

AMAYA GARCIA

EDUCATING CALIFORNIA'S ENGLISH LEARNERS

Chula Vista's Expansion of Dual Language
Programs in an Era of English-Only Policies

NOVEMBER 2017

About the Author



Amaya Garcia is a senior researcher with the Education Policy program at New America. A member of the Dual Language Learners National Work Group, she provides research and analysis on policies and programs related to dual language education, bilingual teacher preparation and early education. Prior to joining New America, Garcia was a policy analyst at the D.C. State Board of Education and a research associate at the American Institutes of Research. She holds a master's degree in public policy from the University of Maryland-College Park, a master's degree in cognitive studies in education from Teachers College, Columbia University, and a bachelor's degree in English and psychology from the University of Iowa.

Acknowledgments

This work would not have been possible without the generous support of the Heising-Simons and McKnight Foundations. Special thanks to Cristina Alfaro, Karen Cadiero-Kaplan, Sera Hernandez, Joseph Johnson, and Saúl Maldonado from San Diego State University. I am also grateful for the participation and support of Emma Sanchez from the Chula Vista Elementary School District, along with Superintendent Francisco Escobedo, Lorena Beifuss, Gloria Montano-Velarde, Erin Dare, and Jeffrey Thiel. Thank you to Chula Vista school principals Ruth Diaz de Leon, Lalaine Perez, and Eric Banatao and to Chula Vista Learning Community Charter School administrators Jorge Ramirez, Lydia Burgos, and Laura Duran. Jorge Cuevas Antillón and Olympia Kyriakidis from the San Diego County Office of Education provided valuable information on the district. Thanks to New America colleagues Elena Silva and Janie Tankard Carnock for reviewing the paper and to Anthony Hanna for research and transcription support. Tyler Richardett provided layout and communication support. Much appreciation to Ruby Takanishi for her feedback on an earlier draft and help connecting me with the district.

About New America

New America is committed to renewing American politics, prosperity, and purpose in the Digital Age. We generate big ideas, bridge the gap between technology and policy, and curate broad public conversation. We combine the best of a policy research institute, technology laboratory, public forum, media platform, and a venture capital fund for ideas. We are a distinctive community of thinkers, writers, researchers, technologists, and community activists who believe deeply in the possibility of American renewal.

Find out more at newamerica.org/our-story.

About the Education Policy Program

New America's Education Policy program uses original research and policy analysis to solve the nation's critical education problems, serving as a trusted source of objective analysis and innovative ideas for policymakers, educators, and the public at large. We combine a steadfast concern for low-income and historically disadvantaged people with a belief that better information about education can vastly improve both the policies that govern educational institutions and the quality of learning itself. Our work encompasses the full range of educational opportunities, from early learning to primary and secondary education, college, and the workforce.

Our work is made possible through generous grants from the Alliance for Early Success; the Buffett Early Childhood Fund; the Foundation for Child Development; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; the Heising-Simons Foundation; the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; the Joyce Foundation; the George Kaiser Family Foundation; the JPMorgan Chase & Co.; the Kresge Foundation; Lumina Foundation; the McKnight Foundation; the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; the David and Lucile Packard Foundation; the Siemens Foundation; the W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation; the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation; and the Walton Family Foundation. The views expressed in this report are those of its author and do not necessarily represent the views of foundations, their officers, or employees.

Find out more at newamerica.org/education-policy.

Contents

Introduction	3
Chula Vista Learning Community Charter: Program Essentials and Goals	5
A Community-driven Approach to Dual Language Immersion Program Expansion	8
A Focus on Teacher Preparation and Professional Development	13
Looking Forward	16
Notes	17

Terminology

English learners (ELs) are students between the ages of 3–21 enrolled in the PreK–12 educational system who have a home language other than English and who are in the process of developing their academic English language proficiency. This definition aligns with that used in a 2017 consensus report by the *National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures*.¹

Bilingual Education is an umbrella term used to describe a variety of programs that provide instruction in English and ELs' home languages. The most common are *transitional* bilingual programs that provide literacy and content-area instruction in students' native languages with the goal of transitioning them to English-only instruction, and *dual language immersion* programs that provide instruction in English and a partner language with the goal of helping students become bilingual and biliterate.

