

**Loyola Marymount  
University**

**CEEL**

Center for Equity for  
English Learners

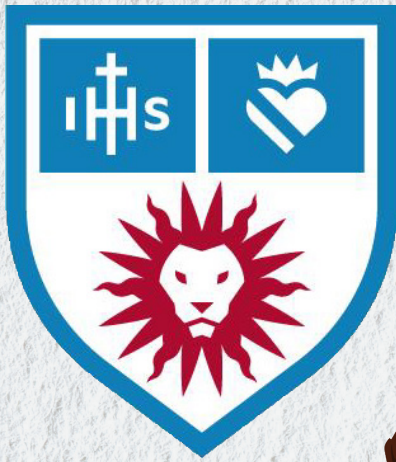


**STRATEGIC**

2023-2028

**PLAN**





# STRATEGIC

2023-2028

## GOALS

## VISION

English Learner and Multilingual education is research- and evidence-based and fully integrated into the U.S. education system.

Language, literacy, and all content instruction for English Learner and Multilingual students is assets-based, equitable, and just.

English Learner and Multilingual students and their families are valued and engaged as partners in the education process.



### 1 GOAL ONE: Research

Expand and prioritize research and evaluation initiatives to support policy and professional learning related to the equitable education of English Learner and Multilingual students.



### 3 GOAL THREE: Policy

Influence and align policy and advocacy efforts in collaboration with partners and organizations focused on equitable education for English Learner and Multilingual students.





# PLAN

Loyola Marymount  
University  
**CEEL**

Center for Equity for  
English Learners

## GOAL TWO: Professional Learning

Increase research and evidence-based professional learning opportunities for teachers and educational leaders to enact equitable education for English Learner and Multilingual students.

## IMPACT MODEL

Equity  
focused and  
asset based  
approach

Collaborative  
inquiry  
and action

Transformation  
and capacity  
building for  
multilingual  
teaching and  
learning

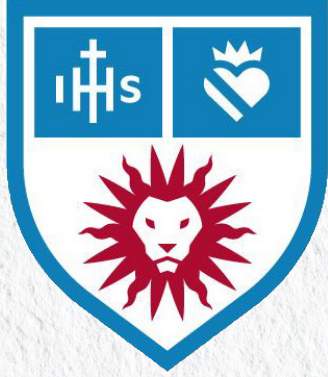
Reciprocal  
accountability

Research-  
based  
programs,  
policies,  
and practices

## GOAL FOUR: Sustainability

Ensure sustainability of CEEL's excellence in leadership, management, and fiscal capacities.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL) extends great appreciation to the students, families, educators, researchers, advocates, policy makers, and communities we serve for partnering with us in this important work. We gratefully acknowledge the Sobrato Philanthropies for funding our organizational assessment and plan development to support CEEL's leadership and financial sustainability. We also thank the following leaders for their commitment, contributions, and dedication to CEEL's vision, mission, and goals:

**CEEL Executive Director:**  
**Magaly Lavadenz, Ph.D.**

**CEEL Directors:**  
**Elvira G. Armas, Ed.D. and**  
**Linda Kaminski, Ed.D.**

**CEEL Advisory Board**

**CEEL Staff**

**SOE and LMU**  
**Administration**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction to CEEL

Located within Loyola Marymount University's School of Education, the Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL) ***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. All of CEEL's work is grounded in a deep commitment to equity and justice and a set of core values that include an assets-based orientation, collaboration, innovation, and reciprocal accountability to the diverse and dynamic community of English Learner and Multilingual students and families that enrich and renew this nation.

## Our Work

Over time, CEEL has steadily gained a strong reputation for the consistent quality and rigor of its work, its pioneering approach to integrating principles of equity and inclusion into language education, and its highly collaborative, interdisciplinary approach. CEEL's unique trifold strategy of research, professional learning, and policy informs and influences leadership and instructional practices for English Learners and Multilingual students in California and across the United States.

### OUR VISION:

English Learner and Multilingual education is research- and evidence-based and fully integrated into the U.S. education system.

Language, literacy, and all content instruction for English Learner and Multilingual students is assets-based, equitable, and just.

English Learner and Multilingual students and their families are valued and engaged as partners in the education process.



