, like, how, what are they doing, like working together in a project. I just see that I am curious that I saw there’s a new book of it in the library. And during Algebra I, I was curious about loading numbers, or doing Algebra I stuff. It was very good for me to learn that.

When asked what he believes helps him to be so curious in school, he shared, “It makes me feel curious that when I see on a textbook that my friend’s doing it to solve the problem, I just feel like I was being determined to work on it by using a piece of paper to help me out to get a correct answer.”

**Daniel’s curiosity is fostered in a welcoming environment, “It’s very positive.”**

### Language Journey

Daniel reflected on his language journey, beginning with early memories of learning Vietnamese at home while simultaneously being challenged to find ways to learn English even before enrolling in school. He recounted several details about his language journey:

My first language was Vietnamese because I learned from my mom. I began learning English back then. When I was a baby, I learned English. It was kind of difficult. When I check on the internet using YouTube, I saw a lot of English show and children’s shows. My earliest memory that I saw English for the first time. It was very difficult for me, but I can understand what they say. I can see the grammar structure. It looks kind of perfect, like when I watch kids shows like I saw that on TV, when I watched Mickey Mouse.

Daniel is a Disney fan stating, “Yes, that’s part of my childhood.” At home, Daniel speaks both English and Vietnamese, “More Vietnamese, but less English.” Communicating in Vietnamese with his parents, “helped me get a lot of memories; I’ve seen my childhood.”

Daniel indicated that he has difficulty communicating with peers because sometimes they misunderstand what he says. Daniel reflected on his bilingualism and communication with others, “It was very uneasy because when I try to communicate with my friends being bilingual that know about

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<sup>29</sup> Ostroff, W. L. (2016). *Cultivating curiosity in K-12 classrooms: How to promote and sustain deep learning*. ASCD.



English. When I talked to them, it was few messed up words on my English. But for Vietnamese, it's just better for my parents. They can't understand [English]." Daniel also shared that there are few Vietnamese speakers at this school. He has only one friend who also speaks Vietnamese but prefers to speak to him in English, "but I speak to him in Vietnamese for greetings." Overall, Daniel indicated that he believes his proficiency in Vietnamese and English is "equal" in reading, writing, and speaking.

### **Reclassification Struggles**

Daniel has attended California schools since he entered school as a child and is keenly aware that he has been unsuccessful at meeting the criteria to become Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP), which can have a far-reaching impact on his educational goals. He described his frustrating experience with his language reclassification journey:

I remember about taking the ELPAC test in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. I was not ready to prepare for it. And so, when I do the writing test, I had to write at least 2-3 sentences about my life, thinking about what you are proud of. And when I'm done taking the reading tests, I got a 2 and the rest of my oral language was 4, so I was very close to reclassify ELD. In April [of 8<sup>th</sup> grade], just the same thing. I got the 3 in oral language and the 2 in writing. So that's my lesson by reading questions carefully.

Daniel explained the difficulty he experiences when writing in English:

It feels hard when you write a lot. It has a lot of mistakes for the last part of the writing tests, like you need to write at least 2-3 paragraphs. But I was writing a lot of paragraphs, but it leads me to get 2's. So, that's my lesson for today was to read the questions carefully.

Daniel reported that he will be taking the ELPAC again. "Yep, to get my mistakes done, and learn from it, from the mistakes." Daniel explained that his ELD teacher reviewed the ELPAC assessment results with him, likely increasing his understanding of the assessment and the language proficiency needed to meet his goals.

### **Cultural Identity**

Daniel feels a strong connection to his family and culture. When asked about how he feels about his culture and identity, Daniel replied:

For my cultural backgrounds, it feels very amazing because we go out for New Year's Day beyond the Vietnamese community that we like. And we love each other. It was beyond perfect. We do Vietnamese New Year. We go out to hang out with my family. We prayed and after that we do some special occasions like doing fireworks and start celebrating."

### **Family and Teacher Support**

Daniel appeared to be highly motivated to earn good grades and improve his academic progress. Daniel shared that he is most proud of his grades. He recently scored a 4/4 on an Algebra quiz. His parents are

also supportive of his academic progress. Daniel detailed his parents' response to report cards, "Sometimes that I remember like when I have a bad grade for the first time, my parents react to my report card and say, yeah, bad grades. We have to get textbooks and start studying to improve **my** grade." Daniel further explained, "My mom saw my report card and she said my report card was her success, but when she saw B, and it made her feel disappointment. So, she said words in Vietnamese that I was feel motivated."

Daniel also provided examples of two teachers who support him in school, "When I got a C+ on Algebra I, I wanted to improve my grade so I could ask my Algebra teacher to help me out. And after that I was improving a lot to get to improve my grade." In particular, the teacher, "wants to help me for my focus that I feel struggled to do the hard question, the hard problem." In another example, Daniel explained with pride:

We had to write about 'The Lady and a Tiger' in English class. I thought, it's very hard, so I write. I start to write. Then quickly, and I saw many people finish, so I have to keep writing faster to take my time to finish. And when I'm done, I feel like my writing and my grammar structure was not very perfect, so I turned it in. And the next day, when my writing assignment comes up, I got an A. I checked my report card, and I got it.

Daniel reported that because the teacher provided proficiency criteria for the assignment, he was able to earn an A. He stated, "Because before doing a right assignment, I checked the criteria and start working on it, and when I'm done, I check my mistake to fix my grammar structure." Daniel also explained that typically when he is working on projects or assignments, he works in a group, "to collaborate with anyone in a group. If your group member needs help, I could ask for them."

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

Daniel is proud to be bilingual and experiences a welcoming environment that supports developing his curiosity and strengths as a learner. Nonetheless, he is well-aware of his language journey and the proficiency scores he needs on the ELPAC to reclassify as English proficient. His educational experience has resulted in a Long-Term English Learner status, and he feels a tremendous personal responsibility to improve his ELPAC scores. Daniel's story leaves us with important questions to consider:

- To what extent does the school prioritize a timely analysis of EL programming to determine the extent of effectiveness for all ELs in reaching their language goals and implementing needed changes responsive to students' linguistic and academic needs?
- Daniel would have benefited from specialized language supports to help him accelerate and reach his academic goals. How can schools design and implement course sequences for LTELs to help him?

# Diana



Loyola Marymount University  
Center for Equity for  
English Learners

## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

### Introduction to our Superdiverse Adolescent Profiles

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### Meet Diana

Diana is an eighth grade student at a small middle school, enrolling approximately 300 students in a suburban low-income community in Southern California. More than 90% of students are Latino. Over 20% are English Learners, and of these, over 95% speak Spanish. Diana was born in the U.S. Her first language is Spanish, which she speaks at home with her parents. Diana started learning English in preschool. Her language designation is Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP). She describes herself as a self-directed learner who began learning Sign Language on her own through watching videos online. Diana was in fifth grade when the COVID pandemic began and returned to in-person learning in the seventh grade at a new school. Diana participated in an in-person interview held at her school.

### Systems of Support: Peers and Programs

Diana highlighted the influence of her peer support system as a motivating factor in her educational experience. Reflecting on the difficulty of online learning during the pandemic, she stated:

Well, that time was kind of hard for me. I didn’t really attend my classes. I lost all motivation. My cousins, just like my friends, they encouraged me to go to all my classes.

<sup>30</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>31</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>.

<sup>32</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

I'd tell them about my problems, and they'd help me and give me advice on what to do about certain things.

Diana also indicated that her friends have been the most helpful support in her schooling experience because they:

... encourage me to keep going and to try hard in school so I can keep my grades up and keep passing my classes and keep turning in my assignments and keep me on track ... And they ask me when I get home if we have homework or something. They remind me to do it because usually, I forget. They encourage me to do things; they are kind of like my motivation.

As a result of distance learning, Diana experienced a lack of socialization and connection with friends, which led to feelings of isolation and awkwardness:

My best friend of nine years ... when we came back, it was just really awkward. ... I could feel the tension, and it was hard to me because she was my best friend for so long and she knew everything about me, and that day was hard.

Diana recalled an experience in which her peers noticed her feelings of isolation:

I feel like I haven't really been connecting with people a lot recently ... my friend kind of like insisted [I] go with them and to have fun because he saw me that I was kind of alone and like just there ... I like that they wanted me to go with them, and that they invited me.

**I feel like I haven't really been connecting with people a lot recently.**

Diana's school partners with a local non-profit that provides a lunchtime art program designed to foster relationships and build school community and culture:

During lunch these people come and set up tents, and they brought art supplies, and you get to paint whatever you want. They bring canvases and papers and stuff, and me and my group of friends, we went and painted. Then we put paint on our hands and put all our hands together and wrote our names. It was really fun. We made four, so each of us could have one. Mine is in my room.

This partnership not only provided students with an outlet for creative expression, but also facilitated a collaborative activity designed to foster friendship through meaningful experiences. The lunchtime art program at Diana's school encouraged the positive effect of **peer**

relationships by supporting inclusion and community within many student outlets.<sup>33</sup> And as time went on, Diana was able to form new friendships:

We became close and never had that awkward stage kind of like friends have. I felt comfortable around her. She never judged me ... we never judged each other, and she gave me advice on what to do, and she helped me cope with it.

Diana's network of peers provided support and motivation during the pandemic and the return to school. Engagement in enjoyable group activities at school expanded and strengthened this support network for her.

### **Collaboration and Relevancy**

When asked about schoolwork of which she is most proud, Diana stated, "a district assessment in Language Arts." This standards-aligned, district wide task is designed to provide a formative assessment of students' reading and writing ability. Students are assigned to read an article that presents multiple perspectives on an issue, then choose a perspective and write an argument to explain and defend their choice. "We got to argue and then choose a side; we give our reasonings on why we chose it ... you have to give information from the story and put it in your own words." Diana explained, "Sometimes I have trouble like writing." During this task, the teacher provided students with an opportunity to collaborate

**I write more if I'm mostly interested in it.**

with classmates to discuss and ideate as part of the writing process. Diana also highlighted the benefit of peer collaboration as an academic support: "My friends, they give me ideas, so it's easier for me to write things. If I know more details or do my research on it, then I know more in detail what to write about."

Diana's comments underscore the importance of opportunities for peer collaboration to support learning. Because she was given an opportunity to collaborate to develop her ideas for the writing task, she was able to include more detail in her writing, equating this to intelligence. "I try to make my things really long when I explain it, so it looks like I'm so smart." In addition to collaborative opportunities leading to academic success, Diana explained the significance of relevancy tied to academic experiences. "If I am interested in the topic, then I know what to write about and [in] more detail ... I write more if I'm mostly interested in it."

### **Individualized Adult Support**

Although Diana indicated that she lost motivation to learn during distance learning, teachers and counselors provided her with individualized support. "The teacher gave more explanation, and she'd tell me if I ever needed help, I could email her. I would always email her to ask questions, and she'd mostly help me with the assignments when I needed help."

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<sup>33</sup> Thomas, G., & Macnab, N. (2019). Intersectionality, diversity, community, and inclusion: Untangling the knots. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1645892>

Diana also mentioned that “the counselors really helped” with the transition back to in-person classes. As a result of adult support, Diana stated, “Now I ask more questions in front of everybody, but like before, I didn’t really do that because I was shy, or I asked after class ... but I did get used to it.” Adult support that is individualized to meet students’ needs can support students’ level of resiliency when dealing with trauma, such as the effect of the pandemic, or helping students with a transition from an elementary to middle school setting.

**The counselors really helped.**

### **Considerations for Supporting California’s Superdiverse Adolescents**

Diana is a Reclassified Fluent English Proficient student who struggled academically during the pandemic and return to school. She found support from her peers who motivated her to continue to engage in her studies and participate in activities which strengthened her connection with her peers. Teachers, counselors, engaging and rigorous class work, and peer collaboration supported Diana to continue to progress academically and socially. Diana’s experiences raise important considerations for educators and policymakers:

- Although Diana found a variety of support through adult and peer interactions, some students may not have those connections. What early warning sign mechanisms do schools have in place for superdiverse learners to ensure they are connected to peers and adults, rather than falling through the cracks of the educational system?
- Diana participated in a lunch time art program designed to create peer interactions and build relationships. In what ways do schools partner with outside organizations in developing students’ social and relationship skills?
- Diana found academic success through an engaging writing assignment. What school processes and policies ensure that diverse learners receive a rigorous and culturally relevant literacy curriculum in support of the development of reading, writing, speaking, and listening?

# Emma



Loyola Marymount University  
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## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

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### Meet Emma

Emma is a seventh grade student born in Zacatecas, Mexico. Emma’s primary language is Spanish, which is the language spoken in her home. Her parents enrolled her in the school district as a kindergartener. Emma attends a middle school that enrolls slightly less than 400 students in seventh and eighth grade combined. The school is located in the middle class area of a Southern California suburban community that is primarily low income. Approximately 90% of students are Latino. Just over 15% of students are English Learners, and of these approximately 95% speak Spanish. Emma has been classified as an English Learner and participated in the English Language Development (ELD) program since kindergarten. This year, Emma met the criteria to become Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP). She is immensely proud of her linguistic achievement. Emma’s post-secondary plans include nursing school because, “I like helping people.”

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<sup>34</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>35</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>36</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

## Pride in Achievement

Emma acknowledges that becoming proficient in English took many years for her. She is very proud that she has not met the criteria for reclassification. When asked about a school event or experience she liked the most, Emma replied:

**I got slowly into learning English and improving English.**

I'm honestly going to say my reclassifying day because I am really proud of myself. That day was like a big thing, and I chose that day because I feel like a lot of people struggle. Other people in my class also reclassified, and I was really proud of them, too. That day was the most important.

Emma's teacher gave her the exciting news that she had finally reclassified. "I had taken the test and honestly didn't think I did that good. But when she told me the news, I was happy! We got little awards, and we got doughnuts and orange juice." Emma's family participated in the celebration. "We went out to eat; they were proud of me, also." Emma's pride in her accomplishment, as well as the recognition by her parents and teacher, illustrate the value placed on her achievement.

As a new student in middle school, Emma's status as a Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) student also opens a new door to expanded opportunities for her education. Emma's experience illustrates the importance of language learners reaching reclassification prior to middle school to mitigate not only literacy achievement gaps, but also opportunity gaps resulting from the loss of elective course offerings. Middle and high school students who are designated ELs may experience variations in programs and services available for college and career preparation pathways and elective classes because of policy, programming, or scheduling constraints.<sup>37</sup> Students who are learning English as a second language must be enrolled in an ELD class; typically, this class takes the place of an elective course such as music, art, or technology. To mitigate this issue, many schools offer additional classes before or after traditional school day hours, allowing students in EL programming to take seven classes, including an elective. Programming and financial limitations preclude this option for students in some educational settings, thus limiting their exposure to the breadth of curriculum offered in middle school.

## Motivation and Relevance

Emma is a diligent student who values getting good grades in school. When asked about an example of schoolwork or a project that she was most proud of, Emma replied, "I'm really proud of one writing that I did. It was making up your own stories, so I got creative, and I got a really good grade on it so I'm really proud of it." Emma said she approached the writing in "parts," and, "At the beginning, I didn't know what to write, so I was kind of pushing it off to the side a little." Once she knew what she wanted to write, she said:

**It was making up your own stories, so I got creative, and I got a really good grade on it, so I'm really proud of it.**

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<sup>37</sup> Sugarman, Julie. 2021. The Impacts on English Learners of Key State High School Policies and Graduation Requirements. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute



It went really well. I started brainstorming everything, and that's when I got creative. It was pretty long, so it took me a couple of days. It was hard at first, but after I started getting really creative, it ended up really good.

Emma was able to overcome the difficulty by engaging in a creative process that involved student choice: "I wrote about this monster, hidden in a student's body and pretending to be my best friend." Emma said that her teacher gave her some feedback to improve her writing. When asked what she thought this writing assignment said about her, Emma observed:

It says about me that I'm a really creative person, and that it can get hard sometimes, but you just have to keep on pushing and it'll be great. I'm a really hard working person, so I say to everyone, 'Just keep pushing; it's not hard.' Some people don't want to do their homework, and I used to be one of those, and I tell them, 'It's not that you don't know how to, it's just that you're lazy. You just need to keep on pushing that laziness out of the way.

Emma's comments illustrate the ways in which motivation and relevance are connected to student achievement. "... members of the education and psychology research communities see it as imperative that education be made relevant to students' lives, interests, and cultural backgrounds."<sup>38</sup> When the learning environment is engaging and relevant, student motivation will soar.

### **Support to Overcome Barriers**

Emma said of the pandemic, "My mom was a really big support for online. It was really hard doing school online. We didn't have internet. My mom called the school and got internet. She was a really big support during the pandemic."

**We didn't have internet.**

Emma also stated that peer support also helped her overcome the challenges of the pandemic: "I was a really shy person back then, but I got more comfortable because everyone would participate, and I wanted to participate." Peer support, "helped to bring up my confidence." Upon returning to the buildings, Emma stated, "It took me a while to get used to being around other people. It was hard making friends...I got more comfortable as the time goes on." When asked what has been most helpful in school, Emma replied:

I'm going to say the counselor because she has actually been helping me a lot. She knows I struggle with doing homework because I get lazy, but she's actually helped me a lot, so I get a lot of stuff done. She just tried to help me out and talk to me about the future.