INTRODUCTION

California is home to almost 1.4 million English learners (ELs), who make up 30 percent of all EL enrollment in the United States.² The state has a long and complicated history when it comes to educating ELs, most notably seen in the seminal court case *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), which found that San Francisco’s school system was denying Chinese students English language instruction in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.³ This case set the stage for policy changes at the federal level through the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (1974), which mandated that states and school districts institute programs aimed at helping EL students overcome language barriers in order to ensure equal participation in educational programs and services, including by being offered bilingual education programs.⁴

In 1997, California again became a focal point of debates around EL education through the “English for the Children” campaign spearheaded by Silicon Valley millionaire Ron Unz. The campaign sought to frame bilingual education as an ineffective instructional method that denied children the opportunity to learn English. In reality, the campaign was a response to the changing demographics of the state. As EL researcher and advocate Laurie Olsen writes in her 2009 case study of the fight for bilingual education, “the initiative was designed to appeal to those who desired better incorporation of immigrants through the teaching of English. It fed on a sense of unease that

immigrants, particularly Latino immigrants, were not assimilating quickly or thoroughly enough.”⁵

The campaign led to Proposition 227, a 1998 ballot initiative asking voters to eliminate bilingual instruction in favor of English-only approaches. Specifically, ELs were to be immersed in English for one year to help them attain proficiency in the language. California voters approved the measure by a wide margin, with 61 percent approving and 39 percent opposing. Over the next decade, bilingual education was eroded through sharp declines in programs and in bilingually certified teachers. A five-year research study conducted by the American Institutes for Research of the effects of Proposition 227 would find that the English-only approach had done little to increase EL student achievement.⁶

But, just as the state was moving away from bilingual education, one school district in Southern California was taking a decidedly different approach. The same year that Proposition 227 passed, Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD), located just south of San Diego, opened the first Spanish-English dual language immersion (DLI) charter school in the district: Chula Vista Learning Community Charter (CVLCC) School. Charter schools, which are public schools that operate independently from the majority of regulations and laws that govern school districts, were first recognized in California legislation

in 1992. According to a 2004 EdSource report, charter schools' independence was seen as a lever for improving student achievement, promoting innovation, and increasing professional opportunities for teachers.⁷ At the time CVLCC was established, the state had just increased the cap on the number of charters allowed and eliminated the 10 charter school limit within a district. These laws helped to facilitate the creation of CVLCC at a time of strong anti-bilingual education sentiment.

CVLCC began as an idea that quickly led to a community conversation centered around one question: *If you had the opportunity to create a dream school, what would it look like?* According to Jorge Ramirez, executive director of CVLCC, “we talked a lot about the 21st century skills. We talked a lot about making connections to real world. We talked a lot about how we should envision the jobs for the future and how the school should be a...beacon in innovation.”⁸ The school's charter was created through those conversations and the collaborative process helped secure a high level of community support and interest. In its first year, CVLCC received over 1,500 applicants for 200 spots. Demand continues to be high.

The charter school represented a starting point for the district. Today the Chula Vista Elementary School District has Spanish-English dual language immersion programs in 21 of its 48 schools, enrolling over 4,400 students.⁹ A full 36 percent of students in the district are ELs, 91 percent of whom come from homes where Spanish is the primary language. Nearly 20 percent of the district's ELs are enrolled a DLI program. This means many ELs are gaining access to instruction that supports the continued development of their home language and English, which research suggests can promote enhanced academic achievement, facilitate English language proficiency, and sustain valuable cultural and familial connections.¹⁰

Promoting bilingualism and biliteracy for students is essential given the district's proximity to Tijuana, explains Chula Vista superintendent Francisco Escobedo. “For San Diego there is no wall; it's very

seamless. The connection between San Diego and Tijuana is huge. We depend upon each other not only for the rich multicultural experience but for economic reasons as well.”¹¹