# 2023-2028 Strategic Plan

Following a comprehensive and inclusive process that engaged CEEL's many stakeholders, the team created a five-year plan that charts a course through 2028. The plan builds on CEEL's more than 16 years of steady growth and innovation and positions it for a future of growth and increased impact, as well as heightened visibility as a critical partner in English Learner and Multilingual Student education. It also is closely aligned with the strategic goals of Loyola Marymount's School of Education and positions CEEL to continue to build on its successful partnership with its parent organization. There are four goals:

## 1 GOAL ONE: Research

**Expand and prioritize research and evaluation initiatives to support policy and professional learning related to the equitable education of English Learner and Multilingual students.**

## 2 GOAL TWO: Professional Learning

**Increase research and evidence-based professional learning opportunities for teachers and educational leaders to enact equitable education for English Learner and Multilingual students.**

## 3 GOAL THREE: Policy

**Influence and align policy and advocacy efforts in collaboration with partners and organizations focused on equitable education for English Learner and Multilingual students.**

## 4 GOAL FOUR: Sustainability

**Ensure sustainability of CEEL's excellence in leadership, management, and fiscal capacities.**

## Looking Ahead

As we look to a future of greater reach and impact, we know this plan will bring us closer to achieving our vision. We are deeply grateful to everyone who has partnered with us to help get CEEL to where we are today. We invite you to reach out to the CEEL Directors at [ceel@lmu.edu](mailto:ceel@lmu.edu) to learn more about how we might work together to build a thriving and more just society by ensuring equity and excellence in English Learner and Multilingual education.



# INTRODUCTION

## This is CEEL

The Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL) was established in 2006 with the purpose of improving educational outcomes for English Learners and Multilingual students. CEEL is located in Los Angeles, CA, and is part of Loyola Marymount University's (LMU) School of Education (SOE). The Center's trifold strategy of research, professional learning, and policy informs and influences leadership and instructional practices for the millions of English Learners and Multilingual students in California and across the nation. CEEL has become an essential voice in the field of English Learner and Multilingual education in the greater Los Angeles area and increasingly at the regional, state, and national levels. Since its founding, CEEL has developed a portfolio of programming that is both broad and deep. Under the leadership of Founder and Executive Director Magaly Lavadenz, Ph.D., and Director Elvira Armas, Ed.D., CEEL has gained a strong reputation for the consistent quality and rigor of its work, its pioneering approach to integrating principles of equity and inclusion into language education, and its highly collaborative, interdisciplinary approach.

**“CEEL should be seen as the right entity to be the convener of advocates, practitioners, researchers, and districts. They have credibility and a strong rolodex in this space so they ... could bring us together.”**

**- Partner Representative**



# CEEL's Impact

● **Advancing research, practice, and policy** for English Learners and Multilingual students through collaboration with broad-based local, statewide, and national governmental and non-governmental organizations

● **Leading state and local level advocacy** for English Learners and Multilingual students through increased collaboration to influence policy, tools, and grantmaking

● **Developing** research- and evidence-based **tools and resources** to support teachers, higher education faculties, and leaders of English Learner and Multilingual students

● **Offering cutting edge professional learning programs, signature institutes, and technical assistance** for teachers and leaders of English Learners and Multilingual students

A recent organizational assessment documented CEEL's impressive growth and strong reputation not only for its trifold strategy but also for how the three elements are integrated. Unlike many organizations offering policy, research, or programs, CEEL has created a dynamic strategy where each competency leverages the other, and the whole truly is greater than the sum of its parts.

CEEL is at an important juncture. After more than 16 years of steady growth and programmatic innovation, CEEL has created a new strategic plan that builds on the accomplishments of the entire team and allows for sustainable growth that preserves programmatic integrity and strengthens operations. With generous support from the Sobrato Philanthropies, CEEL created this plan in partnership with Aurora Commons, a strategy, leadership, and social justice consulting agency supporting foundations and nonprofits with building power and transformation.

This plan charts a course for CEEL through 2028 that builds on its very solid history and positions CEEL for a future of growth and increased impact, as well as heightened visibility as a critical partner in ensuring the success of our nation as our population continues to evolve and diversify. The plan is a "living document" that will drive all aspects of CEEL's work in the coming years. The CEEL team also recognizes the need to adapt as circumstances dictate and is committed to revisiting the plan on a regular basis and adjusting as needed.