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<sup>38</sup> Jeffrey R. Albrecht & Stuart A. Karabenick (2018). Relevance for learning and motivation in education. *The Journal of Experimental Education*. 86:1, 1-10, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220973.2017.1380593>

Emma explained that her perception of laziness is related to the challenge of difficult homework and her need for support. “Sometimes it can be hard, but I ask people in my home if they can help me, like my brother, because he came to this school, so he can help me a lot.”

When asked about a school day or experience that was most challenging, Emma talked about her physical education (PE) class:

When we do PE each Friday, we run a mile. So, when we barely came back to school [after the pandemic], it was really difficult for me to get my run in on time. So, I just tried to practice and practice to improve my time. I practiced outside of school.

Emma explained that the mile run was tied to her grade for the class, and if she did not meet the requirement, “It could honestly bring my grade down.”

### **Considerations for Supporting California’s Superdiverse Adolescents**

Immigrating to the U.S. as a young child, Emma was able to start kindergarten in this country. Her trajectory to becoming Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) took approximately seven years. She is an active and motivated student who recognizes both her academic strengths and challenges, and, most importantly, demonstrates the self-confidence and agency to seek support from her teachers and counselor:

- Although Emma attended her district’s schools since kindergarten, she did not become Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) until seventh grade. How can school systems support English Learners to achieve the RFEP milestone by the start of middle school?
- Prior to reclassification, Emma was enrolled in an English Language Development class and did not take an elective course during her six-period day. How can schools prioritize closing opportunity gaps by providing alternative scheduling to allow all students to take an elective?
- Emma’s parents were able to celebrate her milestone achievement. How can schools affirm and support parent recognition of the accomplishment of their students becoming Reclassified Fluent English Proficient?



## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

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### Meet Esrin

A soft-spoken student, Esrin and her family immigrated to the United States from Afghanistan when she was 8 years old. Her family speaks Farsi at home. She and her siblings have attended different schools across several northern California school districts, continuously seeking a more positive experience. Esrin attends a secondary school in Northern California that enrolls slightly more than 400 students in grades six through 12. Approximately 90% of the students are Latino. Over 35% of students are English Learners; of these, over 85% are Spanish speakers. As a 16-year-old 11<sup>th</sup> grade student, Esrin is labeled a Long Term English Learner (LTEL) due to her level of proficiency in English and academic achievement scores. Esrin was nervous when she began the interview and she timidly responded to each question until she became more comfortable and confident.

### Cultural and Linguistic Diversity are Affirmed and Valued

Culturally and linguistically diverse adolescents thrive when educational systems and teachers respect all learners and acknowledge and proactively affirm students’ cultural identities and assets as a critical facet of their positive self-concept and academic and social well-being<sup>42</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>40</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>41</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

<sup>42</sup> National Center on Safe and Supportive Learning Environments (2023). *Engagement: Relationships*. <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/topic-research/engagement/relationships>

Esrin shared insights on how she and her family have worked hard to identify a learning context that provides safe spaces for diversity, and she expressed that she was very happy to currently be enrolled at this school where “everyone respects each other.” When asked what it means for her to be bilingual and bicultural, she responded:

It feels good to be bilingual. Sometimes you get things confused. In my own language I can speak fluently but sometimes I get my words mixed up. I can’t write in Farsi or Persian, but it’s good to be bilingual because you get to know multiple languages and people.

One of her highlights when returning to in-person instruction after the pandemic was that she was able to communicate with new people to learn a lot about different cultures, including indigenous people and what they’ve experienced. She said, “One thing that stood out the most was the speeches they gave – historical figures. I saw similarities ... the designs, colors, the way they decorated it. That’s what we

**One thing that stood out to me the most was the speeches they gave – historical figures. I saw similarities ... the designs, colors the way they decorated it. That’s what we do.**

do.” Esrin provided additional insight on her perceptions of how learning can be ignited by culturally responsive assignments. For example, a project at the beginning of the year included writing about their traditions, “Something that’s really important to us. I wrote about Ramadan and got a 7.3 out of 10. The teacher said I should use it for my college applications. I am so proud. I included family memories.”

### **It Takes a Village to Address Systemic Barriers**

Although there is variation in the group of students designated as Long-term English Learners (LTELs), they have unique strengths such as possessing strong oral proficiency, demonstrating academic performance in some academic areas, using resources across two languages, and perceiving themselves as successful learners despite schooling challenges or poor academic performance. In many cases this group of students remains designated as English learners for long periods of time because of systemic issues such as incoherent language development programs, lack of access to high-quality instruction, literacy, and language development.<sup>43</sup> Esrin shared that her family expects her to attend a local public university because her older sister and her brother both attended University of California Berkely, yet she’s uncertain about what she wants to do or what she’s interested in pursuing.

**Esrin is aware of her LTEL designation and named the importance of a “village of supporters” to address what she perceives as challenges and opportunities in her educational journey.**

Over the past two years, Esrin recalls that her “village of supporters,” including the college counselor, provided encouragement, support, and advice to address systemic barriers. For example, she believes

<sup>43</sup> Clark-Gareca, B., Short, D., Lukes, M., & Sharp-Ross, M. (2020). Long-term English Learners: Current research, policy, and practice. *TESOL Journal*, 11(1), e452. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.452>

that because of her designation as an LTEL she has not been afforded access to any of the Advanced Placement or Honors classes. She reports taking the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC), yet not having the information about how it might differ at different grade levels, when the results are available, and what the results mean. Nonetheless, she believes that if she asks to be placed in advanced classes, “They would put me in it. At this school everyone is cool and respects us.”

Esrin also mentioned the need to accelerate her academic journey given the challenges she has faced with instructional programming, especially after returning to in-person learning from the pandemic. She highlighted the opportunity her counselor provided to enroll in two dual enrollment courses:

This semester I took two dual enrollment college classes. They were both a lot of work, but I got this. I also got to see the life of college. My school counselor told me the good sides of dual enrollment. I took Spanish and I needed that for my language credits. I knew that I could take this, and it would help me.

As she reflected on her experiences, Esrin pointed to her strengths as a self-motivated student who participates actively, hoping to achieve the intended outcomes.

### **Considerations for Supporting California’s Superdiverse Adolescents**

Esrin is aware of her Long Term English Learner status and identifies supportive features of her schooling context as well as systemic barriers. Esrin’s advice to educators is to “appreciate how hard students work and to create opportunities for success.” This responsibility is shared and necessitates a bold approach to looking beyond the LTEL label to uplift student strengths and to use multiple data sources to create essential conditions for success led by multidisciplinary teams. To implement this approach, educators and policymakers should consider:

- Esrin was not enrolled in Honors or Advanced Placement courses, likely due to her LTEL designation. How can alternative measures of linguistic proficiency support LTEL students’ access to rigorous college preparatory curriculum, including Honors, Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, and International Baccalaureate courses?
- What types of accelerated and language development courses can support LTEL’s transition to rigorous college preparatory curriculum described above?
- Esrin spoke of her desire to accelerate her academic journey. How can educators ensure that all content courses with LTEL students provide Integrated English Language development, with a dual focus on content knowledge and language development in order to accelerate academic progress in a post-pandemic setting?

# Francisco



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## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

### Introduction to our Superdiverse Adolescent Profiles

This student profile represents one example of the “Superdiverse” Multilingual Learner student population in California, crossing boundaries of language, culture, generational immigration patterns, socio-economic class, and individual Identities.<sup>44</sup> California has the nation’s most diverse student population, beginning with the youngest English learning students (ages birth to eight or dual language learners),<sup>45</sup> yet much remains to understand the experiences of the state’s Superdiverse Adolescents (ages 12-19).<sup>46</sup> Our profiles of these students uplift both their voices and key highlights of what their experiences mean to them.

### Meet Francisco

Francisco is an 18-year-old Newcomer senior in a high school that enrolls over 1,000 students in a low-income suburban community in Southern California. Approximately 20% of students are English Learners; over 95% of these students speak Spanish. Francisco’s first year in U.S. schools was 2020, as schools shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic and distance learning was underway. Currently enrolled in English Language Development (ELD) 3, Francisco describes his journey as “una historia rara” [an uncommon story]; that is, Francisco was born in the U.S. and his parents returned with him to their native country of Mexico when he was an infant. Francisco chose to conduct his interview in Spanish and transitioned back and forth between Spanish and English.

### Social and Academic Support from Peers

For adolescents, experiences with others are very meaningful. When Francisco was asked to identify a school event, day, or experience that was most memorable to him, he talked about the time he and his friends from his school’s Universal Dreamers Club raised funds for a trip to Disneyland. The Universal

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<sup>44</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>45</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>46</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

Dreamers Club is for students enrolled in English Language Development (ELD) courses.<sup>47</sup> There are 12-15 ELD students in the Universal Dreamers Club, and they convene on a regular basis for various team-building events and group projects. Francisco describes:

**Entre todos logramos algo que nos benefició.**

**[Together we achieve something that benefits us.]**

Hicimos una recolecta de fondos para poder ir todos a Disneyland, y era la primera vez que íbamos entonces como que estábamos todos bien emocionados. Trabajamos en equipo, juntamos dinero vendiendo cosas, haciendo 'car wash.' Al último, si fuimos.

[We held fundraisers so we could all go to Disneyland, and it was the first time we went so we were all very excited. We worked as a team, we raised money by selling things, doing car washes. At the end, we did go.]

When asked to elaborate why this was so memorable to him, Francisco touched on a few topics including isolation, friendship, and first-time experiences as he described, "Casi nunca salgo a ningún lado. Fue divertido estar con mis amigos y con la maestra." [I hardly ever go out anywhere. It was fun to be with my friends and with the teacher.] Francisco's friends were more than a source of socialization; friends also assisted Francisco academically. When discussing the impact of COVID-19, Francisco elaborated on how two friends were of most assistance to him during distance learning experience. When asked whether teachers or students had been most helpful for him during this time, he replied:

Bueno los maestros, pero también dos estudiantes que hablan español y también inglés. Ellos me ayudaban en mi clase de historia y en matemáticas, también. Ellos me ayudaban a traducir más que nada...unas cosas ya sabía, pero no sabía cómo decirlo así.

[Well, teachers, but also two students who speak Spanish and English. They helped me in my history class and in math, too. They helped me translate more than anything ... I already knew some things but I didn't know how to say it like that.]

Friends stood as academic, social, and emotional pillars for Francisco in his early years in U.S. schools. Francisco's friendships represent the role of peer support in the academic and social wellbeing of adolescent immigrant students.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> The Universal Dreamers is a collaboration of English Learners from various cultural backgrounds on the Southern California high school campus, facilitated by adults who volunteer their time to unite students; build community, relationships, and leadership skills; and, fundraise for an end-of-the-year incentive field trip for English Learners passing all of their classes, all year long. Universal Dreamers Club hopes to promote the love and importance of education as a powerful tool to realize students' dreams. The Universal Dreamers meet weekly and vote for activities such as visits to nearby colleges, hikes, and ways to raise money to inspire high school graduation and higher education.

<sup>48</sup> Carhill-Poza, A. (2015). Opportunities and outcomes: The role of peers in developing the oral academic English proficiency of adolescent English learners. *The Modern Language Journal*, 99(4), 678-695. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12271>

### Challenges and Resilience during COVID for a Newcomer

Sudden school closures and the pivot from in-person to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic presented barriers to educational access unique to adolescent immigrant students.<sup>49</sup> For Francisco, the challenge of distance learning was compounded by his introduction to schooling in California and learning a new language. He described this as a confused and emotional period in his life.

Despite the challenges he encountered, Francisco demonstrated initiative and resilience adjusting to his new school experience. He attributed his survival in school during his first year partly to Google

Translate:

**Cuando llegue al principio, empecé en las clases en línea. Estaba muy asustado y casi me daban ganas de llorar porque yo no entendía nada.**

**[When I first arrived, I started online classes. I was scared and I almost felt like crying because I didn't understand anything.]**

En las actividades, prácticamente copiaba todo el texto, y lo traducía. Hacía mi trabajo en español, y lo traducía al inglés, y ya lo entregaba. Y así hice la mayoría del trabajo ese año. [“In the activities, I practically copied the entire text and translated it. I did my work in Spanish, and I translated it into English and delivered it. And so, it's how I did most of the work that year.”]

Google Translate was Francisco's lifeline initially, but he also realized its limitations. For example, he could not use Google Translate during physical education as most of the instructions were given orally. Francisco recommended that a bilingual peer could have been assigned to partner with him:

“Como ... un compañero que hablara español e inglés que me ayudara. Pero como no conocía a nadie, nadie me ayudó. Pero al final, hice lo que pude, y si pasé la clase pero con una D.” [Like someone who spoke Spanish and English who could help me. But since I didn't know anyone, no one helped me. But in the end, I did what I could, and I did pass the class but with a D.]

He is keenly aware that he is behind in school when he says, “Estoy como un año atrás. Se supone que ya debería de haber terminado la high school.” [I'm like a year behind. I'm supposed to have finished high school by now.]

### Developing Confidence as an English Learner

While distance learning was a challenge for Francisco, he identified his first day of in-person school as his biggest hurdle:

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<sup>49</sup> Jones, N., Pincock, K., Guglielmi, S., Baird, S., Sánchez Tapia, I., Oakley, E., & Seager, J. (2022). Barriers to refugee adolescents' educational access during COVID-19: Exploring the roles of gender, displacement, and social inequalities. *Journal on Education in Emergencies*, 8(2), 44-72. <https://doi.org/10.33682/7e0m-40rq>



El día más difícil fue entrar a clases presenciales el primer día. Venía de clases en línea y no me siento como una persona que puede hacer amigos fáciles. Entonces que no sabía qué hacer. El maestro le dijo a los estudiantes que se presenten y todos se pararon y como que ya se conocían, y yo no conocía a nadie. Y me daba pena hablar y decir, “I don’t speak English. Solo hablo español.” Pero el maestro hablaba español y me pudo ayudar. Me dijo que no me preocupara y que hay otros que solo hablan español. Me dijo, que tomara mi tiempo y que me relajara, pero esa vez estaba yo bien nervioso en la escuela.

[The most difficult day was entering face-to-face classes on the first day. I was coming from online classes and I don’t feel like a person who can make friends easily. So, I didn’t know what to do. The teacher told the students to introduce themselves, and everyone stood up and like they already knew each other, and I didn’t know anyone. And I felt ashamed to speak and say, “I don’t speak English. I only speak Spanish.” But the teacher spoke Spanish and was able to help. He told me not to worry and that there are others who only speak Spanish. He told me I should take my time and relax, but that time I was very nervous at school.]

The Spanish-speaking teacher was a lifeline and reassured Francisco that he wasn’t alone, and that things would get better. As Francisco gained more confidence during the school year, he told us about an oral presentation that he did for his government class of which he was particularly proud.

Teníamos que hacer cómo un resumen y hablar acerca de un encargado de un distrito de aquí de California. A mí me tocó el número 5. No recuerdo muy bien el nombre, pero hicimos una presentación, este fue el tema, y es una presentación en inglés. Pensé que no iba a poder. Me sentía muy nervioso, pero al final supere ese miedo de intentar hacerlo. Tenía miedo de que todos se rieran de mí por no poder decir una palabra pero al último si pude.

[We had to do a summary and talk about a person in charge of a district here in California. I got number 5. I don’t remember the name very well, but we made a presentation. This was the topic, and it was a presentation in English. I thought I was not going to be able to do it. I felt very nervous but, in the end, I overcame that fear of trying. I was afraid that everyone would laugh at me for not being able to say a word, but in the end, I was able to do it.]

Francisco’s English proficiency has increased since starting school in the U.S. “Ahora ya sé hablar inglés más con calma. No tendría ese miedo de conocer a alguien con el que no pudiera comunicarme. Ya perdí ese miedo.” [“Now I know how to speak English more calmly. I wouldn’t have that fear of meeting someone I couldn’t communicate with. I already lost that fear.”]

**Puedo hacer cosas más grandes de lo que yo creo, si me lo propongo.**

**[I can do bigger things than I think, if I set my mind to it.]**

When asked what his experiences say about him as a person, Francisco very wisely stated, “Puedo hacer cosas más grandes de lo que yo creo si me lo propongo.” [I can do bigger things than I think if I set my mind to it.]

### **Considerations for California’s Superdiverse Adolescents**

As a Newcomer student, Francisco encountered and surmounted challenges of distance learning, in-person learning, and learning English. Francisco was keenly aware of his differences as an English Learner, being older than the traditional high school students, and as one school year behind. His retelling of his experience of schooling in the U.S. shows the importance of a social network of Spanish-speaking peers and teacher, and his own initiative and resilience which together supported his linguistic and academic growth. The challenges facing Newcomer students like Francisco point to important questions about education:

- To what extent are educators and policymakers aware of and responsive to the needs of Newcomer students?
- Francisco found responsive peer and adult support through the Universal Dreamers program at his school. How can schools be designed and staffed to serve as welcoming and supportive hubs for Newcomer students?
- Francisco would have benefitted from additional language supports to help him accelerate and reach his academic goals. How can schools fulfill Francisco’s request for bilingual peers and teachers to help him?