With the 2016 passage of Proposition 58, which minimized portions of the state's English-only law and allows districts more flexibility to implement bilingual education programs for all students, California is poised for a resurgence of bilingual education. However, developing and implementing these programs will not be easy. The state is facing a critical shortage of bilingual educators. As Learning Policy Institute researchers Desiree Carver-Thomas and Linda Darling-Hammond explain in a 2017 fact sheet, after Proposition 227, California saw a reduction in the number of bilingual teacher preparation programs and the number of bilingual authorizations. There are currently only 30 institutions of higher education in the state (out of 80) that offer bilingual teacher preparation programs and in 2015–16 only 700 bilingual authorizations were granted, down from a peak of 1,800 in 1994–95.¹² In a recent survey of 111 districts and charter schools conducted by the advocacy organization Californians Together and the Association of California School Administrators, 53 percent of all respondents reported a shortage of bilingual educators.¹³

Chula Vista has not yet felt the strain of the bilingual teacher shortage. This is partly due to its location. Jeffrey Thiel, assistant superintendent of human resources for CVESD, said graduates of local teacher preparation programs prefer to stay and work in Southern California.¹⁴ The district also has strong relationships with local universities, including San Diego State University (SDSU), that have created direct teacher pipelines into their dual language programs via student teaching. “SDSU wants to send their teachers here. If we can get them as student teachers it's easier to hire them,” Thiel explained.¹⁵

As districts move towards creating new bilingual programs, such as dual language immersion models that split instruction between English and

a partner language, they should look to existing programs within their state for lessons on design and implementation. Chula Vista provides a good example of how to scale up dual language immersion programs by paying attention to

community input, how to partner with local higher education to gain well-prepared bilingual educators, and how to prepare all teachers to facilitate ELs' language development.

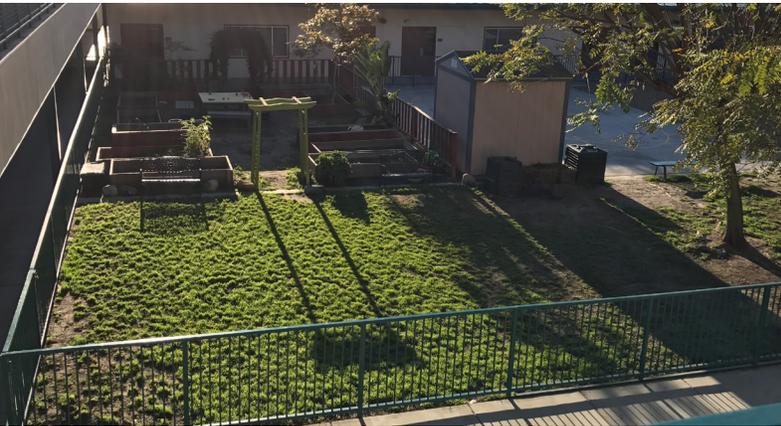
CHULA VISTA LEARNING COMMUNITY CHARTER: PROGRAM ESSENTIALS AND GOALS

Chula Vista Learning Community Charter (CVLCC) School has grown to include an elementary, middle, and high school that serve over 1,500 students, the vast majority of whom are Latino.¹⁶ In a 2014 article, Cristina Alfaro, Richard Durán, Alexandra Hunt, and María José Aragón describe CVLCC as an “innovative Spanish-English dual language program, which combines a biliteracy approach with a focus on critical pedagogy and global citizenship so that the goal of the teaching and learning process is to develop and strengthen a respect for human dignity, individual worth, and civic action in every student.”¹⁷

The focus on global citizenship is one of the most striking features of the school and it is anchored by teacher-created curriculum. “Since we don’t have a set curriculum [and] we don’t adopt textbooks, our teachers create their own curriculum [during]...

collaboration time set aside every week,” said Laura Duran, coordinator of curriculum design at CVLCC. This is “always with the lens of social justice issues, global perspectives, making sure they’re connecting it to [the question] ‘¿Y que? [So what?].’ What does this have to do with our students? What does this have to do with what students need to know in order to succeed in the future?” she said.

A visit to the school last spring showcased this curricular focus in action. In a fourth grade classroom, students were learning about Westward Expansion through the lens of gentrification and its impact on local communities. In a second grade class, students were comparing capitalism and socialism as part of a lesson about different economic systems. And in a kindergarten class, students were learning about Cesar Chavez and his role in empowering the Mexican-American community.