# Overview of the Process

This document is the culmination of a comprehensive and highly participatory 18-month planning process that engaged numerous stakeholders. All of the CEEL staff, the CEEL Advisory Board, administrators in SOE and LMU Administration, funders, representatives of other university academic centers, and representatives of partner organizations participated in the assessment phase of the process. Data collection included interviews, a staff survey, a benchmarking study of five other university centers, a scan of the external environment, and a series of all-staff meetings to review findings from the assessment and determine strategic priorities and action plans. Reflecting CEEL's ongoing commitment to inclusivity and partnership, this plan strives to incorporate the perspectives of CEEL's myriad partners, including staff, funders, LMU and the School of Education and other centers within the university, community organizations, the teachers and administrators with whom CEEL works, and English Learner and Multilingual students and their families.

**“Everyone values CEEL’s work and its contribution to advancing to an R2 status as a university, and strongly believes that work needs to be continued.”**

**- LMU Representative**

## Strategic Priorities

This plan establishes an exciting path for CEEL and is firmly grounded in the Center’s commitment to partnership, intellectual integrity, innovation, and equity. It will allow CEEL to accelerate progress toward its vision of changing how education for English and Multilingual learners can transform schools and the educational system. The plan seeks to balance growth and innovation with sustainability—to preserve what has been built over the past 16+ years while also growing in a sustainable way. Research, professional learning, and policy will continue to be the cornerstones of CEEL’s strategy and will be supplemented by a strategic focus on supporting and enhancing its excellent leadership, management, and fiscal capacities.



The plan that follows establishes the following priorities for CEEL over the next 5 years:

**Essential Partnerships:** Position CEEL more visibly and actively as a leader in English Learner and Multilingual education locally, regionally, and nationally, strengthening its reputation as an essential partner in the effective and equitable integration of an increasingly diverse population. CEEL is equally committed to its partners within LMU, including SOE and other university centers, and those outside the university, such as school districts/local education agencies, advocacy groups, other institutes of higher education, and state/national leaders and policymakers.

**Trifold Programmatic Growth:** Increase impact through the expansion of its research agenda and dissemination of knowledge through publication, strengthening its presence as an effective policy advocate, and increasing research and evidence-based professional learning opportunities.

**Sustainability:** Bolster its capacity to maintain programmatic excellence and innovation through targeted investment in leadership development, staff development, effective management, and financial sustainability.

**Emerging Scholars:** Build the field of English Learner and Multilingual education by supporting emerging scholars.

**LMU and SOE Alignment:** Deepen the relationship with LMU and SOE by leveraging the shared goals of the Center, School, and University.

## Alignment with the LMU School of Education

This plan is strongly aligned with SOE's current priorities and goals. Both entities have identified equity and inclusion, research, and the learning and preparation of their students as top strategic priorities. CEEL's global commitment to equity, justice, and inclusion (see the *Impact Model* on page 12) supports SOE's *Priority Goal One*: "integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion through SOE programs, practices, and partnerships." Of particular note is the alignment between SOE's *Priority Goal One* and CEEL's commitment to influencing and aligning policy and advocacy efforts focused on equitable education for English Learner and Multilingual students (CEEL's *Goals One and Three*). In addition, CEEL's focus on research and evidence-based professional learning (CEEL's *Goal Two*) reinforces SOE's *Priority Goal Two*, "providing candidate-centered, innovative, and evidence-based programs that cultivate the expertise necessary to be agents of change."



# MISSION, VISION, VALUES, AND IMPACT

## Mission

The Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL) **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.

## Vision

English Learner and Multilingual education is research and evidence-based and fully integrated into the U.S. education system. Language, literacy, and all content instruction for English Learner and Multilingual students is assets-based, equitable, and just. English Learner and Multilingual students and their families are valued and engaged as partners in the education process.

## Values

We believe that educators who utilize students' cultural and linguistic resources while developing students' academic, social-emotional, and global competencies have the potential to transform schools and educational systems significantly. We recognize that true equity for English Learners cannot be experienced until social, racial, and linguistic justice are realized for all of us.

**“They know how to get down to the end user experience (i.e., teachers and students). You have to make a connection to culture, language, and identity – and CEEL has those kinds of partnerships.”**