# Gloria



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### Meet Gloria

Gloria is a Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) student in eighth grade at a small middle school enrolling fewer than 300 students in a suburban district in a low-income community in Southern California. Over 90% of students are Latino. Approximately 20% are English Learners; approximately 95% of these students are Spanish speaking. Born in the U.S., Gloria describes herself as a native Spanish speaker and is currently living with both of her parents.

### High Expectations for Diverse Adolescents

Gloria described two particular school experiences as standing out during her time in middle school; one is her Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) classes<sup>53</sup> and the other is her Spanish for Spanish Speakers classes. These provided two complementary opportunities that support her academic progress, as well as her identity development.

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<sup>50</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>51</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>52</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

<sup>53</sup> Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) courses are intended to provide students with knowledge and skills to support academic and college-to career success. Teachers and school leaders complete cycles of training to implement AVID in districts and classrooms.

AVID, adopted by this school district prior to the pandemic, is a long-standing and well-recognized academic structure that builds skills and self-assurance by providing middle and high school students with expanded and collaborative, peer-group learning opportunities during the school day. A former English Learner, Gloria described how AVID served to counter her trepidations about public speaking and provided her with the tools to develop confidence through activities in her AVID class.

**We had to present on something we were passionate about [in my AVID class]. We had to present in front of class. I don't like speaking in front of class, so it was hard ... it made me feel more confident.**

In addition to the AVID program, Gloria's district also provided Spanish for Spanish Speakers classes to middle school students to accelerate meeting college readiness requirements and access to advanced Spanish classes in high school. This class was a highlight for Gloria, where she not only was able to further develop her native language, but also experienced culturally and linguistically sustaining instruction and developed more confidence in both her language and identity.

### **Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Teaching**

When asked about an assignment or school task that she is particularly proud of, Gloria described a bio poem, a 10-line, non-rhyming summary of a fictional or non-fictional person, that students were asked

**I'm proud of that one because I got to write more about myself and others but without using simple words [instead] using other complicated words.**

to complete in her Spanish for Spanish Speakers class. She shared that she wrote the bio poem about her mother and appreciated the instruction to expand vocabulary usage in the bio poem, "The teacher made us look for other words we can use to help us, so that was a good one." For Gloria, the bio poem assignment was not just about using more sophisticated

Spanish vocabulary; it also provided the opportunity to strengthen the home school and family connections and her identity as a proficient bilingual learner.

### **Challenges and Resilience During COVID**

Despite the fact that these interviews occurred over a year and half after the end of the pandemic, Gloria still spoke about the challenge of the simultaneous transition from elementary school to middle school coupled with the transition from online learning back to in-person learning. Gloria elaborated on the difficulty of re-establishing, and sometimes establishing for the first time, those human, social and peer relationships and connections that are part of traditional adolescent development, but which were disrupted because of the pandemic.

**It was really hard because in sixth grade I was still elementary. And then going to middle school after being online was hard because I got lost in the beginning of the year, and then making new friends because online was not being able to talk to old friends, so making new friends was hard, meeting new teachers, new staff.**

The challenge of establishing peer networks also impacted her academic work and access to peer support. "And I didn't understand it because of just coming out of online learning and

elementary, and then again not being able to ask for help because you don't know them that well, because you don't feel comfortable."

In contrast to hesitancy and limited interactions during the school day, after school events that foster socialization with peers became an important venue to break through some of the apparent awkwardness of entering middle school and engaging with her peer group in a non-academic setting. Gloria shared her experience at a recent school dance as a highlight of in-person schooling:

There was the winter dance. That was like probably the only one I've been to but it was fun 'cuz ... everybody [was there], ... even the principal was participating, and then they also gave out snacks to people, and everybody got to go. It was fun!

This particular school dance was symbolic for Gloria in multiple ways. Not only was it a typical "coming of age" experience, but it also represented the type of social interactions that were forestalled during the stay-at-home mandates of COVID-19. When probed about its importance, Gloria replied, "Because of the music and like being with friends. I just liked getting the chance to hang out with people like not only in class, but outside of class, too." Developing these positive peer relationships can contribute to positive experiences within classrooms as well.

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

Gloria recognized the benefits she experienced in school through her participation in rigorous, college preparation classes such as AVID and Spanish for Spanish Speakers. She saw their contribution to the development of both academic skills and self-confidence. While she was hesitant about establishing new peer relationships once school reopened, she enjoyed the school's social activities and was supported, particularly through her participation in AVID, to engage with peers during collaborative learning activities. These supportive opportunities suggest the following considerations:

- Gloria participated in the AVID program in support of college and career readiness. What systems do schools and districts have in place to ensure that all students have access to rigorous, enriching college preparation curriculum?
- Gloria spoke of class assignments that included culturally relevant connections to her life. In what ways can schools build on the linguistic and cultural assets of multilingual students to enhance and accelerate biliteracy development?
- The challenge of establishing peer networks seems to have had an impact on Gloria's academic work at school re-entry. How can collaborative peer group learning become more widespread as an instructional practice for superdiverse adolescents?

# Hector



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### Meet Hector

Hector is an eighth grade student in a middle school with slightly less than 400 students in grades seven and eight, in a suburban low-income community in Southern California. Approximately 90 percent of the students are Latino. About 15% are English Learners, of whom over 95% speak Spanish. Hector’s parents and older siblings were born in Mexico; he was born in a nearby town. Hector grew up speaking Spanish and English that he learned from his older brother. He feels he speaks English better than Spanish. Hector and is proud that he recently became Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP). The interview was conducted primarily in English, with some Spanish as Hector recalled conversations with Spanish speakers.

### Multilingual Pride

Hector describes his efforts to becoming fluent in both Spanish and English. He recalls growing up with the challenge of not being fluent in either Spanish or English:

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<sup>54</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

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My first language was Spanish. I grew up learning Spanish and English at the same time from my older brother. I can't really speak Spanish that good, but I can speak English good, but not too well. I still mess up some words.

He was enrolled in English Language Development (ELD) until the beginning of this year when he was reclassified as RFEP. His district provides a seventh period elective course for students who are enrolled in ELD, but he was glad to be reclassified and able to choose "my own elective," a Spanish for Spanish Speakers class. "My elective is Spanish class right now. I am learning how to read it and write it because I didn't know how to write it; I know how to speak it."

... sometimes  
I speak  
Spanglish

Hector recognized that he is not as fluent in English or Spanish as he would like. His district offers dual language programs at two schools, but he was not enrolled in the program; although his sister was. He describes his current bilingual abilities and how he handles linguistic challenges:

There are certain words I don't know how to write or speak. For me it's hard to say some words like, "gancho" [hook] or like "mueble" [furniture]. So, words I don't know in English so I just say it in Spanish. When my dad tells me to speak better, sometimes I do but sometimes I do not because sometimes I speak Spanglish.

At the same time, Hector spoke at length about the translation support he provides for his parents:

I help my parents out with translation. My dad works in installation. Born in Guerrero, Mexico, same as my mom, from the same village. He works in installation, like I said. He needs help with his clients, and I help him with work, but I also do translation with English and Spanish because there are so many people that don't speak Spanish and it's a main language to this country.

Hector also described using his bilingual abilities for a school fundraising event selling chocolate bars to raise money for tickets for his family to go to Knott's Berry Farm:

I helped out with selling chocolates like I would go by myself sometimes to sell the chocolates at Target, at CVS, and there's a "segunda" a thrift store ... and there's mostly a little bit of Spanish speakers. So, I obviously had to turn on my Spanish and English at the same time. So, I was using two languages, two languages at the same time. I would go, "Oh, chocolate for \$1?" Sometimes I don't know if they speak Spanish or not. So, like they say, "O, yo agarro cuando me sale." [Oh, I'll get one when I leave.] So, I say, "OK. Espero aquí."

The fundraiser was a success, and Hector and family members went to Knott's Berry Farm together. Hector is keenly aware of language abilities within his family, and described his relatives going to Knott's Berry Farm with him in terms of their spoken language:

We went with my aunt, my uncle, my uncle who speaks Spanish only, my uncle who speaks English and Spanish, my mom and my dad who speak Spanish only, my older brother who was born in Mexico, and he speaks English and Spanish.

Hector also considers language abilities as he considers his future in the military; he anticipates that he will need to speak multiple languages:

Like I said, I'd like to join the military. I know of a special forces called the Navy Seals that I'd like to join ... and with that I could actually use foreign language because it's the language of other countries that I'd have to speak. Some countries have no English; some don't know English, so that's when I can turn on my multilingual. Like right now I'm learning how to speak Japanese a little bit. Little by little, but I'm also learning more Spanish at the same time.

**That's when I  
can turn on  
my  
multilingual.**

Hector's self-described varying levels of fluency in Spanish and English and varying uses of Spanish and English depending on the purpose and need in different situations is consistent with research regarding the fluid bilingual use of language.<sup>57</sup>

### **The Importance of Family Legacy**

When asked about schoolwork that he was proud of, Hector described what he learned through a project for Day of the Dead in his Spanish for Spanish Speakers class. Hector's family and extended family live nearby; however, he never met his grandmother who lived in Mexico. He selected her for his project:

I've got to say that the assignment that I was most proud of was this school year. I made an "ofrenda" [offering] for my grandmother which I didn't get to meet, and I didn't know anything about her. The "ofrendas" are very important to me to honor the dead. I had to write a note to her, and I didn't know most things about her, so all I wrote was, "I wish I knew you. I heard lots of things about you. I really hope that you were here with us and that you could talk more about stuff. I never got to meet you."

During this project, Hector learned about his grandmother primarily from his mother. Among the many things he learned were his grandmother's accomplishments for her village.

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<sup>57</sup> Flores, N., Kleyn, I., & Menken, K. (2015). Looking holistically in a climate of partiality: Identities of students labeled long-term English Language Learners. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 1492), 113-132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2015.1019787>



I also learned ... that she was the first lady to make cheese in her village. She made cheese from hand. Since she learned how to do it, she taught more people, and that's how we get cheese from Mexico. Every once in a while, we get food sent from Mexico, and we always get cheese. And since now I know that my grandma taught others I think, "Oh, there are [a] few who learned from my "abuela" [grandmother] how to make this cheese, and they taught their children. So, we have their cheese here now.

**She was the first lady to make cheese in her village.**

### **Challenges and Resilience during COVID**

Distance learning was a difficult time for Hector who was easily distracted during online lessons and had difficulty sustaining attention to the lessons. This was due partly to the easy availability of online games, but also because the online class was a combination class with two grade levels. This made it difficult for Hector, who noted, "She would help mostly the other grade." He recognized he needed to focus and participate more:

It was just me telling myself, "I need to stay in class until it ends and participate in activities," and, of course, I had to go to ELD, and that I mostly paid attention to because I wanted to get out of ELD.

Hector realized that he was not participating as he should during virtual learning and was eager to return to in-person school:

Well, since I was in virtual learning, it got boring after a little bit, and I was like, "I want to go to school. I want to go to the building. I am not in the right mind right now." And when the opportunity came ... It was actually very helpful because I could be with my teachers, and I couldn't just wander off in my own virtual world anymore. I'm a visual learner. I need to see what's going on, and then I can do it ... Virtual learning was hard because I can't see you in person, but when I got to the building, I saw what I was expected to do, and I did it.

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

Hector values his developing multilingual abilities, his family heritage, and the opportunity to return to in-person school. Although he attained Reclassified Fluent English Proficient at the beginning of the year, Hector recognizes his linguistic limitations in both languages. He enrolled in Spanish for Spanish Speakers in middle school to improve his Spanish and learn how to read and write in Spanish as well. Hector translates for his father's business clients and uses his bilingual abilities strategically as needed. He sees the value of being bilingual and is challenging himself to learn a third language in preparation for a military career that may take him to many countries. Hector's culture is a source of pride, especially his grandmother who he learned contributed to her village's cheese-making business. He is also glad to be back to in person schooling and feels he is paying greater attention and learning more. His experiences learning multiple languages and efforts to engage better now that he has returned to school suggest questions educators should consider:

- Hector sees the importance of being able to be fluent in Spanish. He is trying to improve his Spanish by his enrollment in a class designed for students who speak, but do not read or write Spanish. How can educators increase the availability of Spanish for Spanish Speakers classes to support Multilingual Learners who have not been able to attend dual language programs?
- Hector recognizes his limitations in both English and Spanish. Had he had the opportunity to participate in a dual language program since he began school, it is likely that he would be fully proficient in both languages. How can educators increase access to dual language programs considering options such as dual language programs at multiple campuses, ways to enter dual language programs in upper elementary, and ways to continue dual language programs at the secondary level?
- Hector values his cultural and family background, as seen in his efforts for the Day of the Dead project offered in his Spanish for Spanish Speakers class. How can culturally-responsive teaching be implemented across all classes, particularly in schools with significantly diverse study populations?

# Hossein



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### Meet Hossein

Hossein is an 11<sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer born in Kunduz, Afghanistan who speaks Farsi. Hossein lived with his family and attended school in Afghanistan until 2021, when U.S. troops withdrew military support. As the Taliban militia captured the city of Kunduz, Hossein’s family was forced to evacuate their home. Hossein escaped with his parents, brother, sister, and other family members. One older brother stayed behind with his wife and children. Hossein shares how difficult this time was for his family, “We got out of there and made it to the camp.” As he reflects about growing up in Afghanistan, Hossein said, “It was great, even though it wasn’t peaceful. But it was great. It was fun.” Hossein arrived in the U.S. during the pandemic and did not immediately enroll in school, “We just took a break for some months.” Hossein attends a high school enrolling over 1,500 students in a low-income urban community in Northern California. The school is very diverse, enrolling approximately 40% Latino students, 30% Asian students, and over 20% African American students, with few than 5% White students. Approximately 25% of students are English Learners; about half of these speak Spanish. The remaining students speak one of more than 15 languages. Hossein plans to attend college after high school graduation. When asked about how he is doing in his classes, Hossein replied, “It’s perfect: As or A+’s.” He is taking Algebra II, and stated, “In my country, I was good at math.” Hossein loves soccer and plays on the school’s junior varsity soccer team as a defensive back. The day of **the interview he proudly wore his team jersey and**

<sup>58</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>59</sup> ark, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>60</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeg.12166>

**looked** forward to playing in a soccer match after school. Hossein plans to attend college after high school graduation.

### **Voice and Choice**

Hossein learned to speak English in Afghanistan schools and said it was easier coming to the U.S. being able to speak both English and Farsi; he ascribed his success and transition to U.S. schools to his bilingual/biliteracy abilities. Hossein noted the differences between schools in Afghanistan and the U.S.:

In our school in Afghanistan, they would hit us if we didn't do our homework, [or] if you didn't answer the question. And there we had hard classes. And here it's easier. Here, if you like the subject, they would teach you that subject. But in Afghanistan, they would just throw you any subject they want. And they don't care if you like it or not.

Hossein explained that in Afghanistan, students do not have choices, such as elective classes to learn different subjects. This year, Hossein is taking computer science as his elective class. He described a project from his history class of which he was particularly proud:

The best thing I did was in history class [was] about the first American Indians. We made a collage about it and a presentation about it. But the thing is, it's hard. I never made one; this was my first time. You going to take pictures from different books and newspapers and take different pictures and put it on a paper. And it shows the feeling of the leader of someone you're talking about.

Hossein said that he worked with a partner on this project. When asked if his teacher provided him with feedback regarding his work, he replied, "A lot of time. Four times. He was always asking, 'How'd you do?' And I was showing him my work, which was the most helpful'." This type of guidance from teachers is indicative of the transition he experienced as a Newcomer student as they navigate the "journey from east and west."<sup>61</sup>

### **Supportive Family and Adults**

When asked what has been most helpful at school, Hossein replied, "The teacher and my cousins. Whenever I need help and I don't know with school or with homework, they just help. I asked [the teacher] a lot of question[s]." His cousins, also from Afghanistan, provided him with social-emotional support to navigate a new school system, "What should I do?" And my cousin came and said, 'Yeah, let's hang out.' And

**Hossein received support from his teachers and cousins.**  
**"Whenever I need help and I don't know with school or with homework, they just help."**

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<sup>61</sup> Elkord, N., & Elkord, N. (2019). Making Educational Meaning of Arab Immigrant Students' Cross-Cultural High Schooling Experiences. *Cross-Cultural Schooling Experiences of Arab Newcomer Students: A Journey in Transition Between the East and the West*, 107-145.

they just told me about the school, and they just show me the places and what should I do. Now I know all about this.”

Prior to attending his current high school, Hossein attended another high school for his ninth grade year. He explained,

At that school, I wasn’t doing great and some C’s. The thing is I was new, and I didn’t know what to do. At the other high school, the teachers were kinda bad. They wasn’t helping; they would just sit all day and wait for us to do our things. They wouldn’t help. And I did not have any cousins to help me, too.