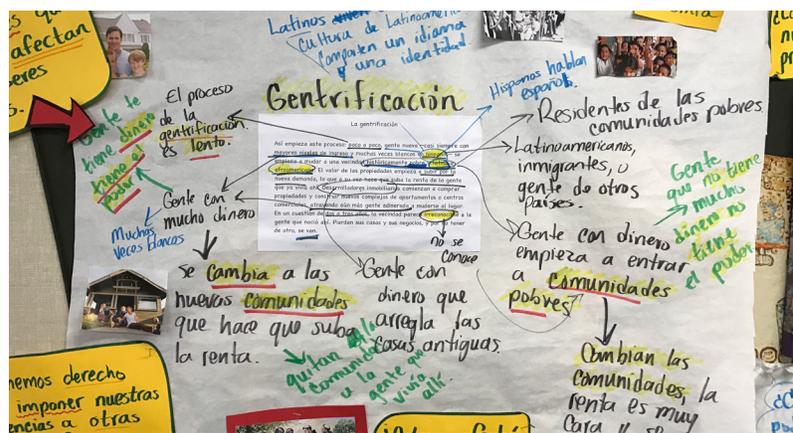
The garden at CVLCC. Photo: Amaya Garcia.

The teachers interviewed acknowledged that creating their own curriculum is a challenging task which requires a lot of time, but also said that the effort was worth it because they believed in it.¹⁸ As Danielle Salgado, a teacher on special assignment at CVLCC, explained, “it’s easier to just get a textbook and be like ‘Hmm, we’re going to be on page five,’ but if you’re going to do that, you’re not going to be able to have third graders analyzing the difference between socialism and capitalism. So it affords you the opportunity and the ability to pick texts that you like. You can bring in literature that speaks to you as a teacher that you’re passionate about, and then that’s gonna transfer to the students....It’s challenging, but it’s kind of the only way to do it.”¹⁹

CVLCC leaders also place a strong emphasis on ensuring that both Spanish and English are equally valued languages in the school community. This is often a core goal of dual language immersion programs in order to frame all languages as assets, which runs counter to the traditional narrative that portrays home languages as deficits to learning and academic development. At CVLCC, all students are considered emergent bilinguals as they are all in the process of learning a new language and seen as contributing to the education of their peers. “Neither English [n]or Spanish is more dominant or powerful or important than the other. It allows kids in class to really be equals. In Spanish, I can support you, and in English you support me,” said Duran.²⁰

The school uses a 50/50 program model where instruction is split evenly between English and Spanish (see **Dual Language Immersion Program Models** on page 7). Students in elementary school have history, social studies, and Spanish language arts in Spanish and math and English language arts in English. Science is used as a bridge that allows students to practice the transference of skills across both languages, according to Ramirez. And the 50/50 model holds up through the twelfth grade, which is rare among secondary DLI programs that usually only offer one or two courses in the partner language. That is part of CVLCC’s strategy of innovation, says Ramirez, who added, “we’re kind of excited and nervous at the same time because we’re really pushing our 50/50 model to be an example, and we are challenging traditional ways of looking at [dual language immersion] models.”²¹

The school’s approach appears to be working for its English learners, particularly in the area of English Language Arts (ELA). Results from the 2016 Smarter Balanced Assessment, a national standardized test for grades 3–8, reveal that 35 percent of ELs at CVLCC met or exceeded standards in ELA compared to only 13 percent of ELs overall in the state.²² And 80 percent of former ELs (e.g., those who have exited EL services due to attaining English proficiency) met or exceeded standards in ELA, compared to 58 percent of former ELs state-wide.



A poster on the impacts of gentrification from a fourth grade classroom. Photo: Amaya Garcia.

Fecha: 2 de marzo del 2017

Acciones de César Chávez

usa el poster de las acciones de César Chávez y escribe lo que hizo para ayudar a las personas



creo el sindicato United Farm workers para ayudar a los trabajadores.



se formó a los trabajadores que podían votar.

A kindergarten worksheet on the “Actions of Cesar Chavez.” Photo: Amaya Garcia.