**- Partner Representative**

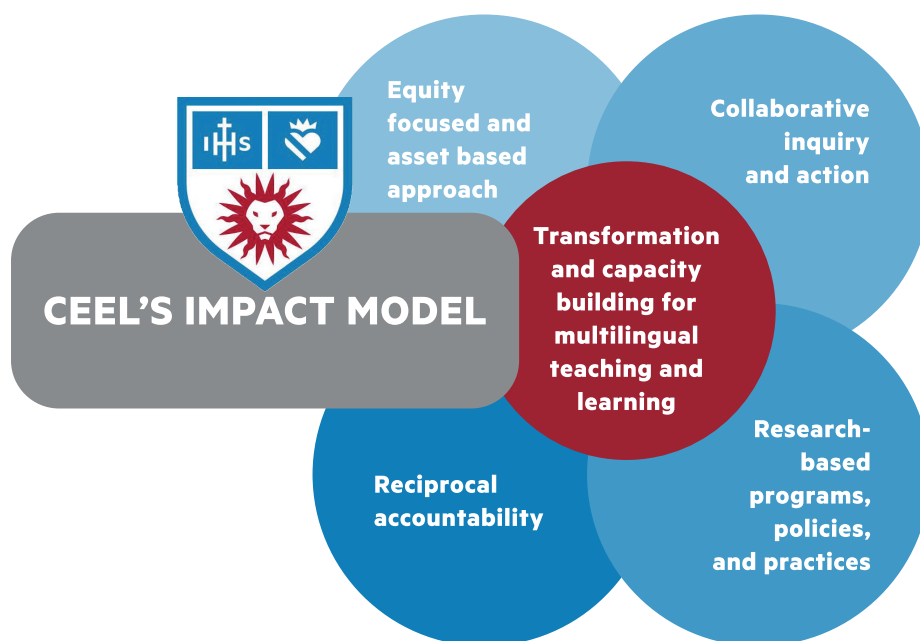


These core values guide our work:



## Impact Model

CEEL serves the diverse and dynamic community of English Learner and Multilingual students and families that enrich and renew this nation. Grounded in CEEL's values, the *Impact Model* depicted below integrates research, practice, and policy focused on systemic equity and excellence in linguistically and culturally diverse contexts. Reciprocal accountability, an equity-focused and asset-based approach, and collaborative inquiry and action underlie CEEL's integrated approach, whereby research, practice, and policy are mutually reinforcing. Research informs practice; research and practice inform policy. The result is transformation and capacity building for multilingual teaching and learning.





# STRATEGIC GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND MILESTONES

The following goals, objectives, and milestones will guide CEEL's growth over the next 5 years. Goals are what CEEL is trying to accomplish programmatically and operationally. Objectives are how CEEL will achieve its goals. Milestones are steps towards the goals, which blend a measurable indicator with the rationale for why the milestone matters.

## 1 GOAL ONE: Research

**Expand and prioritize research and evaluation initiatives to support policy and professional learning related to the equitable education of English Learner and Multilingual students.**

## 2 GOAL TWO: Professional Learning

**Increase research and evidence-based professional learning opportunities for teachers and educational leaders to enact equitable education for English Learner and Multilingual students.**

## 3 GOAL THREE: Policy

**Influence and align policy and advocacy efforts in collaboration with partners and organizations focused on equitable education for English Learner and Multilingual students.**

## 4 GOAL FOUR: Sustainability

**Ensure sustainability of CEEL's excellence in leadership, management, and fiscal capacities.**





# GOAL ONE: Research



The following goals, objectives, and milestones will guide CEEL's growth over the next 5 years. Goals are what CEEL is trying to accomplish programmatically and operationally. Objectives are how CEEL

## OBJECTIVE

1.1

Develop and maintain a continually responsive **research and evaluation** agenda.

1.2

Develop a strategy for **publication, dissemination, and communication.**

## MILESTONE

1A

CEEL will disseminate relevant and cutting-edge updates in English Learner and Multilingual education fieldwide by publishing at least **2 Education and Policy Briefs each year.**

1B

CEEL will continue to build the base of knowledge in English Learner and Multilingual education with **3-5 publications in peer-reviewed journals** over the course of the strategic plan.



## GOAL TWO: Professional Learning



Expand and prioritize research and evaluation initiatives to support policy and professional learning related to the equitable education of English Learner and Multilingual students.

### OBJECTIVE

2.1

Deliver **pre-service and in-service professional learning** that supports educators providing English Learner and Multilingual education.

2.2

Provide **opportunities and mentorships to emerging scholars** within the field of English Learner and Multilingual education.

### MILESTONE

2A

CEEL will **increase its programmatic impact by expanding its professional learning programs into 3 new regions** over the next 5 years, driven by a thorough market analysis.

2B

CEEL will **expand the pipeline of educational scholars by providing 20 scholarships** over the next 5 years.