When asked if there were anything his current school could do to improve his school experience, Hossein replied, “We should have some more communication and helpers. We need some more help to help us with homeworks, classworks, any presentations.”

### **Peer Interactions and Relationships**

Hossein explained the importance of newly arriving students having peer relationships. “They need some friends. Not everybody has friends. I didn’t have friends at the school. So, I know some things - they need some friends.” When he first arrived, he explained, “It was crazy. New people, new language, I mean everything was new. School was the first time. Yeah, that was hard.” When asked if he felt his culture and identity were accepted by the other students at the school, he replied, “The Hispanics were the first ones to accept me. They love me and they don’t care about my identity.”

### **Considerations for Supporting California’s Superdiverse Adolescents**

Hossein represents superdiversity through his middle eastern immigrant experience and as a bilingual/biliterate Farsi-English speaker. Some studies have indicated that Middle Eastern immigrant and refugee students experience more discrimination, bullying and marginalization, particularly in politically contested times.<sup>62</sup> In light of Hossein’s experiences, consider the following:

- According to Hossein’s reflection about how his teacher and his cousins provided him with support to navigate a new school system, what systems, processes, and protocols do schools have in place to provide initial and ongoing support to Newcomer students who are experiencing a new school system and structure that may be quite different from their previous school system? How are these systems, processes and protocols differentiated according to the diverse typologies of Newcomer students like Hossein?
- Hossein expressed the importance of peer relationships in schools. When Newcomers arrive, may not know any other students at the school. What school systems and supports are in place to connect newly arrived students with peer groups to build relationships and community?

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<sup>62</sup> Russell, S. G., Persaud, A., Mantilla Blanco, P. L., Webster, K., & Elliott, M. (2021). Fostering belonging and civic identity: Perspectives from Newcomer and refugee students in Arizona and New York.

- Hossein felt his culture and identity was accepted by the peers at his school. What do schools intentionally do to create opportunities for students to share their identities in a safe space?

# Jaime



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## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

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### Meet Jaime

Jaime is a 17-year-old student in 11<sup>th</sup> grade in a small middle school/high school, enrolling over 650 students in a low-income urban community. Over 80% of students are Latino, and over 10% are African American. Approximately 50% of students are English Learners; of these 90% are Spanish speaking. Jaime is a Long-Term English Learner who was born and raised in this community. He began attending the school three years ago as a ninth-grade student. His family is from Oaxaca, Mexico. The interview was conducted in a patio of the school. Jaime was friendly and smiled often as he answered the interviewer’s questions about his school experiences.

### Preserving and Sharing His Culture

**Culture builds you. It’s who you are today. It builds your character, the way I speak and the way I act.**

Jaime is a bicultural and bilingual student who is proud and appreciative of his culture, observing, “I am most proud of being close to my culture.” He sees culture as essential to

<sup>63</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>64</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>65</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

who he is. “Culture builds you. It’s who you are today. It builds your character, the way I speak, and the way I act.” Jaime actively works to preserve his bilingual abilities:

At home I speak Spanish. At school it’s English ... then I started speaking English at home, but I noticed my Spanish wasn’t as good, so I made the commitment to speak Spanish at home, even with my sister who speaks English well.

Jaime’s initiative to preserve his home language and share it with others is consistent with the California English Learner Roadmap principles for schools.<sup>66</sup> He expressed that his best experience at school was last fall as the school prepared for the Mexican celebration of Day of the Dead on November 1:

The experience that I liked was people being their culture at the school even if the school is seen as a learning place. There was a time when the school didn’t focus on culture, but that’s changing. For example, Nov. 1 – Day of the Dead. It’s not showing culture to people who are of that culture but showing [your] culture to other people.

Jaime recognizes the school’s commitment to honoring culture, eliciting a sense of support Jaime feels for preserving and sharing his own culture. The school’s respect for the Latino culture was evident even during our visit over a month later with student artwork from the Day of the Dead showcased in the hallway. Other students proudly pointed it out to us.

### **Motivated To Be His Best Self**

Jaime is deeply religious and listens to and acts on advice from others. When talking about what culture means to him, Jaime expands his view of culture to include religious beliefs. “[Culture] it’s my beliefs,

**What’s been most helpful for me in school is being guided about what to do and what not to do ...**

religious in a way, every act I do.” His beliefs support him in dealing with challenges as he explains, “I believe I am being watched by God, so when I hear negative comments from someone, I let it go away and give thanks for what God has given men.”

Jaime appreciates the advice he has received on doing the right thing, sharing an example from elementary school:

What’s been most helpful for me in school is being guided about what to do and what not to do in assignments and the way to act. For example, I usually cheated at a young age, but was told not to do it because it would take me to a bad pathway, becoming a bigger problem.

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<sup>66</sup> California Department of Education. (2018). English Learner Roadmap Principle One: Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools: Elements and Case Examples. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/rm/principleone.asp>



He also takes his class work seriously and works to perfect his assignments. “I have this college class and the final exam is everyone, students, trying to apply with the theory we learned through the whole semester, to apply to this school. I’m working on my acting to show it [what I will say to apply to the school].

Jaime’s commitment to improving himself also helped him during the COVID school closures. Unlike many of his peers, Jaime approached this disruption as a time to better himself in practical skills and a deeper understanding of himself:

It was a great experience. I had a lot of time on my hands. I thought about what skills I could learn. I decided to cook. Once or twice a week, I went to cook chicken for my sister. And thinking about myself in deep. Who am I and what can I do better to become a better person for everyone? It was exercising, usually running long distances, and I earned pretty good grades.

### **Love and Care for Family**

Jaime reports the greatest challenge he has faced is violence in the school. He spoke with emotion about a shooting on campus a few months prior that occurred in the section of the school reserved for middle school students, including his sister:

**I got worried  
about, not  
myself, but my  
sister ...**

The most difficult thing for me was when there was violence at school. I believe a month or two months ago there was a shooting at school. There was a 13- or 12-year-old who was shot and the shooter was 12 or 13. We were scared when we were in class. We thought it was an adult coming to our school, and I got very worried about, not myself, but my sister who was in middle school. I was thinking whether or not I should run over to the middle school to save her.

The reality of violence in Jaime’s school continues. On the day of the interviews, we were instructed to be sure to walk students back to their classroom. We learned there had been a student-student stabbing the previous day.

### **Considerations for Supporting California’s Superdiverse Adolescents**

Jaime’s motivation and support stem from his culture, his beliefs about right living and self-improvement, and his love for his family. These core values motivate his self-development, appreciation for his school that honors his culture and provides advice, and his strength in handling school violence. As educators, we can see the influence of family values and school support strengthening a young man to continuously seek to improve himself, as he queries, “What can I do better to become a better person for everyone?” Educators also seek continuous improvement asking themselves questions such as:

- Jamie and his classmates experienced instances of violence on campus. What are the causes of student violence on our campus, and what student supports are needed to establish a school community where problems can be addressed and solved without violence?
- Jamie spoke of his commitment to his personal and academic growth. To what extent do all students feel that they matter and are engaged in the school as a place of learning, belonging, and growing? How can we strengthen this?
- Jamie recognizes the importance of schools honoring culture and community. How can we work with parents and the community to develop a school that reaches out to and supports student and family needs and is perceived as essential and valued by all?

# Jasmine



Loyola Marymount University  
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### Meet Jasmine

Jasmine is an 18-year-old high school senior who attends a small high school that enrolls slightly over 600 students in a low-income Southern California community. Approximately 95% of students are Latino. Just over 20% are English Learners; over 95% of these students speak Spanish. Born in the Philippines, Jasmine came to the U.S. when she was three years old. Her mother came to the U.S. ahead of her in search of work and better opportunities for her daughter. Jasmine considers herself a “polyglot”: her first language, Tagalog; second, Japanese; third, English; and she is currently learning Spanish as her fourth language. Because Jasmine’s primary language is Tagalog, when she entered kindergarten, she was assessed and identified as an English Learner (EL) and participated in the EL program. By the third grade, Jasmine achieved the Redesignated English Proficient (RFEP) language designation. In the sixth grade, Jasmine transferred to her current school district. Throughout her educational journey, Jasmine experienced a strong adult support system, including her mother, teachers, counselors, school and district administrators and other adults in her community. Jasmine’s adult support system served as a conduit for opportunity. She is an exceptional student who has been accepted to several outstanding universities and has received full-tuition scholarships. A community

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<sup>67</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>68</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>69</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

activist for change, Jasmine actively participates in school, city, state, and national levels advocating for systematic implementation of anti-racist pedagogy within classrooms and encouraging dialogue centered on racial relations and identities to help all students navigate the world, especially those who are marginalized. To further this passionate work, she participates in state and national grassroots social justice movements to disrupt racism through organizing and participating in anti-hate campaigns.

### **Impact of Student Voice in Education**

During the interview, Jasmine spoke of the impact of student voice in education. She explained that her favorite school experience has been the opportunity to enroll in the Early College Program Ethnic Studies course, which allowed Jasmine to simultaneously receive both high school and college credit. Jasmine not only advocated at the state level for the passage of the AB 101 Ethnic Studies bill, but also participated in a national and local student campaign, resulting in a collaborative school district committee of students, teachers, and administrators to co-construct and implement more diverse curricula in the district's high school courses; yet she was uncertain the classes would be implemented soon enough for her to enroll in prior to her graduation:

**We don't do things for ourselves; we do them for other people.**

I had to take a step back. I was crying a little because I worked really hard at implementing Ethnic Studies in our high school. We have Ethnic Studies in our history classes; we also implemented them in English classes, as well as its own general curriculum at [the college]. So having to do all that work without knowing if I would ever be in that Ethnic Studies cohort was really a moment for me and I was like, Wow! This really happened! We don't do things for ourselves; we do them for other people. But to be able to create, facilitate, and experience the curriculum was a very cathartic moment.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

**We live in the same truth and same perspective.**

Jasmine also spoke of the impact of including culturally diverse topics and curricula in schools observing that diverse curricula in high school coursework provides students with an opportunity to discuss and navigate the topic of racism. Jasmine reflected:

The fact that we are having a conversation about it [racism] legitimizes its existence. That conversation was very eye-opening for me because these are the people that I interact with on a daily basis, and I never knew that they had those perspectives but also bigotry. A lot of people don't want to speak things into existence because there are a lot of negative connotations with that especially in America. As Black and Indigenous people of color, we live through a White lens ... so speaking our truth, in and of itself ... to have my community there and back me up ... that was a core moment ... that I am taking with me wherever I go.

Regarding engaging in difficult and sensitive conversations, Jasmine stated:

I try to be open-minded and leave with as much empathy as I can, but it's difficult when you're having those conversations and the other person doesn't reciprocate, so there is a lot of back and forth and figuring out how to navigate those spaces.

Her statement can underscore the need for teachers to participate in culturally responsive professional learning and coaching to strengthen instructional practice and facilitate student discussion.<sup>70</sup>

### **System of Support**

Jasmine recognizes the impact of community support.

Having a support system ... that includes having teachers and building a community within the student body while also having teachers there that have your back and are contributing allies but also that can just be there for you is very significant. In my high school right now, we have an academic success coaching program that not only focuses on academic success coaching but is really there for emotional support. Our student body calls it "safe space." It was inceptioned for students who are academically disenfranchised, but last year it was opened to students who typically are deemed honors kids. There was an influx of students. It's a place where we know we can be safe and vulnerable with one another. My district is going through a lot of transition right now and community is all we have.

Jasmine also discussed the impact of COVID, both inside and outside of the school community: "We were stuck in this perpetual cycle of tragedy of losing people, of seeing violence all around us, seeing the world for what it is by also bearing witness of people coming in and supporting their communities." Jasmine explained that frequent interactions with her peers helped her to maintain community connection and support during the pandemic:

**We were stuck in this perpetual cycle of tragedy of losing people, of seeing violence all around us.**

We got to know each other on such an intimate level on our dynamic, our backgrounds, how we came to be, our mentality, our journeys, what we are struggling with. And that frequency in interaction really helped develop and establish that sense of community ... I don't think I'd be able to survive COVID without them. They got me through it. It was just having my community be there ... knowing that we live the same truth and same perspective. There is comfort in knowing you are drowning together.

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<sup>70</sup>Santiago Schwarz, V., & Hamman-Ortiz, L. (2019). Systemic functional linguistics, teacher education, and writing outcomes for U.S. elementary English learners: A review of the literature. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 49. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2020.100727>

Jasmine's reflections indicate the importance of both adult support systems and peer relationships for superdiverse adolescents; especially in these times of rapid school change during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>71</sup>

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

Jasmine's experience highlights the importance of students being provided with opportunities to thrive in a supportive network of peers, teachers, and community, as well as the importance of rigorous, culturally proficient learning environments. Throughout her advocacy for an anti-racist curriculum embedded in language arts and history classes, she learned the dual importance of a social justice vision and broad-based support to enact that vision. Her successful advocacy on behalf of the student community raises critical questions for educators and policymakers:

- Jasmine's school and district provided students with an opportunity to use their authentic voice to advocate for change. How can schools, districts, and states support students in developing an advocacy role to ensure they are educated and supported in an anti-racist curriculum?
- Jasmine found opportunities to advocate for social justice in her community. How can educators support student engagement in social justice to dismantle racial/cultural inequities?
- Jasmine participated in peer advocacy groups across the state and nation to enact change. In what ways can student advocates educate their peers about their experience as advocates, including the successes enacted and the challenges overcome?

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<sup>71</sup> Orjuela-Grimm, M., Marti-Castaner, M., Bhatt-Carreño, S., Castro, M. A., Restrepo Henao, A., Pinilla, H., Lewis-Fernandez, R. (2022). Household composition after resettlement and emotional health in adolescent migrants. *Journal of Migration and Health*, 5, 100103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmh.2022.100103>

# Jian



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### Meet Jian

Jian is a 10<sup>th</sup> grade Newcomer who was born in Tsingtao, China and speaks Cantonese. Jian came to the U.S. two years ago with his family. He attends a high school that enrolls over 1,500 students in a low-income urban community in Northern California. The school is very diverse, enrolling approximately 40% Latino students, 30% Asian students, and over 20% African American students, with fewer than 5% White students. Approximately 25% of students are English Learners; about half of these students speak Spanish. The remaining students speak one of over 15 languages. Although he is still learning English, Jian was eager to participate in our conversation. Jian wants to go to college when he graduates, but is not sure what he would study, “I like cameras and photography.”

### Choice

When asked what class he likes the best, Jian replied, “I like basketball.” At Jian’s high school, students can select a single sport for their required physical education class. Research has found adapting physical education classes to a Sports Education Model (SEM) can promote students’ intrinsic

<sup>72</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>73</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>74</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeg.12166>

motivation.<sup>75</sup> When students are interested in a subject, their engagement increases. He likes this class because, “I get to play with other people and make friends.”

### Peer Support

When asked what is most helpful in school, Jian replied, “My friends.” Jian’s friends provide a variety of support. He stated, “I speak English by talking to friends.” Speaking with friends provides him an opportunity to practice language in an informal setting. His friends have also provided support in navigating a new country and school system. Jian told us that he has many friends and that, “Most friends also speak Chinese, but English, too.”

**I speak English by talking to friends.**

### Opportunities to Rehearse Oral Language

Jian takes a variety of courses, including an elective class. His coursework has provided him with engaging projects and assignments that enable him to rehearse oral language with peers. He explained what helps him to learn language: “He writes the word and the pronunciation in English and writes the definition.” When asked about a project that he feels proud, he said, “I did a video project for a final project for a class last year. For the project, I asked people questions. They spoke English and also other languages and talked about their experiences in the U.S.” He learned, “That people’s experiences are different.” Jian is also taking a Cantonese class and said, “I am learning to read and write it.” In this class he also participated in creating a video with other students. When asked about a challenge he has faced, he replied, “I came to the U.S. in middle school at age 14 in eighth grade. When I came here, my English was not good.” He acknowledges that he is learning a lot and said, “I am proud of myself.”

### Adult Support and Learning Environment

When asked what teachers do to help him learn, he replied, “They teach me vocab, read some books in school, read in Cantonese, read funny stories – easy to understand.” Jian provided advice for the adults in his school, “Someone to translate.” He said that a teacher at the school speaks Cantonese and helps him with his other schoolwork. He also explained that it’s helpful for him when the adults help him, “to be focused in class,” which, in turn makes it, “easy for me to focus on my work.”

### Considerations for Supporting California’s Superdiverse Adolescents

Jian recognizes the support he is receiving from peers and adults to learn English and the importance for him to have access to someone who speaks his language as well as classes that allow him to develop his interests. His observations about these opportunities in his school raises the following questions:

- Like many of our profile students, Jian commented that an adult who speaks his primary language was helpful in many ways, including language acquisition as well as other coursework and homework. To what extent do Newcomers have access to primary language support throughout the day and before and/or after school?

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<sup>75</sup> Tendinha, R., Alves, M. D., Freitas, T., Appleton, G., Gonçalves, L., Ihle, A., Gouveia, É. R., & Marques, A. (2021). Impact of Sports Education Model in Physical Education on Students' Motivation: A Systematic Review. *Children* 8(7), 588.