Test scores are just one measure of school performance and students’ academic outcomes. At CVLCC, administrators have an even larger end goal in mind beyond ensuring high academic performance. “We want to be that school that gives kids the skills” to participate, Ramirez said,

when they go to a Spanish-speaking native country...We want them to be able to metacognitively think in Spanish as they’re speaking in Spanish, and then think in English when they’re speaking in English. That is the goal, to me, of bilingualism. And then when they’re thinking in that language, that they’re also thinking of the culture, of the essence, of the power of being in that language.²³

Dual Language Immersion Program Models

The most common models used in dual language immersion programs are:

90/10: These programs begin with a 90 percent to 10 percent ratio of classroom instruction conducted in the partner language (e.g. Spanish, Mandarin) to English, and shift towards a 50/50 balance over a period of years.

50/50: These programs begin with an equal ratio of classroom instruction conducted in the partner language to English. This ratio can be achieved by splitting instructional time evenly by day or alternating language by day or week.

Note: Amaya Garcia and Conor P. Williams, *Stories from the Nation’s Capital: Building Instructional Programs and Supports for Dual Language Learners from PreK-3rd Grade in Washington, DC* (Washington, DC: New America, 2015).

Taken together, CVLCC provides a strong example of how school-level autonomy can be leveraged to to push beyond traditional models of dual language education.

A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN APPROACH TO DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM EXPANSION

Beyond the efforts of CVLCC as a charter school, Chula Vista district leaders who oversee the community’s traditional public schools are intent on expanding dual language immersion. DLI programs are sprouting up across the country and growing at an impressive rate. Today there are an estimated 2,000 programs, compared to only 260 programs in 2000.²⁴ School districts use a variety of approaches to determine where to open these programs and which students to serve. These approaches may include grassroots efforts led by parents and individual schools interested in starting a program or targeted programs in schools that serve large numbers of EL students. While research suggests that DLI programs are particularly beneficial for ELs, many native English-speaking parents eager for their children to become bilingual are strong advocates for the creation or expansion of DLI.²⁵

In Chula Vista, programs are opened based on community interest and support. Under Proposition 227, EL parents had to sign waivers to allow their children to participate in bilingual educational programs. The community-driven approach was a way to expand programs within the limitations of the law and ensure the participation of ELs by obtaining parental buy-in.

Emma Sanchez, executive director of Language Acquisition and Development at CVESD, described the program development process as placing community engagement front and center.²⁶ Schools that are interested in starting a program must survey families to gauge interest, hold multiple informational meetings, coordinate visits to other DLI programs for families and staff, and then spend a year planning. She shared a story about a school where initial interest in starting a program seemed high but then very few families showed up to the informational meetings; “that lack of interest caused the district to drop plans to start a program there.”²⁷

The community-driven approach is no surprise given that the district is highly decentralized, which means that school principals are given substantial autonomy to make decisions that they feel are best for their students and families. Olympia Kyriakidis, leader of the Achievement Gap Task Force at the San Diego County Office of Education, sees this autonomy as an asset: “Chula Vista strikes the right balance between the tight and the loose. The autonomy and the non-negotiables.” She added, “for your dual language programs, there’s basic principles that need to be followed but there’s looseness in how they exactly manifest themselves

and people can be creative and make it their own and work with their site.”²⁸

Each dual language immersion program site has the freedom to select admission procedures (e.g., lottery or first come, first served) and most appropriate instructional model (e.g., 90/10 or 50/50). For the most part, schools determine the model based on the population of students they are serving. A close examination of program models across the district reveals that schools that serve a majority of native English speakers (also known as English-only, or EO) tend to implement 90/10 models, while schools that serve more ELs or that enroll more equal numbers of EL and EO students generally use 50/50 models.²⁹

For example, Salt Creek Elementary School uses a 90/10 model because the majority of its students are native English speakers. “It’s important our students are fully immersed in the beginning because there isn’t a lot of Spanish in the community...and many [students] don’t speak Spanish at home,” principal Lalaine Perez said.³⁰ These programmatic choices reflect differences in the demographics of students served in schools on the west side and east side of the city. Those on the west side tend to serve higher numbers of EL and low-income students than those on the east side.

