ENGLISH LEARNER CONSORTIUM: 2019 POLICY PRIORITIES

In early 2019, the California Community Foundation sought the recommendations of English Learner researchers, advocates, and practitioners to develop a local and statewide English Learner policy framework.

The Consortium for English Learner Success was then established to strengthen the prosperity of California and Los Angeles County by advocating for an educational system that fully supports the needs and embraces the assets of English Learner (EL) students and Dual Language Learners (DLLs)*. The Alliance for a Better Community proudly joined Californians Together to co-chair the Consortium, which is now composed of nearly 100 civil rights, policy, research, philanthropic, educator and community-based organizations.

Over the last few months, the Consortium has engaged its members in a working group made up of over 50 researchers, advocates, and practitioners. Today, we are thrilled to release the Consortium’s 2019 Policy Priorities, the result of collaboration and advancing educational equity through lasting, transformational change.

EL students are the fastest-growing subgroup of students in the United States, and yet the state of EL education is in a crisis. Sizable opportunity gaps between EL students and non-EL students remain. These students bring a rich diversity of cultural and linguistic backgrounds to our state. If California does not address the needs of English Learner students, it will lose the assets of DLL/EL students that are needed to develop a global, diverse, and multilingual state and economy. We share a responsibility to ensure that all students, regardless of their background, can achieve economic prosperity and have an equal opportunity to thrive.

*DLL students are children ages birth to five learning two languages simultaneously, while EL students are students in K-12 education who require additional language and academic support to succeed in school.