- In Jian's classes, he participates in engaging project-based learning by creating video projects, which also connect to his college and career interests. How often and in what classes do students have an opportunity to connect their interests to course learning outcomes?

# Koloa



Loyola Marymount University  
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### Meet Koloa

Koloa is an eighth grade student in a secondary school enrolling over 650 students in grades 6-12 in an urban low-income community in Northern California. Over 80% of students are Latino and over 10% are African American. Almost 50% of students are English Learners; of these 90% speak Spanish. Koloa was born in a city near his school. A child of first-generation Tongan immigrants to arrive in his city, Koloa reflects about how he separates his native Tongan language from the language of school and the ways he uses his bilingual abilities. Over the course of the interview, Koloa describes his journey towards reclassification.

### Language Separation at Home and at School: Koloa’s Bilingual/Bicultural Acculturation

Koloa describes his awareness of keeping his two languages separate. Tongan is used with his family, as he describes how he had to translate school information for his parents. Koloa and his family also attend a Tongan-language church and attends community cultural events.

**So, I have a little “switcharoo”- when I go home, I only think of Tongan words. When I come to school, I only think of English words.**

<sup>76</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>77</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>78</sup> Birman, D., & Addae, D. (2105). Acculturation. In: Carola Suárez-Orozco, Mona M. Abo-Zena, & Amy K. Marks. *Transitions: The Development of Children of Immigrants*. NYU Press.

So, in my household, my parents they grew up in Tonga, and they moved to the U.S. to further give me a better life ... they mostly only understand Tongan. And since I understood English, whenever we would get a field trip form, I'd explain to them like "Can you please sign this?" And I will talk to them in Tongan to make sure that they can understand what I'm saying.

His bicultural and bilingual identity development point to an acculturation pattern that is similar to that of many other generations of immigrant children's perceptions about the language of home and community and the language of school.

I go to an all-Polynesian Church; everyone speaks Tongan. It's only their kids over there that know English or the adults over there that were born in America. And whenever my parents or anybody in that church needs an understanding of what's happening, then I will tell them.

### **Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy**

Reflecting on his elementary school experiences, Koloa recalls some of the challenges he experienced prior to entering middle school:

What was very difficult and very challenging for me was probably understanding English. There would be times where I would just repeat the same word, because I didn't have [many] words in my vocabulary until I started learning a lot of new words ... I was always that quiet kid. Or I was always that loud kid that would scream random out things.

Once he entered middle school, Koloa was enrolled in English Language Development (ELD) classes, where his teacher highlighted the value of being multilingual while also focusing on reclassification from a designation of Long-Term English Learner (LTEL) to Reclassified Fully Proficient English Learner (RFEP) status. "... she started explaining the meaning of (using both languages), and that really pushed my confidence to start speaking in Tongan and English. He credits another ELD teacher's support for helping him in understanding the process for reclassification:

I was so proud that I reclassified because I was just sitting in my ELD class talking to my friends ... my teacher, Mr. L., walked up to me. He gave me a piece of paper. I read it, and it said I got reclassified. And then my friend also read it, and I said, "What does this mean?" And he said, "We passed the ELPAC; we passed ELD." And I said, "Oh, my God!" And now I started running around happy because I passed.

Koloa's experience in ELD illustrate how support systems for Multilingual Learners build opportunity for classroom and teacher engagement.

It has helped me understand teachers ... and to get to know them because I would only have ... [a few] words. I'll only say words that I knew, and then, when I came to ELD I would learn more words which made me happy, because now I can understand teachers and further talk to them.

As Koloa's self-confidence grew during his middle school experience, so did his sense of understanding of his teachers. He describes the generative experiences of his ELD classes that be applied to other subjects. He states, "You know how math is like difficult? I started to get used to math, and I started to just persevere through the challenges of math and science and history."

When asked about an assignment or project in school that he was proud of, Koloa described an event planning and budgeting project in his math class, reflecting that the teacher provided instructions to create a poster to describe and illustrate how he would allocate expenses for an event budget of \$1,500 to include security, catering, music and understanding profits and expenses ... [even] my partner was impressed. When asked to elaborate, Koala shares.

I understood it and that really, that really boosted my confidence because it was something I understood. Math is a subject I usually do not understand. And then when I just saw the problem like, "Oh, my God! You're speaking my language!" Then I did it, and then my teacher was proud, so I was proud.

Koloa continued: "[Now] I have As and Bs. I do not want to go down to a C, because that would further disappoint me." Koloa is proud of upholding these expectations for himself, and when asked where his expectations come from, he responds, "That really came from probably like I would barely learn [and] I would go 'Oh, my God! These teachers are barely teaching me anything.' From that mindset to now I further understand my teachers. Now I can learn."

Koloa reflects on his academic journey noting, "Learning a lot of meanings from the word to further add to my vocabulary taught me that there's more to life than what you just [the word knowledge that] you have." Noting the importance of teacher support, Koloa recognizes how his teachers encouraged persistence and he converted his persistence into a positive mindset:

I used to be that type of student [who did not] even ask for help; what helped me is that ... whenever I'm giving up on myself, my teachers are like, 'You need to persevere through the challenges; do not give up.' So, I learned how to [persevere]. I learned a lot of new words. I learned how to approach people. I also learned how to ask the teacher for help.

**I will tell [the teachers] to not give up on what you're teaching, and how you are teaching. And do whatever to make sure that the student that you have is understanding and learning. I just feel like you have to have this type of mindset in order for the student you are teaching to further their education.**

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

Koloa's middle school provided designated ELD classes and expert teachers who knew his strengths and needs and communicated their belief in his abilities. He is especially appreciative of the tools and knowledge gained from his ELD teachers. It was through culturally and linguistically responsive instruction practices and supports that Koloa's confidence as a learner increased and his grades improved. Koloa's experiences raise important questions and considerations for educators and policymakers:

- Koloa described the way in which he separated his home/community and school languages. What are ways to support students like Koloa?
- Koloa demonstrated his learning through a budgeting project in math class. How do schools ensure all Multilingual Learners have access to a rigorous, culturally, and linguistically affirming curriculum?
- Although Koloa found a support system in school, yet some students may not have those systems. What early warning sign mechanisms do schools have in place for diverse learners to ensure they are connected to adults, rather than falling through the cracks of the educational system?

# Leticia



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### Meet Leticia

Leticia is a 10<sup>th</sup> grade student in a secondary school enrolling over 650 students in grades six through 12 in a low-income urban community in Northern California. Over 80% of students are Latino, and over 10% are African American. Almost 50% of students are English Learners; of these, 90% speak Spanish. She is a native of Honduras and has lived in the United States six months. Spanish is her native language and she has been in school in the U. S. for three months. Leticia participated in an in-person interview at school. Leticia decided against recording the interview; therefore, a second observer on Zoom took notes with no recording. The interview was conducted entirely in Spanish.

### Overcoming Self-Doubt

Leticia is a very recent Newcomer to the U.S., arriving during the summer prior to the start of 10<sup>th</sup> grade. She spoke of facing her fears of public speaking and shared the challenges and benefits of making presentations in her classes.

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<sup>79</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>80</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>81</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

When asked about a particularly difficult time in school, she shared having to make a presentation in her English class. She shared those concerns with her teacher who supported her through the process. This experience helped Leticia gain self confidence:

Hice una presentación en mi clase de inglés. Estaba muy nervioso.  
Hablé con mi maestro y, al final, seguí adelante e hice la presentación.  
Estaba feliz de haber podido hacerlo y superar mi miedo. Aprendí que  
no todo es imposible. Si quieres hacer algo, puedes hacerlo.

[I did a presentation in my English class. I was really nervous. I talked  
to my teacher, and at the end, I went ahead and did the presentation.  
I was happy that I was able to do it and overcome my fear. I learned  
that not everything is impossible. If you want to do something, you can do it.]

**Aprendí que no  
todo es imposible.**

**[I learned that not  
everything is  
impossible.]**

When asked about a project or assignment of which she was particularly proud, Leticia said it was also a presentation, this time in her chemistry class. This presentation was done with a group of students, which she preferred to presenting alone. She commented, “La presentación fue en química, sobre las reglas de un laboratorio. Usé diapositivas e imágenes; trabajábamos en grupos. Creo que hice un muy buen trabajo hablando en inglés frente a mis compañeros de clase.” [“The presentation was in chemistry, about the rules of a laboratory. I used slides and pictures; we worked in groups. I think I did a really good job speaking in English in front of my classmates.”]

Leticia spoke of the encouragement she receives at home as well as at school. She recalled feeling nervous before starting school, and how her father reassured her. She compared her feelings when arriving to the U.S. and the beginning of the school year and how she feels now, after a few months:

Cuando vine a la escuela aquí, era más complicado y estaba muy nerviosa. Ahora estoy bien. Mi papá siempre me anima a venir a la escuela. Me dice: “Necesitas ir a la escuela y aprender inglés para poder conseguir un buen trabajo.”

[When I came to school here, it was more complicated and I was very nervous. Now I’m doing okay. My Dad always encourages me to come to school. He tells me, “You need to go to school and learn English so that you can get a good job.”]

Leticia’s experience demonstrates the benefits of a strong family support system for immigrant students. Her supportive home and school environments encouraged her to conquer her nerves and quickly acclimate to a new setting.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Orjuela-Grimm, M., Marti-Castaner, M., Bhatt-Carreño, S., Castro, M. A., Restrepo Henao, A., Pinilla, H., Lewis-Fernandez, R. (2022). Household composition after resettlement and emotional health in adolescent migrants. *Journal of Migration and Health*, 5, 100103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmh.2022.100103>

### Academic Support from Peers and Teachers

When asked what has been the most helpful to her at school, Leticia pointed to a friend supported her since the first day of school, both with English translation and with orienting her to her environment:

Mi amiga, porque me ha ayudado mucho con el inglés. Por ejemplo, cuando llegué aquí por primera vez, no conocía la escuela ni dónde estaban las aulas. Ella me llevó a mis clases; ella todavía me ayuda, pero ahora conozco mi camino. Tenemos clases juntos. Mis maestros me ayudan, pero mi amiga me ayuda más.

[My friend because she has really helped me with English. For example, when I first got here, I didn't know the school or where the classrooms were. She took me to my classes; she still helps me, but now I know my way around. We have classes together. My teachers help me, but my friend helps me more.]

Leticia also mentioned receiving support from other students, especially when working on group projects. She enjoyed the time with her classmates, saying, “Trabajamos bien juntos; la maestra dijo que hicimos un buen trabajo, que fue la mejor presentación, y nos dio todo el crédito, todos los puntos.” [“We worked well together; the teacher said we did a good job, that it was the best presentation, and she gave us full credit, all the points.”]

**Mis maestros me ayudan,  
pero mis amigas me ayudan  
más.**

**My teachers help me, but my  
friend helps me more.**

Leticia's opportunities to participate in collaborative assignments facilitated the creation of support structures to learn English. Her experience points to the power of peer support for Multilingual Learners. Having bilingual peers working collaboratively with Multilingual Learners increases language acquisition beyond formal English Language instruction.<sup>83</sup>

### Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents

Newcomer students face significant challenges as they adjust to the educational system in the U.S. and begin the process of learning a new language, while also striving to continue their academic progress. Leticia shared how her adaption required building self-confidence in the new language with the support of teachers and peers. Her experience informs educators to analyze:

- What parent engagement and/or leadership opportunities do schools provide to parents of Newcomer students? What input is elicited from parents regarding engagement?
- How can systems of support for such as intentional master scheduling ensures Newcomers have linguistic support from peers in class?

<sup>83</sup> Carhill-Poza, A. (2015). Opportunities and outcomes: The role of peers in developing the oral academic English proficiency of adolescent English Learners. *The Modern Language Journal*, 99(4), 678 -695. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12271>



- How can schools ensure that all second language learners are involved in either an on-campus club, activity, or sport to connect to the school community and additional opportunities to acquire language?

# María



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### Meet María

María is a ninth grade Newcomer who had been in the United States for seven months at the time of our interview. She attends a secondary school enrolling over 650 students in grades six through 12 in a low-income urban community in Northern California. Over 80% of students are Latino, and over 10% are African American. Almost 50% of students are English Learners; of these, 90% speak Spanish. María wore a black sweatshirt hoodie over her head and a facemask throughout the interview so that only her eyes were visible. María seemed to perk up and appeared to relax when she began to share about her new group of friends and her emerging love of drawing.

### Academic Support from Peers –The Importance of “Pegamento” [Bonding]

Like most adolescents, the universal concept of friendship was the first comment shared by María. She frequently used the term “pegamento,” [bonding] to describe the strong relationships among her newfound group of friends. When asked what she likes most about school, she replied:

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<sup>84</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>85</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>86</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

Me ha gustado el tiempo que puedo pasar con mis amigos porque como que nos entendemos bastante. Tenemos bastante pegamiento. Nos gusta andar juntos y nos ayudamos entre nosotros en las clases.

[I have liked the time that I have been able to spend with my friends because we understand each other a lot. We have a lot of bonding. We like to hang out together and we help each other in class.]

María smiled with her eyes through her mask as she provided an example of how she and her group of friends help each other in her classes, “El que le entendió primero es el que explica cómo es. En el grupito de nosotros, pues somos siete; hacemos un buen grupo.” [“The one who understood first is the one who explains. In the small group of us, we are seven; we make a good group.”]

María’s friends go beyond a source of academic support and into the realm of emotional support that she identified as most helpful for her in school, “Tenemos bastante pegamiento. Si alguno de nosotros no haya tenido un buen día y están como frustrado o triste, ah pues nos acercamos y ya le preguntamos qué pasó. Ya nos cuenta y buscamos de alguna forma ayudarle.” [“We have a lot of bonding. If any of us has not had a good day and they are frustrated or sad, oh well, we approach them and we ask them what happened. They tell us and we try to help them in some way.”] A trusted source of emotional support that is reciprocated is important for students like María who have had to leave their native countries, friends, school, and loved ones behind for the opportunity of better living conditions.<sup>4</sup>

### **School Environment for Newcomer Students**

María described her biggest challenge as her first day of school in the U.S. She told us about being lost on campus and not knowing where to go:

Pues yo no encontraba la maestra y no tenía quien me ayudara. Los maestros me decían que fuera al salón pero yo no sabía ni en dónde estaban los salones de clases. Encontré una señorita y me dijo que me ayudara y yo acepté la ayuda y fue ella la que me llevó a mis clases.

[Well, I couldn't find the teacher and I had no one to help me. The teachers told me to go to the classroom, but I didn't even know where the classrooms were. I found a lady and she told me to help me and I accepted the help and she was the one who took me to my classes.]

**Encontré una señorita y me dijo que me ayudará y yo acepté la ayuda y fue ella la que me llevó a mis clases.**

**[I found a lady and she asked me if she could help and I accepted the help and it was her who took me to classes.]**

Having no one to initially help navigate the school campus, María was fortunate to have found someone who was able to show her where to go. Once in the classroom, things did not get any easier. María nervously chuckled as she told us about her first lesson in her English class:

**O sea, ella daba la clase pero yo, por la luna, sin entender.**

**[I mean, she taught the class, but I didn't understand.]**

Bueno, la maestra muy tranquila, Miss Nancy, ella escribía todo en el pizarrón y yo no entendía nada lo que ponía. O sea, ella daba la clase pero yo por la luna sin entender. Pues me daba como pena y como nervios de estar en una clase.

[Well, the very calm teacher, Miss Nancy, wrote everything on the blackboard, and I didn't understand what she was writing. I mean, she taught the class, but I felt as if I could have been on the moon. Well, it made me feel embarrassed and nervous to be in a class.]

María vividly recalls her first day on campus, the confusion of not knowing where the classes were and the lack of comprehensible input in English for her as a Newcomer student. The kindness of a stranger helped her find her classroom.

### **Asset-based Instruction**

While her first few days may have presented challenges for María has also allowed for self-discovery. When asked about something she has done in school that she is proud of, María spoke about a sketch she drew of two hands in prayer, palms and fingertips touching. Although not an assignment, this was something that she was inspired to do after completing an assigned sketch in class. For María, drawing is a newfound talent, “Como que siempre me ha gustado el arte, pero nunca lo había puesto en práctica.” [“It's like I've always liked art, but I had never put it into practice.”] María's teachers have also observed her artistic talent, but María remains humble and a bit guarded about it. She said the sketch of the praying hands was not complete, and when we asked if this new talent meant she is good at drawing, she quickly corrected us by saying “Intento dibujar.” [“I try to draw.”] Hopefully she will be able to continue to expand her artistic talents throughout high school.

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

Adolescent Newcomers share similar stories about the challenges of navigating a new school campus on the first day of school, as well as the importance of a peer network for support. María's experiences raise important questions for educators and policymakers:

- What systems do schools have in place for Newcomers' welcoming arrival on the first day of school? Programs such as Where Everyone Belongs (WEB) and Link Crew are evidenced-based programs designed to ensure that all students have a system of peer support and bonding throughout the school year.
- What academic supports can be implemented to ensure that students learn from the first day of school rather than being immersed in classes that are not comprehensible?