## GOAL THREE: Policy



Increase research and evidence-based professional learning opportunities for teachers and educational leaders to enact equitable education for English Learner and Multilingual students.

### OBJECTIVE

3.1

Produce and publish **policy research** to inform English Learner and Multilingual education curriculum and instruction, assessment and accountability, and teacher preparation for English Learner and Multilingual education.

3.2

Create a **policy agenda** to prioritize policy engagement/initiatives at the **local, state, and national levels**.

3.3

Foster and support **district, school, and higher education advocacy, leadership and development, and capacity building** to monitor the implementation of equitable English Learner and Multilingual education policies and practices.

### MILESTONE

3A

In coalition with its allies, CEEL will **influence the policy discussion related to English Learner and Multilingual education** through the development and dissemination of **briefs** that highlight research and evidence-based policy recommendations.

3B

CEEL and its allies will **influence the state legislative agenda by advancing at least one new policy item** during each session.



# GOAL FOUR: Sustainability



Ensure sustainability of CEEL's excellence in leadership, management, and fiscal capacities.

## OBJECTIVE

4.1

Ensure **alignment within research, professional learning, and policy initiatives** to extend CEEL's reach and to raise CEEL's intellectual and reputational influence.

4.2

**Deepen CEEL's existing relationship with LMU and SOE** to enhance mutual and collaborative support and reputation.

4.3

Expand internal **leadership capacity** to increase and share expertise, ownership, and collaborative responsibility.

4.4

Expand internal **management capacity**.

4.5

Expand **fiscal capacity** through increased funding and streamlined financial management.

4.6

Expand the **communications** function to more effectively communicate the value and impact of CEEL's work and increase internal and external audiences' engagement and support.

## MILESTONE

4A

CEEL will **increase its visibility and influence** by publishing the **summary of its Annual Strategic Initiatives**.

4B

CEEL will **continue its partnership with the School of Education** through regular participation in multidisciplinary research projects and grantmaking.

4C

CEEL will build a team of staff leaders and managers who feel **capable and well-resourced** to grow the organization.



# FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This plan builds on CEEL's history of rapid growth and charts an ambitious trajectory over the next 5 years that is sustainable and increases our impact. Achieving the goals set out in the plan requires that we increase our investment in program delivery, policy and advocacy, and organizational capacity. To accommodate the growth in expenses, we will expand revenues each year and continue to diversify our core funding sources, including foundations, grants, and contracts.

**“I want to see it grow and become a bigger gorilla in the state and a larger presence within the nation.”**

**- LMU Representative**

# RISK ANALYSIS

This plan is based on thorough data analysis, as well as the knowledge and experience of the CEEL team and its advisors. At the same time, the future is uncertain. The CEEL team has identified potential risks and how they would manage adverse circumstances.

**RISK 1:**

Funding cuts in local school districts related to professional development and/or investments in English Learner and Multilingual education.

**RESPONSE:**

Decrease dependency on LEA contracts, increase foundation revenues, and explore opportunities for corporate funding. Policy work lifts English Learner and Multilingual education as core to education and less subject to budget reductions.

**RISK 2:**

Public policy and discourse related to immigrants and refugees become increasingly hostile, threatening public funding and strengthening opposition to policies that enable CEEL's work.

**RESPONSE:**

Stay the course. Continue to contribute to the "narrative change" campaign by producing policy briefs and other publications that uplift the contributions of English Learners and Multilingual students. Participate actively in advocacy campaigns and other partnerships, like CRLA, ACLU, and others, that support English Learners, Multilingual students, and their families.

**RISK 3:**

Private funder interests shift away from English Learner and Multilingual student education.

**RESPONSE:**

Seek other funding sources, particularly by cultivating individual donors and corporate funding.

**RISK 4:**

Unexpected leadership transitions at CEEL.

**RESPONSE:**

This entire strategic plan focuses on CEEL's sustainability, including staffing. The team is intentionally building its leadership and management capacity to strengthen upper and middle management levels to ensure continuity during any transitions.





# LOOKING AHEAD

For over 16 years, CEEL has helped to build and transform the critical field of English Learner and Multilingual student education through its pioneering work in research, professional learning, and policy. Our work has informed and influenced leadership and instructional practices in California and across the United States while never wavering from our commitment to equity, collaboration, and excellence.

As we look to a future of greater reach and impact, we know this plan will bring us closer to achieving our vision. We are deeply grateful to everyone who has partnered with us to help get CEEL to where we are today. We invite you to reach out to our Center Directors at [ceel@lmu.edu](mailto:ceel@lmu.edu) to learn more about how we might work together to build a thriving and more just society by ensuring equity and excellence in English Learner and Multilingual education.