As Jorge Cuevas Antillón, coordinator of language acquisition and biliteracy instruction at the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) explained, the schools on the East side would like to have more native Spanish speakers and those on the West side want more native English speakers, “The problem is that the district decentralizes what’s happening here. So it could not be a district-led thing. [There] would have to be a...principal [willing] to make that happen.”³¹

Eric Banatao, principal of Eastlake Elementary School, has leveraged his autonomy to make refinements to the program model and open the only 50/50 DLI program on the city’s east side. He said, “90/10 didn’t fit well with [the school] population. I wanted to create a balance of more equity for ELL and SLL [Spanish language learner]

families.” Some parents resisted the change and feared that it would result in their children learning “Spanglish” rather than receiving a solid foundation in each language, but over time realized that was not the case. Banatao emphasized that Spanish and English were not working against each other since, in fact, the languages were complementary.

At Eastlake, where 21 percent of students are ELs, those in dual language immersion are outperforming their EL peers in the school’s English-only program on the state’s standardized assessments. Consider: 75 percent of EL third graders in the DLI program met or exceeded expectations, while only 33 percent of third grade ELs in the English-only program reached that benchmark. That difference in performance does not necessarily sit well with Banatao and CVESD leaders, but is a reality of public school systems. In CVESD, schools are obligated to offer an English-only program and the only way to have a whole-school DLI program is to convert to a public charter school. In other words, the public school system has a responsibility to ensure that families have the option to select the educational program for their children, be it dual language or English-only (see **Prioritizing Family Engagement** on page 10).

Despite the decentralized structure of the district, Sanchez is striving to create some shared practices across all of the DLI programs with the help of a group of teacher leaders. These teacher leaders have been working together for the past four years to examine different components of the programs and to create shared resources for teachers, including translating curriculum, creating performance task assessments in Spanish, and developing the DLI report card that tracks students’ progress in English and Spanish.

In one meeting, the group discussed the development of common entry and exit criteria into programs. Teachers noted inconsistencies across schools in terms of how students are admitted to the program: some schools use a lottery while others have parents lining up at 5 a.m. to gain entry based on a first come, first served model. Additionally,

Prioritizing Family Engagement

Chula Vista Elementary School District places a strong emphasis on providing families with the support they need to help their children be successful. Family engagement is not simply a buzzword in the district; it is an intentional and thoughtful set of practices and programs used to keep families involved in decision making and help access strategies and tools to support their children's education.

For the past three years, the district has held a Parent Academy that offers workshops on a range of topics including dual language immersion, parent leadership, socio-emotional development, academic areas such as math, ELA, and STEM. Several of the workshops are available in Spanish, including one on how to participate in Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings. A mix of district staff (teachers, principals, central office, instructional coaches), community members, and consultants lead these sessions.

The impetus behind the Parent Academy came from feedback from parents during the district's English Language Advisory Council (DELAC) meetings. "We were [talking] about things that we can do. 'I need help teaching my child math. I know how to do the problem but don't know how to explain it to my child in Common Core language. Or I'm not familiar

with how we're using technology and I need help to support my child,'" said Marcos Lopez, an DELAC parent leader. He continued, "then someone came up with the idea of doing a daylong workshop for parents. We...catered workshops to different needs that parents requested. Parents loved it."³²

Each California school with 21 or more EL students is mandated to have an ELAC comprised of parents of ELs (the percentage of EL parents who are members of the ELAC must mirror the percentage of ELs in the school), other parents, school staff, and community members.³³ The committee provides the school with feedback on the supports and services for ELs and helps with the development of the school's needs assessment. Additionally, districts in California with more than 51 EL students must also have a District-level English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) that helps conduct a district-wide needs assessment, establish goals and objectives for EL programs and services, and review the district's reclassification requirements, among other duties.³⁴

In Chula Vista, the DELAC meets monthly and consists of one ELAC representative from each school along with the principal of that school. Lopez says that parents and principals making key decisions together "will drive you to make improvements."³⁵

they described using different assessments to gauge students' proficiency in Spanish, with some schools using the LAS Links and others using the Foreign Language Oral Skills Evaluation Matrix (FLOSEM).³⁶ These differences present a challenge for families who seek to move to new schools and must navigate varying procedures for gaining access to programs.