- School scheduling constraints often leave second language learners without an elective class due to the requirement for these students to take a Designated English Language Development course. Yet, as evidenced by María's story involving art, language learners benefit in developing their creative interests. How can states, districts, and schools collaborate to develop programming for Multilingual Learners that includes Designated English Development courses as well as access to elective course content that provides Integrated English Language Development?

# Miguel



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### Meet Miguel

At the age of 14, Miguel traveled from El Salvador to Mexico where he waited for two years and eight months to cross the border to the United States. Now 17, he is enrolled in small secondary school enrolling over 650 students in grades six through 12 in an urban low-income community in Northern California. Over 80% of students are Latino; over 10% are African American. Almost 50% of students are English Learners; of these, 90% are Spanish speaking. Miguel has been enrolled in high school for one month. He was placed in 10<sup>th</sup> grade after not having attended school during his time in Mexico. His home language is Spanish, and he lives with his uncle who serves as his legal guardian and as his constant supporter while learning to navigate U.S. systems. When we contacted his uncle to obtain permission to conduct the interview, he was pleased to hear about the opportunity. He immediately engaged Miguel in the conversation by placing our call on speaker so they could simultaneously learn more about the details of the interview process to make a joint decision. Neither hesitated to participate and both agreed that Miguel has an important story to share.

The interview was conducted entirely in Spanish and took place in a small room in the school library. Miguel initiated informal conversation prior to the interview and appeared confident and comfortable throughout the experience. He answered each of the questions thoughtfully and without hesitation and was proud to tell his story. Two elements emerged from our conversation with Miguel.

## Welcoming and Supporting Newcomer Students

A safe and welcoming environment affirms students' diverse cultural, linguistic, and academic backgrounds and experiences. When Newcomer students experience an assets-based approach and perceive positive responses, it creates opportunities to build trusting, positive relationships that avoid Newcomers feeling marginalized or discriminated against.

**Pues aquí no hay desigualdad, sino que yo veo que aquí en esta escuela todos son iguales no importa de dónde uno venga, ni tus acentos, pues todos son bienvenidos. Son bienvenidos en sus aulas, en su situación de trabajos, y cosas así.**

**[Well, there's no inequality here, rather I see that at this school all are equal regardless of where you come from or your accent, all are welcome. They're welcome in their classrooms, their worksites, and places like that.]**

Micro- and macro-level factors contribute to the creation of inclusive environments that help Newcomer students feel accepted and supported. Based on his experience during his one-month enrollment at this northern California school, Miguel describes the school context as a place where, "all are equal, all are welcome." He expressed keen awareness of the diversity of cultures, language, and other factors among students and acknowledges that although many of his classmates are of Latinx backgrounds, there are variations in their countries of origin, Spanish varieties, accents, and world perspectives. He reports that the school is a welcoming place; he sees himself represented in his surroundings and feels that although he may have a different language and accent, he is welcomed as an equal participant and contributor to the learning community.

Miguel's school clusters Newcomer students in course sequences that include an advisory period designed to provide an overall orientation to U.S. school systems, connect with other Newcomer students, and become familiar with academic and other resources. Miguel reflects on how his schedule allows opportunities for him to make friends and build camaraderie with other young Adolescent Multilingual Learners who are both similar and different:

Hubo un evento en la librería y fue como una actividad estilo convivio en dónde se entregó a los estudiantes de mi clase que se habían empeñado más cierto certificado por haber desempeñado su trabajo en la clase de advisory. Y pues me gustó porque estábamos todos conviviendo y comíamos mientras platicábamos.

[There was an event at the library, like an activity where we convened, where certificates were given to students who exhibited the greatest effort in the Advisory classwork. And, well I liked it because we were gathered together, and we ate while talking with each other.]

Clustering Newcomer students appears to also add to Miguel's perception of the school's welcoming environment resulting in what he explains leads to fostering positive relationships and trust because of the kindness he has experienced and the opportunity to express himself freely.

### Peer Connections Support Engagement and Self-efficacy

When asked about specific experiences during his one-month period at this site, Miguel repeatedly highlighted the connections he has made during collaborative activities as the most impactful way the school has supported his engagement and increased his sense of self-efficacy in this new context. Beginning with his physical education class, Miguel described how teacher-to-student, student-to-teacher, and peer-to-peer connections encouraged feelings of belonging and bridged opportunities to provide advice and support for one another.

**Sí, mucha colaboración y también me sentía incluido en el grupo de ellos. Ellos me daban consejos [en español] de cómo tirar la pelota, y como moverme en situaciones así.**

**[Yes, a lot of collaboration and I felt included in the group. They gave me advice [in Spanish] on how to hit the ball and how to navigate situations.]**

Miguel was pleased to share that the experiences in his physical education courses helped him feel more connected to learning in other classes because he felt more confident asking fellow students for an explanation. He also indicated that in cases where he had knowledge about a topic in other content classes, he could be a resource for others.

In contrast to his home country of El Salvador, Miguel indicates that opportunities for peer connections and support are much more frequent, “Más que nada el apoyo entre mis compañeros es mucho mayor que el que está en

mi país.” [“More than anything, the support among peers is much greater than that in my country.”]

Miguel also discussed how teachers provide assignments and support that connects to student interests and experiences. He eagerly shared about a recent assignment, “que me gustó bastante hacerlo – that I really enjoyed doing.” It involved a project in his English Language Arts class where students identified a person who inspired them and had to describe why they are an inspiration, first orally and then in writing. To meet the success criteria, he employed strategies such as relying on words he had memorized in English, collaborating with other students, and using Google Translate for more difficult words. Miguel felt very supported by his teacher who structured a series of lessons to support students throughout the process. She grouped them so they could assist each other, communicated clear expectations, and created an authentic opportunity for them to present their product to peers. She also provided resources to leverage students’ home language literacy skills as they developed their written text. Miguel was very proud that he selected a character that embodied what he perceived to be his greatest strengths as a Newcomer student at his school. He explained, “Elegí a ‘Goku’ porque es muy fuerte y seguro de sí mismo y también ayuda más que nada a sus amigos y a personas que no conoce...es como yo.” [“I chose ‘Goku’ because he is very strong and sure of himself and most of all he helps his friends and people he doesn’t know ... he is like me.”]

### Considerations for Supporting California’s Superdiverse Adolescents

Having attended U.S. schools for only one month, Miguel shared important insights about his journey and experiences as a Newcomer student where he feels welcomed, connected, supported, and affirmed



as a learner and valuable contributor to the school community. The specialized courses and opportunities for collaboration and engagement that promote camaraderie within and across courses contributed to his confidence and self-efficacy, revealing positive beliefs and attitudes about his capacity to achieve success. The success of the intentional approach of the program and courses for Newcomer students can set an example as educators consider:

- Miguel's school provides individualized academic and social-emotional support to Newcomers through a "clustering" approach. How can this approach, as well as instructional strategies designed for recent Newcomers be incorporated in courses they take beyond their first year in the U.S.?
- Miguel's teachers provide assignments that support and connect to students' interests and experiences. How do schools systematically design the successful interpersonal and instructional approaches being implemented for Newcomers at this school?
- Miguel and his Newcomer peers attend a daily advisory period together. How can Newcomer students and other students in the school be supported to develop strong interpersonal connections and peer support networks?

# Oscar



Loyola Marymount University  
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## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

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### Meet Oscar

Oscar is a 17-year-old Newcomer student in ninth grade at a secondary school enrolling over 650 students in grades six through 12 in a low-income community in Northern California. Over 80% of students are Latino; over 10% are African American. Almost 50% of students are English Learners; of these 90% speak Spanish. Oscar has been in the United States for six months and is a native Spanish speaker from Honduras. He resides with his mother who upon learning Oscar had the opportunity to be interviewed by a team from the university was excited for him to share his experiences and to learn about opportunities to accelerate his acquisition of English as a path toward future success in the U.S.

The interview was conducted entirely in Spanish and took place in the school library. Oscar appeared both interested and eager to share his experience. He listened attentively to each of the questions and did not hesitate to respond, although he was measured in what he shared, especially when providing information about his academic and language learning experiences. His face lit up with a smile when recounting experiences about community or peer-related experiences. Two elements emerged from our conversation with Oscar.

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<sup>87</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>88</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>89</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeg.12166>

### The Value of Teacher Support

Relationships matter for all students, and for adolescent Newcomers this is a critical aspect of an introduction to a new country, schooling experiences, and differing socio-cultural norms and expectations. When Newcomer students experience an assets-based approach and perceive positive responses to other Newcomer students, it creates opportunities to build trusting, positive relationships that avoid Newcomers feeling marginalized or discriminated against. When these approaches are implemented, classroom-based peer and teacher–student interactions also flourish, in addition to students’ opportunities for language acquisition/development expansion.<sup>90</sup>

**Los maestros dan lo mejor de ellos. Tratan de hablar español. Busca la manera para que ella nos entienda; nos ayuda mucho. Siempre nos están hablando con mucho respeto para que nosotros tengamos confianza.**

**[Teachers give their best. They try to speak Spanish. She tries to understand us; she helps us a lot. She speaks to us with great respect so that we can build trust and confidence.]**

Teachers are at the heart of building trusting relationships and creating safe and welcoming environments for Newcomer students. Oscar reports feeling very supported by teachers at school. He expresses overall positive experiences with each of his teachers and speaks about the specialized courses the school provides for Newcomer students. His school clusters Newcomer students in course sequences that include an advisory period designed to provide an overall orientation to U.S. school systems, the opportunity to connect with other Newcomer students, and the ability to become familiar with academic and other resources. Oscar feels respected and supported, especially by his advisory teacher whom he said is committed to understanding Newcomer students, their language, culture, strengths, and challenges. She also treats students with respect to build trusting relationships and boost confidence.

When reflecting on experiences with other teachers, Oscar indicates a similar level of support, stating, “Los maestros dan lo mejor de ellos.” [“Teachers give their best.”] He proudly describes how he has taken advantage of the resources and strategies teachers have provided to support his acquisition of English. Specifically, he shared appreciation for daily writing opportunities to practice English and how it helped him be successful in completing a recent assignment requiring him to write about a person who inspires him. He reports, “Yo escribí de mi familia. Luchamos mucho para llegar aquí.” [“I wrote about my family. We fought so much to arrive here.”] He expresses appreciation for teachers allowing opportunities to work independently, collaborate with others, and then share with the whole class. Additionally, he shared that teachers provide good instruction, allowing him to learn incrementally.

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<sup>90</sup> Kibler, A. K., Karam, F. J., Futch Ehrlich, V. A., Bergey, R., Wang, C., & Molloy Elreda, L. (2017). Who are ‘long term English learners’? Using classroom interactions to deconstruct a manufactured learner label. *Applied Linguistics*, 39(5), 741–765.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amw039>

Oscar identifies other ways relationships are fostered by teachers across courses. When asked about a favorite school experience, he speaks enthusiastically about his physical education class, appreciating the opportunity to play soccer but also pointing to the ability to use this space to have conversations with his teachers and classmates with the freedom to ask questions. He perceives this as a safe space to obtain information that helps him feel more confident. He expresses that he has yet to feel confident attending large school events that do not offer this support system. He would rather be in supported spaces, with his friends and teachers who give their best to help him conquer his fears about a system that feels so different to him.

**[En mi clase de educación física] puedo conversar con los maestros y con los compañeros para hacerles preguntas y sentirme con más confianza en todo lo que hago.**

**[(In my physical education class) I have conversations with teachers and my classmates, ask questions, and feel more confident in all that I do.]**

### **Systems that Transcend Barriers**

Systemic conditions for Newcomer program and policy shape the support that can be provided for Newcomer students such as Oscar who are acutely aware of the barriers that need to be overcome to “catch up.” He is grateful for the opportunities in this country, as represented by his statement:

Lo que hice en mi país [Honduras] es muy diferente y no tienen las mismas oportunidades que aquí. No hay un sistema, rutinas y orden como aquí.

[What I did in my country [Honduras] was very different and we didn’t have the same opportunities as here. We don’t have a system, routines, and order/rules like here.]

When asked about his experience during the pandemic, he uplifts examples of a further contrast in systems, indicating that he participated in online learning during the pandemic, but reports it was not conducive to engagement. He shares that students were sleepy and bored. For him this resulted in low achievement, contributing to him feeling that there are so many more barriers to overcome to “catch up” as expressed in his plea, “Ayúdame a regresar a mi grado actual.” [“Help me reach my actual grade.”]

Oscar’s reflections about returning to in-person school while simultaneously transitioning to a new country and very different system unveiled his lack of awareness of U.S. school systems, requirements, and ways of overcoming barriers to complete schooling and graduate, given he is 17 years old and placed in ninth grade. He states, “Tengo que aprender mucho y no sé cuánto tiempo tengo para terminar.” [“I need to learn so much and don’t know how much time I have to finish (school).”] This appears to be magnified by his fear of being in a new school and not being aware of the traditions. Although he

**Es todo diferente. Siempre tengo miedo estar en una escuela nueva.**

**[Everything is so different. I’m afraid of being in a new school.]**

acknowledges that there are supports in school, he doesn't yet see how the system can help him **reach** his goal of completing high school and finding success in this country.

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

Oscar is grateful for the commitment, support, and understanding his teachers afford as they help build and bridge trusting relationships to facilitate his transition to U.S. schools. He is aware that there are barriers he needs to overcome to meet his goals but uncertain about how the system can mitigate obstacles to help him succeed. He offers wise advice for teachers and leaders, "Sabe el idioma. Dános clases que podamos entender. Ayúdame a regresar a mi grado actual." ["Know my language. Give me classes I can understand. Help me reach my actual grade-level."] Oscar's experiences raise critical questions for educators:

- To what extent do schools and districts use validated survey instruments to determine the ways in which all students perceive classroom conditions such as trusting, safe spaces and relational trust with staff and peers?
- Like many high school-aged adolescent Newcomers, Oscar is considered a "late arriver" and needs additional programmatic support to reach his goal of attaining a high school diploma. How can state policy makers and district educators partner together to develop creative, innovative programming to support "late arrivers"? In what ways might classes offered in students' primary language, alternative class scheduling, access to interest-based Career Technical Education and internships, and modified graduation requirements remove barriers and provide a pathway for adolescent Newcomers to attain a high school diploma?

# Pedro



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### Meet Pedro

Pedro is a 12<sup>th</sup> grade student at a secondary school with over 650 students in grades six through 12 in a low-income community in Northern California. Approximately 80% of students are Latino; over 10% are African American. Almost 50% of students are English Learners; over 10% are African American. Pedro has attended school in this district since kindergarten. His parents are Spanish speaking, and he grew up speaking Spanish. He recalls beginning to learn English in daycare when he was five years old and from his older brother. Pedro’s language status is Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP).

**In a smaller school,  
parents and teachers  
are there for me.**

The interview was conducted in person on a patio at the school. Pedro was conversational and forthcoming throughout the interview. He was thoughtful as he crafted his answers and appeared to appreciate the opportunity to share his story.

<sup>91</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>92</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>93</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

## Immigrant Achievement Pressure

**I just think of myself as a student from immigrant parents, and I feel like I have to overachieve because they crossed the border, so I have to do that for them.**

Pedro described himself as an immigrant student, even though he was born in the U.S. His appreciation for his parents' journey to cross the border between Mexico and the U.S. has driven his identity and sense of responsibility to "overachieve." His motivation and commitment to stay on the right route and to concentrate on his studies has sustained

Pedro's focus throughout middle and high school. Until last year, the middle school and high school programs shared the school buildings with classes for students in sixth through 12<sup>th</sup> grade spread throughout the campus. Pedro found the shared campus challenging during middle school but was able to maintain his focus on his studies. He shared, "When you come to middle school and are around high school students, you could go the bad route, but I stuck to what I was doing – staying on the right route." Pedro's focus during middle school was effective and he recalls, "My best day at school was probably when I graduated eighth grade because I felt I did really well through my whole middle school." Pedro has continued to do well in high school, and his favorite subject is math. He shared that "I've always been good at math. My reading is okay, but not good like math. My math has always been great. I get it; I can't explain it." Pedro is thinking about looking for a job after high school, but at the same time he knows he is very talented in math and is open to the idea of college. He only recently spoke with his counselor about post-graduation plans.