# CEEL and SOE Strategic Plan Goals and Alignment (2023-2028)

CEEL’s plan is strongly aligned with the LMU School of Education’s (SOE) current priorities and goals. Both entities have identified equity and inclusion, research, and the learning and preparation of their students, as top strategic priorities.

CEEL’s global commitment to equity, justice, and inclusion (see the *Impact Model* on page 12) supports SOE’s *Priority Goal One*: “integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion through SOE programs, practices, and partnerships.” Of particular note is the alignment between SOE’s *Priority Goal One* and CEEL’s commitment to influencing and aligning policy and advocacy efforts focused on equitable education for English Learner and Multilingual students (e.g., CEEL *Goals One* and *Three*). There is strong potential for collaboration here. In addition, CEEL’s focus on research and evidence-based professional learning (CEEL *Goal Two*) reinforces SOE’s *Priority Goal Two*: “providing candidate-centered, innovative, and evidence-based programs that cultivate the expertise necessary to be agents of change.” The following table details the relationships between SOE goals and CEEL goals.



# CEEL and SOE Strategic Plan Goals and Alignment (2023-2028)

## SOE STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

### Priority Goal One:

The School of Education will support its Mission and Vision by integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout SOE programs, practices, and partnerships.

### Priority Goal Two:

The School of Education will support its Mission and Vision and reinforce its commitment to the Ignatian principle of cura personalis by providing candidate-centered, innovative, and evidence-based programs that cultivate the expertise necessary to be agents of change.

### Priority Goal Three:

The School of Education will reinforce its commitment to discovery, creativity, and the generation of new knowledge by supporting, conducting, and utilizing research in our work with candidates, partners, and colleagues.

### Priority Goal Four:

The School of Education will live its Mission and Vision by utilizing its unique commitment, as a leader and convener in the region and beyond.

### Priority Goal Five:

The School of Education will support its Mission and Vision by developing capacities and structures to ensure SOE viability and impact.

## CEEL STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

### Goal Three: Policy

Influence and align policy and advocacy efforts in collaboration with partners and organizations focused on equitable education for English Learner and Multilingual students.

### Goal Two: Professional Learning

Increase research and evidence-based professional learning opportunities for teachers and educational leaders to enact equitable education for English Learner and Multilingual students.

### Goal One: Research

Expand and prioritize research and evaluation initiatives to support policy and professional learning related to the equitable education of English Learner and Multilingual students.

### Goal Four: Sustainability

Ensure sustainability of CEEL's excellence in leadership, management, and fiscal capacities.

### Goal Four: Sustainability

Ensure sustainability of CEEL's excellence in leadership, management, and fiscal capacities.

## EXAMPLES OF ALIGNMENT

CEEL's impact model is grounded in an equity focus and asset-based approach.

CEEL provides essential support for the SOE goal of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ).

CEEL's model of partner-based, co-constructed, Research, Practice, Policy Partnership (RPPP) supports districts and partners to be agents of change for ELs.

CEEL contributes to supporting SOE pre-service candidates (Obj. 2.2).

CEEL's impact model emphasizes research- and evidence-based programs, policies and practices, collaborative inquiry, and action.

Highly aligned with SOE Key Performance Indicators:

KPI 1: high impact candidate-centered practices that address the learning and development of the whole student.

KPI 3: cultivate and increase faculty expertise and research opportunities in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary program specialization areas.

CEEL's impact model emphasizes research- and evidence-based programs, policies and practices, collaborative inquiry, and action.

CEEL's research and evaluation projects inform practice, professional learning, policy development, and advocacy.

Highly aligned with SOE Key Performance Indicators:

KPI 1: increase faculty productivity in scholarship and the depth of research engagement of graduate students.

KPI 2: increase external research grants sought after and the number of creative/scholarly/ community-engaged publications produced.

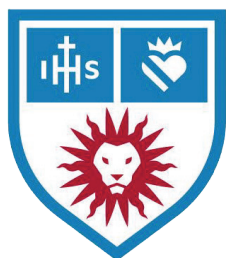
CEEL's leadership in convening schools, districts, and Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) to collaborate with policy/advocacy groups.

CEEL's leadership and role are essential to the success of SOE and thus deserves support for fiscal sustainability.









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

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