## Parent and Teacher Support in a Small School

Pedro recognizes his accomplishments but humbly attributes his success to others, particularly, his parents, teachers, and the small size of his school. When asked what has been most helpful for him, Pedro replied, "Probably just having my parents be really good to me and good teachers." He appreciates having the opportunity to attend a small school and explained that "It's not like it's a big school with 6,000 students, where teachers can't know students. In a smaller school, my parents and my teachers are there for me. I'm getting good grades and doing the right stuff." Pedro's recognition of access to parent and teacher support in his small school also speaks to research that attributes adult support in school to the overall well-being of English Learner students.<sup>94</sup>

## Challenges and Resilience during COVID

Pedro encountered and overcame multiple challenges during the transition to distance learning during COVID. He shared that "It wasn't like learning the same way. It happened all of a sudden." Additionally, the home environment and family travel hindered his focus on his studies. Reflecting on these challenges, Pedro explained that "Learning at home was difficult with the noise, all of the distractions. It was very hard. I also traveled. It was difficult to keep up." Pedro's reflection speaks to the inequities faced by many English Learner adolescent students during COVID, especially the

**It wasn't the way I would want it, but it was okay.**

<sup>94</sup> Orjuela-Grimm, M., Marti-Castaner, M., Bhatt-Carreño, S., Castro, M. A., Restrepo Henao, A., Pinilla, H., Lewis-Fernandez, R. (2022). Household composition after resettlement and emotional health in adolescent migrants. *Journal of Migration and Health*, 5, 100103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jimh.2022.100103>

heightened challenges to accessing distance education related to family and home environment.<sup>95</sup> Pedro also expressed that even the initial return to school provided challenges as well:

When we came back to in-person, it was kind of weird. People didn't know how to socialize. It felt like a different environment. It was good to be back and learn in school, but weird because you had to social distance. It wasn't like you came back and it was comfortable. It wasn't like it was before.

Despite these challenges, Pedro's long-established focus on his studies benefited him. He showed resilience and perseverance and as he reflected on his current status and experience during the pandemic, he concluded, "I feel like I caught up okay. It wasn't the way I would want it, but it was okay." The end of social distancing created a better environment for Pedro, and he reflected on his thoughts during that time, sharing, "Now it feels regular, you have your friend group."

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

As the child of immigrants and an RFEP student, Pedro is an example of successful education for an English Learner. His sense of responsibility to achieve the immigrant dream for his parents motivated his focus on learning. Support from his parents and teachers, particularly in a small school setting, enabled resilience and perseverance during challenging times in middle and high school. In essence, his success results from the positive "ecology of learning" that recognizes the need for and benefits of positive interactions and support from parents and teachers in a student-focused school system. Pedro's experiences raised important questions for educators and policymakers:

- Pedro experienced an "immigrant pressure to succeed." What is the impact of this pressure and how can more students benefit from this sense of obligation and maintain strong social-emotional well-being?
- Pedro spoke of the impact of teacher support in a small setting. How can educational systems ensure personalized support for superdiverse Multilingual Learner adolescents, particularly in larger urban school settings?
- During and after the pandemic, Pedro maintained a sense of resilience and perseverance. What strategies and supports successfully help superdiverse Multilingual Learners maintain resilience and perseverance in order to graduate from high school on time and be ready for college and career, despite the challenges of the COVID era?

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<sup>95</sup> Jones, N., Pincock, K., Guglielmi, S., Baird, S., Sánchez Tapia, I., Oakley, E., & Seager, J. (2022). Barriers to refugee adolescents' educational access during COVID-19: Exploring the roles of gender, displacement, and social inequalities. *Journal on Education in Emergencies*, 8(2), 44-72. <https://doi.org/10.33682/7e0m-40rq>



# Roberta



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### Meet Roberta

Roberta started schooling in the U.S. during the year schools switched to virtual learning. Eighth grade was her first in-person experience. She attends a secondary school enrolling over 650 students in grades six through 12 in an urban low-income community in Northern California. Over 80% of students are Latino; over 10% are African American. Almost 50% of students are English Learners; 90% are Spanish speaking. Roberta is a native of Guatemala and has lived in the United States for three years. Spanish is her native language. Roberta participated in an in-person interview in her school conference room. The interview was recorded on Zoom, with a second interviewer observing the session and taking notes through Zoom. The interview was conducted entirely in Spanish.

### Academic Support from Family and Peers

Roberta is quick to smile when expressing her appreciation for the support provided by her family. When asked to describe a school project that made her especially proud, she described an art project she completed entirely in English that honored her family:

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<sup>96</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>97</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>98</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeg.12166>

Se trató de poner algo que agradecemos y poner un texto en la imagen de lo que agradecemos; yo puse a mis papas. El trabajo me dice que me sé expresar bien que siempre soy agradecida con mis papás por lo que han hecho por mí o lo que me han dado ... Me gustó que podíamos expresar lo que sentía como agradecerle de una otra manera a mis papas por el apoyo.

**Siempre soy agradecida con mis papas por lo que han hecho por mí o lo que me han dado.**

**[I'm always grateful for what my parents have done for me or what they have given me.]**

[It involved describing something we were grateful for and to combine text and images; I chose my parents. The project showed that I'm able to express myself and that I'm always grateful for what my parents have done for me or what they have given me ... I liked that I could express in a different way the gratitude I feel for the support my parents provide.]

Roberta shared that her mother goes to school to speak with teachers when she has a question or concern. When Roberta had a problem with another student, she informed her parents of the situation and they spoke with the school administration. The principal became involved and resolved the issue. Roberta described her parents as advocates on her behalf, "Me hizo bien hablar con los papas, contarles, y ya ellos te voy a hablar aquí con los directores." ["It was good for me to tell my parents, and they were able to come talk to the administrators."]

When asked what supported her the most during virtual instruction, Roberta talked about the support her mother provided. Roberta's mother kept track of her schedule and made sure she was logged into her computer on time. "Siento que ella fue un gran apoyo en ese momento." ["I think she was a great help during that time."]

Roberta's mother's advocacy extended to her participation in the interview. Roberta's mother was enthusiastic about Roberta's participation, even though she had a previously scheduled medical appointment earlier that day. Her mother stressed the importance of making sure Roberta had an opportunity to share her perspectives.

When asked about other support, Roberta described the assistance she received from one of her peers. Many of her friends during virtual instruction were in the year ahead of her and was promoted to another school when they returned to in-person learning. She had one friend she made during virtual learning who was able to guide her to her classes. Roberta has benefitted from a very strong support system, both at home and at school. Her parents are willing to advocate for her needs and cheer (celebrate?) her academic successes. Her household composition and support may ultimately have positive impacts on her emotional health.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Orjuela-Grimm, M., Marti-Castaner, M., Bhatt-Carreño, S., Castro, M. A., Restrepo Henao, A., Pinilla, H., Lewis-Fernandez, R. (2022). Household composition after resettlement and emotional health in adolescent migrants. *Journal of Migration and Health*, 5, 100103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmh.2022.100103>

### Primary Language Support Critical for Success

Roberta was quick to point to the primary language support she received from her teachers and others as critical to her success at school. Roberta was assigned a primary language tutor during virtual instruction when struggling to complete assignments. Roberta described a supportive environment created by her teachers, sharing:

Las maestras que hablan español nos explican cómo hacer las cosas. Me ayudan a entender cómo hacer mi trabajo o cómo aprender inglés, también ... mi maestra me ayudó. Mi maestra le gusta cómo me expreso en lo que escribí en la imagen.

**Sentí orgullo de lo que pude lograr.**

**[I was proud of what I was able to accomplish.]**

[Teachers who speak Spanish explain how to do things. They help me understand how to do my work and teach me English, too ... my teacher helped me. My teacher liked the way I expressed myself **by** what I wrote with my image.]

Roberta described the assistance received by her mother from teachers and administrators because they can communicate in Spanish. She elaborated:

Las maestras o directores que hablan español pueden ayudar entonces cuando mi mama tiene alguna duda o algunos problemas; nos pueden ayudar.

[Teachers and administrators who speak Spanish can help when my mom has a question or a concern; they can help us.]

When asked about the result of primary language support, especially after the return to in-person learning, Roberta lit up and commented:

Este año aprendí mucho más porque me había atrasado mucho en las clases en línea. Aprendí un poco más de lo que no había aprendido. Tenía buenas calificaciones y reconocimientos de buenas calificaciones. Siento que hice muy bien ese año.

[I learned much more because I got really behind during virtual learning. I was able to catch-up on some of what I missed. I got good grades and was recognized for my grades. I think I did really well that year.]

Roberta's school is an assets-oriented and needs-responsive environment. The school built on her primary language strengths, providing her with primary language instruction while she was learning English. This is an example of the policy recommendations of the California English Learner Roadmap.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> California State Board of Education (2017). *California English learner roadmap state board of education policy: Educational programs and services for English learners*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/rm/elroadmappolicy.asp>

Roberta was proud to share the result of her academic efforts and her growing confidence. When asked about a significant school event, Roberta immediately asked if she could talk about her eighth grade graduation. Her eyes lit up when she described the day, walking on stage and receiving her certificate while music played. “Me sentí orgulloso de mí porque tenía buenas calificaciones y logré pasar el año.” [“It made me feel proud because I got good grades, and I was able to promote to the next grade.”]

### **Considerations for Supporting California’s Superdiverse Adolescents**

Roberta’s experience highlights the importance of supporting language learners’ need in a student-centered, responsive environment that builds on students’ primary language strengths, providing primary language instruction with learning English. Because all classroom teachers are expected to provide Integrated English Language Development to English Language Learners and understand the tenets of second language acquisition, this can raise critical questions for educators:

- To what extent can all teachers on campus identify a student’s stage of English Language proficiency, and effectively plan instruction to meet the language needs of that student, as well as provide Integrated English Language Development during instruction?
- As students’ receptive language develops (listening), expressive language (speaking and writing) expands and enables students to understand context and make inferences and meaning. What assessment systems do schools have in place to accurately evaluate the receptive and expressive language skills of English Language Learners?
- Roberta experienced success when provided with the opportunity to complete an art project to demonstrate learning. In what ways do schools have a system to provide students with cross-curricular learning opportunities, as well as the integration of art to express creativity and demonstrate knowledge?
- Roberta benefited from a strong support structure, inclusive of family and school supports. In what ways have schools and districts developed systems of support for all students, and what systems are in place to identify language learners in need of specialized support?

# Silvia



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### Meet Silvia

Silvia is in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade in a secondary school enrolling over 650 students in grades six through 12 in an urban low-income community in Northern California. Over 80% of students are Latino; over 10% are African American. Almost 50% of students are English Learners; 90% are Spanish speaking. She is a native of Guatemala and has lived in the United States four years. Silvia’s first language was Acateco, an indigenous language of Guatemala. She learned Spanish in Guatemala and began studying English when she arrived in the United States in 2018 as a sixth grader. Although Silvia has been in the U.S. four years, she describes herself as a Newcomer. Silvia appeared nervous when being walked to the interview, asking if she could do the interview together with a friend.

Silvia indicated her current living situation with relatives as being her second living placement. It is not clear from the interview, but it is possible Silvia is an unaccompanied minor. In California, unaccompanied minors are often assigned a social worker. Silvia referenced her social worker at various times during the interview. The adult contacted to obtain permission for the interview described herself as Silvia’s guardian.

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101 Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

102 Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

103 Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeg.12166>

Silvia participated in a one-on-one, in-person interview in a school conference room. The interview was conducted entirely in Spanish.

### **Academic and Social Support from Peers**

Silvia described receiving the majority of support from her peers. She met students as part of a group project, and they continued to support one another. “La ayuda de mis amigos es lo que más me ayuda.” [“The help from my friends is what helps me the most.”] They helped with English translation and with explaining lessons, “Me sentía más cómodo hacienda proyectos grupales, y estaba aprendiendo más.” [“I was more comfortable doing group projects, and I was learning more.”] Silvia’s support from her peers had a positive effect on her language acquisition, reflective of the broader implications of peer collaboration in the classroom on superdiverse adolescents’ academic proficiencies.<sup>104</sup>

Silvia was in her second year in the U.S. at the start of the pandemic, and stated her peers were the most important support during virtual learning. Silvia mentioned she lived in a different setting that was challenging. The friends she had made at school continued to support her virtually. “Nos comunicamos por Zoom, y me explicaron el trabajo además de ayudarme con el inglés.” [“We communicated by Zoom, and they explained the work as well as helping me with English.”]

Silvia looked forward to the return of in-person learning because she could now meet in person with some of the new friends she had previously made virtually. In some ways, however, she found in-person learning challenging because she had less access to support from her friends than during virtual learning.

In contrast to the support she received from peers, Silvia noted that very few teachers spoke Spanish. She described the challenges of not understanding English and struggling in her Algebra class. Silvia recalled not receiving any adult assistance during virtual learning:

Fue difícil ... Yo vivía en otra casa con otra gente, y mis amigos eran los únicos que me ayudaban.

[It was difficult ... I lived in another house with other people, and my friends were the only ones who helped me.]

The only adult support Silvia received was from her social worker: “Ella fue quien me apoyó con el inglés, y realmente me ayudó.” [“She was the one who supported me with English, and she really helped me.”] Additionally, the school recently provided her with a tutor to help her with English. Silvia’s possible unaccompanied minor status may be a factor in her ability to learn English. The research indicates that migration during adolescence may be a significant stressor for unaccompanied minors.

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<sup>104</sup> Kibler, A. K., Karam, F. J., Futch Ehrlich, V. A., Bergey, R., Wang, C., & Molloy Elreda, L. (2017). Who are ‘long term English learners’? Using classroom interactions to deconstruct a manufactured learner label. *Applied Linguistics*, 39(5), 741–765.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/aww039>

They were found to expend more effort creating support structures than youth who migrated with their parents.<sup>105</sup>

### **Building Self-Efficacy**

At the time of the interview, the California Department of Education's definition of Newcomer student is a recent immigrant who has received less than two years of instruction in English. Despite starting her fourth year of instruction in the U.S., Silvia entered ninth grade describing herself as Newcomer student, unable to speak English. She was struggling in school, and she stated the reason was because the teacher didn't speak Spanish and she couldn't understand the lessons. "Soy nueva," ["I'm new,"] Silvia stated, even though she was no longer technically a Newcomer.

There are many factors impacting the speed of language acquisition, including academic background in the primary language, quality, and frequency of second language instruction, and a warm and welcoming environment.<sup>106</sup>

Silvia came to the realization that the only way to change her circumstances was to become more fluent in English. "La única ayuda que tuve fue aprender más y más inglés. Empecé a practicar más y a leer más." ["The only help I had was to learn more and more English. I started to practice more and read more."]

Silvia built her support structure through her peers. Silvia's experience demonstrates the importance of peer support, both during virtual and in-person learning. Silvia built on the peer support she had prior to virtual learning and increased it to support her through a challenging school experience. The group projects assigned in class provided Silvia the opportunity to build support structures among her peers. Silvia described that she felt proud when she was able to complete assignments on her own, "Me gustaba hacer un trabajo que alguna vez creí que no podía lograr." ["I liked doing work that I once believed I couldn't accomplish."]

**Cuando trabajé en un proyecto grupal, me sentía más cómoda, era cuando estaba aprendiendo más.**

**[When I worked on a group project and I felt comfortable, that's when I was learning the most.]**

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

As a student continuing to learn a new language and culture, Silvia received fragmented support while navigating her high school experience. Likely an unaccompanied minor, Silvia received the most support from a social worker, in addition to school friends who translated and explained academic assignments. Silvia's experiences raise important questions for educators and policymakers:

<sup>105</sup> Orjuela-Grimm, M., Marti-Castaner, M., Bhatt-Carreño, S., Castro, M. A., Restrepo Henao, A., Pinilla, H., Lewis-Fernandez, R. (2022). Household composition after resettlement and emotional health in adolescent migrants. *Journal of Migration and Health*, 5, 100103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmh.2022.100103>

<sup>106</sup> California State Board of Education (2017). *California English learner roadmap state board of education policy: Educational programs and services for English learners*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/rm/elroadmappolicy.asp>

- In what ways do schools provide an integrated system of support for unaccompanied or unhoused language learners that includes wrap-around services, academic support, extra-curricular opportunities, and physical and social-emotional wellness?
- Silvia benefited from project-based, collaborative academic assignments. How can schools ensure that superdiverse language learners are provided with regular opportunities to engage in rich project-based, collaborative learning in which they regularly engage in speaking and listening to orally rehearse language and build relationships with peers?
- What hiring protocols or incentives do districts have in place to ensure a multilingual educational staff supports the linguistic needs of students?



# Tomasa



Loyola Marymount University  
Center for Equity for  
English Learners

## Superdiverse Adolescent Multilingual Learners

### Introduction to our Superdiverse Adolescent Profiles

This student profile represents one example of the “Superdiverse” English Learner student population in California, crossing boundaries of language, culture, generational immigration patterns, socio-economic class, and individual identities.<sup>107</sup> California has the nation’s most diverse student population, beginning with the youngest English learning students (ages birth to eight years old or dual language learners),<sup>108</sup> yet much remains to understand the experiences of the state’s Superdiverse Adolescents (ages 12-19).<sup>109</sup> Our profiles of these students uplift both their voices and key highlights of what their experiences mean to them.

### Meet Tomasa

Tomasa is a ninth grade student in a secondary school enrolling over 650 students in grades six through 12 in a low-income urban community in Northern California. Over 80% of students are Latino; over 10% are African American. Almost 50% of students are English Learners; 90% of these speak Spanish. Tomasa is a native of El Salvador and has lived in the United States about eight months. Spanish is Tomasa’s native language. She started schooling in the U.S. in August 2022. Prior to the pandemic, Tomasa attended school regularly, but she did not receive schooling during school closures, at the height of the pandemic, and was delayed by six months in entering school after arriving in the U.S.

Tomasa participated in a one-on-one, in-person interview conducted entirely in Spanish.

### Positive Newcomer Experiences

Tomasa is a recent immigrant from El Salvador. At the time of her interview, she had lived in the U.S. for about nine months and had been in school for only about three months. She described feeling lost and disoriented her first day at school because she spoke absolutely no English, and she did not know any of

<sup>107</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>108</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>109</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

her classmates who could help her. The only class where she could slightly follow was her geometry class because she could use her previous learning to understand the graphics. Within weeks, however, she had positive experiences and quickly began to feel better about her circumstances, “Ahora se está volviendo más fácil, estoy un poco más asentada.” [“Now it’s getting easier, I’m a little more settled.”]

Tomasa enjoys her advisory period because it is where she can communicate with her classmates. Tomasa receives academic support from her advisor, and she uses the advisory period to complete assignments from other classes. The advisor has created a warm and welcoming environment, celebrating birthdays, and playing games.

Tomasa has benefitted from a warm, welcoming environment at her school. In particular, her advisory period provides her with a place where she can interact with her peers, both socially and academically. Her adviser supports her needs in all classes. This is in line with the best practices for English Learners.<sup>110</sup> Tomasa believes she receives the most support from her peers, both academically and emotionally. She reaches out to her classmates both during class and after school:

Lo que más me ha ayudado, más allá de la ayuda que he recibido de mis profesores, es la ayuda de mis compañeros. Me ayudan con mis deberes cuando no entiendo algo o cuando el maestro está ayudando a otros estudiantes.

**Quisiera que mis maestros hablaran un poco de español para que me pudieran ayudar tanto en español como en inglés, un poco de ambos.**

**[I wish my teachers could speak a little Spanish so that they could help me both Spanish and English, a little of both.]**

[What has helped me the most, beyond the help I’ve received from my teachers, is the help from my classmates. They help me with my homework when I don’t understand something or when the teacher is helping other students.]

Tomasa appreciates the primary language support she receives from teachers and staff, but wishes more of them spoke Spanish:

Quisiera que mis maestros hablaran un poco de español para que me pudieran ayudar tanto en español como en inglés, un poco de ambos.

[I wish my teachers could speak a little Spanish so that they could help me both Spanish and English, a little of both.]

Tomasa is motivated to learn more English so she can understand her coursework. When asked about her greatest challenge, she responded, “Los días que no entiendo, cuando no puedo entender el trabajo escolar por el inglés.” [“The days that I don’t understand; when I can’t understand the schoolwork

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<sup>110</sup> California State Board of Education (2017). *California English learner roadmap state board of education policy: Educational programs and services for English learners*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/rm/elroadmappolicy.asp>

because of the English.”] Those days, however, serve to encourage her to continue learning, “Me hace querer aprender más inglés; trabajo más duro para poder aprender más inglés.” [“It makes me want to learn more English; I work harder so that I can learn more English.”]

Tomasa was especially enthusiastic when describing her geometry class. Beginning with her first day in school, Tomasa was able to comprehend the coursework because it is less language dependent, “Puede que no entienda el inglés, pero puedo entender los gráficos porque solo tengo que mirarlos.” [“I may not understand the English, but I can understand the graphics because I only have to look at them.”] Tomasa is proud of her ability to tutor other students even though she doesn’t speak English well. She is grateful to be able to contribute:

**Me gusta mi clase de geometría porque puedo entender el trabajo. Puedo ayudar a otros estudiantes en esa clase.**

**[I like my geometry class because I can understand the work. I can help other students in that class.]**

Me gusta mi clase de geometría porque puedo entender el trabajo. Puedo ayudar a otros estudiantes en esa clase. Cuando alguien no entiende, y hay muchos estudiantes que no entienden, entonces los ayudo.

[I like my geometry class because I can understand the work. I get to help other students in that class. When someone doesn’t understand, and there are a lot of students who don’t understand, then I help them.]

The primary language support provided can play a significant role in the development of a second language. Students who receive high levels of academic engagement in their primary language will achieve greater mastery and higher levels of achievement in English.<sup>111</sup>

### **Disrupted Opportunities to Learn**

Tomasa described a combination of circumstances which resulted in a long period of time without attending school or receiving instruction. She did not receive instruction during the pandemic because of unspecified problems. She was about to return to in-person learning when she left El Salvador. Tomasa moved to the U.S. around March 2022, but she believes she was not assigned a school placement until May 2022. This was a few weeks before the end of the school year; and although Tomasa was also offered summer school, her family did not send her to school. Tomasa’s mother wanted her to go to her current school with her cousins, but it took additional time to receive the permit, causing her to miss the first three weeks of the current school year.

Tomasa’s disruptions to instruction, both in El Salvador and in the United States, may have negatively impacted her English acquisition. Latecomers, students who arrive after the beginning of the school year

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<sup>111</sup> Olsen, L. (2014). *Reparable harm: Fulfilling the unkept promise of educational opportunity for California's long term English learners*. Californians Together. <https://californianstogether.org/reparable-harm-fulfilling-the-unkept-promise-of-educational-opportunity-for-californias-long-term-english-learners/>

face the challenges of integrating into a new school system, developing relationships with peers, and having a compressed time for instruction.<sup>112</sup>

### **Considerations for Supporting California's Superdiverse Adolescents**

Tomasa benefitted from a school schedule that included an advisory period. The structured support of an advisory class can provide students with critical academic and social-emotion support; however, in many cases, a school schedule that includes a student advisory period may be challenging to add due to financial and the overall impact on the school schedule. Lack of an advisory period for Newcomer students can be a barrier to implement student support systems. Tomasa's experiences raise important questions for educators and policymakers:

- What kinds of assistance do districts and schools need to leverage the support of administrators and teachers to implement student support systems?
- Tomasa's previous knowledge of geometry gave her an entry point to understanding English. What professional development can districts and schools implement to support administrators' and teachers' instructional knowledge in bridging students' prior learning and language acquisition?
- What safety nets exist for every student to ensure a positive first few weeks in school?
- What can be done to provide Newcomer students with immediate opportunities to learn, even as they wait for initial assessments or paperwork to be completed?

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<sup>112</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12166>

# Yolanda



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### Meet Yolanda

Yolanda is an 11<sup>th</sup> grade student at a secondary school serving slightly more than 400 students in grades six through 12 in a low-income urban community in Northern California. Approximately 90% of the students are Latino; fewer than 20% are African American or Asian. Slightly less than 40% of students

**... I feel pressure about graduating, going to college, being a nurse, or something.**

are English Learners; approximately 85% are Spanish speakers. Yolanda has attended this school since sixth grade. She is an example of a dually identified student: a Long-Term English Learner and a student with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Her parents were born in Mexico; Yolanda was born in a nearby city. She is proud of her heritage and strives through school to overcome challenges and achieve the immigrant dream of a better life in the

U.S. Her interview was conducted over Zoom. Yolanda appeared at ease with her mother in the background, turning to her as she answered each question.

### Cultural Pride and Achievement Pressure

The daughter of immigrants, Yolanda experiences many of the sources of pride and of stress inherent in dual nationality, proudly keeping cultural traditions while at the same time navigating the expectations

<sup>113</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120983342>

<sup>114</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>115</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeg.12166>

of her family for improved life in the U.S. She identifies herself as Mexican American and explains what this means to her. “Being Mexican but having a small percentage from Mexico. I’m the start of the new part here.” She is committed to maintaining her bilingual abilities noting, “I speak Spanish mostly at home ... so I won’t forget it.”

At the same time, she feels both motivated and pressured to succeed. She admires her sister, saying, “I kind of want to be like her,” and recognizes that, “My family motivates me.” However, she also experiences the pressure of fulfilling the immigrant dream:

My parents were born in Mexico, so I’m first generation. Because my parents came from Mexico and my sister is at UC Davis, I feel pressure about graduating, going to college, being a nurse or something.

Yolanda is keenly aware of her heritage and the pressure to do well in the U.S. Despite its challenges, she views school as the pathway forward for her.

### **School Challenges and Support**

Yolanda notes that her schooling experience prior to sixth grade was difficult. She recalls being pulled out of class for English Language Development, academic support, and test preparation. As she describes, “In school, it was hard because I had to be pulled out to learn words, nouns, all through elementary.” For her, pull-out time was a time to prepare for state tests and work on reading programs to measure growth.

Secondary school has been a more positive experience for Yolanda. Research consistently identifies the importance of positive relationships among peers and with their teachers, often facilitated by small school settings where students are known by staff.<sup>116</sup> This is certainly the case for Yolanda. Transitioning to her small middle/high school has been positive for her: “I started [my middle/high school] when I was in sixth grade. So far, it’s been a good experience. My sister used to go there, so I feel like the teachers already knew me and my family.” Yolanda recognizes the value of a small school and peer and teacher relationships, noting, “Something I like about my school is that it’s small. It’s great. Every grade has about 64 students, so we have close relationships with students and the staff, too.”

Yolanda also appreciates and recognizes the benefit of the extra support she receives at school. “The most helpful thing has been, I have an IEP, so I have two teachers specifically help me ... getting the work done.” Yolanda shared a time when she failed a test and the classroom teacher, and the special education teacher thought she hadn’t prepared for it. She describes the challenge, noting, “It was kind of hard because no one saw it from my perspective. Because I really studied hard, but they just thought I didn’t study hard. The class teacher and the special helpers didn’t

... I started crying,  
and they saw that I  
really did care.

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<sup>116</sup> Carhill–Poza, A. (2015). Opportunities and outcomes: The role of peers in developing the oral academic English proficiency of adolescent English learners. *The Modern Language Journal*, 99(4), 678-695. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12271>

know it from my perspective.” She turned to her therapist who recommended that she go and talk to her teachers. Yolanda followed the advice, “I did go talk to them, to the special teachers. I’m not really emotional, but I started crying, and they saw that I really did care.” The extra support from Yolanda’s teachers goes beyond specific classroom assignments.

### **School Pathway to the Future**

Yolanda is intentional about preparing for her future. She keeps in mind the advice given by her counselor in ninth grade. “He told us to have good grades because that’s what colleges look for.” Yolanda has taken advantage of opportunities to explore careers and college. “I’m interested in nursing. I’ve taken this program that I started in March, and I get to go to the hospital and get to shadow nurses or visit different departments in the hospital. I’m really into ICU.” She also appreciates the school-

**I get to go to the hospital and get to shadow nurses.**

provided opportunity to participate in a college trip, “This past month, we went to see colleges, a college trip to UC Davis, Sonoma, and Sac State,” but notes, “I haven’t seen any colleges [for nursing] yet.” Yolanda also recognizes support from teachers in exploring career and college interest, noting “They have said, ‘You can do this; don’t give up’.”

### **Considerations for Supporting California’s Superdiverse Adolescents**

Yolanda relies on her family and her school to help her navigate the challenges of being bicultural and dually identified as a Long-term English Learner with an Individual Education Plan. Her family’s history, taking the initiative to immigrate to the United States, and her older sister’s initiative to attend college both motivate and pressure her to follow in their footsteps. School support from her teachers and opportunities to develop her career interests provide a door to the future and corroborate her family’s support and motivation for her. Yolanda’s experiences raise important questions for educators and policymakers:

- What systems do schools have in place to ensure language learners have equitable access to college and career programming such as Career Technical Education Programs, Regional Occupational Programs, Early College Programs, and Career Internship Programs?
- To what extent do language learners have equitable opportunity to participate in college and university field trips and tours?
- Yolanda indicated that she was “pulled out” of class for state testing. Rather than remove students from class for test preparation, what evidence-based systems of support do elementary and secondary schools have in place to provide small group instruction to differentiate and personalize instruction to meet the unique needs of all learners?
- Yolanda spoke of being proud of her cultural traditions. How do schools ensure that curriculum and instruction is culturally proficient? In what ways do schools support and celebrate students’ cultural identities?

# Yuxuan



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### Meet Yuxuan

Yuxuan is an eighth grade student at a small middle school of about 230 students in a low-income suburban community in Southern California. Approximately 95% of students are Latino. About 35% are English Learners; 95% are Spanish speakers. Yuxuan first attended school in the district when he was in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. His primary language is Chinese, which is spoken at home. The interview was conducted in English by Zoom while Yuxuan was at home.

### Positive Attitude Toward School

Yuxuan spoke positively about his school experiences. He participated in online learning during COVID and shared that he used an app to record the lessons, noting that “after class we look at the video we record and try to remember and take notes about what they were saying.” Yuxuan was excited about returning to in-person instruction when school re-opened. “I feel excited because it’s been two years already, and I really want to go back to school and see the real people face and not through the video.” He also commented that “through the video, the way that teachers teach has been limited ... so I wonder what they will teach without the video.” Overall, Yuxuan was happy to

**I think the most helpful is the attitude of my teachers.**

<sup>117</sup> Álvarez-Pérez, P. & Harris, V. W. (2022). Personal social networks as a superdiversity dimension: A qualitative approach with second-generation Americans. *Current Sociology Monograph*, 70(2), 227-257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00113921211021934>

<sup>118</sup> Park, M., Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). *Growing superdiversity among young U.S. dual language learners and its implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/growing-superdiversity-among-young-us-dual-language-learners-and-its-implications>

<sup>119</sup> Allard, E. C. (2016). Latecomers: The sources and impacts of late arrival among adolescent immigrant students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(4), 366-384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeg.12166>



be back at school and see his friends. He explains, “There’s my friend, or if you’ve got a person that you know, you will feel more better than alone.” When asked about what has been most helpful at school, he credits his teachers, “I think the most helpful is the attitude of my teacher that make[s] me feel very, very close, just like my friend. So, I will feel better to go to the classroom and start learning.” He added that he sees this positive attitude in almost all of his teachers. Yuxuan appears to be a student who enjoys school, his friendships, and his teachers.<sup>120</sup>

### School Accomplishments and Challenges

Yuxuan did not hesitate when asked about a school project or assignment about which he is particularly

**I got a 95% of the A on this project.**

proud. He quickly responded, “I think I have one in my backpack. I will grab it real quick.” He retrieved a large paper divided into sections with writing and illustrations. He shared that his science teacher asked students “to describe the definition of the three laws of Newton’s motion and illustrate the motion. ...” He noted that the teacher had also “let us watch some videos about each law of motion, about each of Newton’s laws of motion.” Yuxuan was very proud of his work on this project commenting, “I got a 95% of the A on this project.”

Yuxuan also shared about the challenges he faced at school. He identified a difficult testing situation, “I think it’s at the beginning of the school year. We have to take two diagnostic tests of reading and math, and the diagnostic was like according to your school of last year and make even harder questions for the level you’re on right now.” Yuxuan explained the strategy he used as he approached the test:

I like look at a question; like I read it at least twice to try to understand what it’s talking about, and if I really don’t know what it’s talking about, like some of them I didn’t even learn at school, so I would take my best guess and go to the next question.

Yuxuan has confidence in his approach to test taking. When asked how he might handle the situation differently, he replied, “I don’t think I will handle it differently. I would handle just the same as last year.”

### Considerations for Supporting California’s Superdiverse Adolescents

Yuxuan started school as an English Learner and is considered a Long-Term English Learner (LTEL), indicating that he has made progress in learning English but still needs ongoing support. At school, he is enrolled in an ELD class in addition to the other core classes taken by middle school students. His situation is experienced by many English Learners who continue to need support in middle and even high school. Their needs typically include specific instruction in English as well as linguistic support from the content teachers to ensure continued language development, specific to each content area. California requires secondary English Learners to have access to both Designated English Language

<sup>120</sup> Main, A., Zhou, Q., Liew, J., & Lee, C. (2017). Prosocial tendencies among Chinese American children in immigrant families: Links to cultural and socio-demographic factors and psychological adjustment. *Social Development*, 26(1), 165-184.

Yeh, C. J., Okubo, Y., Ma, P. W. W., Shea, M., Ou, D., & Pituc, S. T. (2008). Chinese Immigrant high school student’s cultural interactions, acculturation, family obligations, language use and cultural support. *Adolescence*, 43(172).

Development (DELD) and Integrated English Language Development (IELD). To address the needs of LTELs, educators should consider:

- Yuxuan is taking an ELD course as part of his class schedule and learning about Newton's three laws of motion in his science class. He is proud of what he is learning about Newton's laws of motion but needs support to correctly name and discuss what he is learning. To what extent can his core subjects align with and extend his ELD instruction by a specific focus on academic language development as appropriate for each discipline?
- Yuxuan appreciates his close relationships with his friends and the positive attitude of his teachers. He identified how this helps him feel better in class and start learning. The importance of a positive school climate is clear: how can educators collaboratively implement and enhance a positive school climate for all students?
- Yuxuan demonstrated resilience and confidence dealing with the challenge of taking difficult tests. At the same time, he was frustrated about being tested on something he was not taught. While it is important not to limit instruction to teaching to the test, educators can investigate the extent to which instruction is aligned to state expectations for rigorous, standards-based instruction.