But as Cuevas Antillón explained, the fact that the district is consulting with teachers to make these decisions is just another way that CVESD stands out. "That's where they are forward thinkers because they have this group of representative teachers who have the respect of their peers, who are part of the union, who make decisions on what's best for the measurement of Spanish." He continued, "then when they make a big change everybody can then talk to their peers about why was this decision made. Which I think is ultimately more effective than the district central office deciding you're all going to use the LAS Links."³⁷

The district's commitment to dual language also extends to the programs that the district adopts. "We will not buy any resource that does not come in

in both languages," said Superintendent Escobedo.³⁸ When the district first moved to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2010, it hired a team to translate the math curriculum into Spanish to ensure that DLI programs were striving towards the same standards as non-DLI programs. These days the district is able to find CCSS aligned materials in both languages and uses the Common Core en Español, an initiative led by the San Diego County Office of Education.

Finally, the district has been proactive about creating data systems that allow principals to track the progress of all students. Its LCAP Matrix, developed as part of the state's new Local Control Funding Formula, provides a deep dive into the performance of EL students as a whole and individually (see **A New Education Funding System for California** on page 12). As Escobedo explained, it is important to examine ELs' multiple dimensions, since "they come with varying skills and experiences and we are able to diagnose and supply a support system that meets their needs. It's really, really critical how we utilize data and how data creates a story to meet the needs of students."³⁹

A New Education Funding System for California

by Anthony Hanna

In 2013, California's state legislature passed the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) to create a system of equitable funding for districts that serve high percentages of traditionally disadvantaged groups such as English learners (ELs) and low-income students. The formula outlines three separate funding components: base grants, which are given to all districts in the same amount per pupil; supplemental grants, which provide an additional 20 percent of the base grant for each high-need student enrolled in the district; and a concentration grant for districts with high-needs students who make up more than 55 percent of the district's enrollment.⁴⁰ The state adopted this system of funding as a way to increase or improve services for high-needs students in proportion to the increase in funding for each district.⁴¹

To ensure more transparent accountability in return for the allocation of LCFF funds, districts were tasked with creating Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs), outlining how funding would be used to improve outcomes for each group of students over a three-year period.⁴² Some strong examples of LCAP measures found by Californians Together, a state-based advocacy organization for ELs, include structured interventions for long-term English Learners (LTELs) and professional development focused on emotional and cultural awareness for teachers and staff working with ELs.⁴³

Yet, while districts are expected to spend LCFF funds proportionately to improve outcomes for high-needs students and narrow the achievement gap, they are not required to list expenditures specifically for this group of students. Instead, they may choose to use "quantitative and/or qualitative descriptions" of how services for EL and other-high needs students will increase.⁴⁴

This practice of excluding details on expenditures has caused many parents and advocacy organizations to object to what they view as ineffective uses of LCFF funds by multiple school districts. One lawsuit filed against the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) in July 2015 claimed that the district was not proportionately using the extra funds it received to improve programs for low-income and EL students.⁴⁵ But LAUSD is not the only district that has been criticized for a lack of transparency in its use of funds. In fact, the ACLU of Southern California has found that most districts failed to account for a majority of their LCFF funds in the first year of the policy's implementation.⁴⁶ The Education Trust-West also found that while LCFF has improved funding equity between districts in the three years since it was passed, students in high-poverty schools still have far less access to the services that they need than students in low-poverty schools.⁴⁷ Many parents and advocacy groups argue that this discrepancy is largely a result of the flexibility afforded to districts in drafting LCAPs and allocating LCFF funds.⁴⁸

A FOCUS ON TEACHER PREPARATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Preparing Teachers in Partnership with San Diego State University

Chula Vista's DLI program expansion would not have been possible without access to a stable pipeline of bilingual educators. For the past 15 years, the district has partnered with San Diego State University's (SDSU) Department of Dual Language and English Learner Education (DLE) to create pathways into CVESD for program graduates.

According to Superintendent Escobedo, it is incumbent on school districts to develop strong relationships with local institutions of higher education in order to help staff programs. "Unless you pressure your universities you're going to have that challenge year after year finding the right teachers. My suggestion for districts who are really serious in sustaining and growing [DLI programs] is you have to influence your higher ed institutions. For us that's been SDSU." He added, "we hire about 50–60 percent of our [general education] teachers, and 90 percent of teachers in our DL programs come from SDSU. That is an extremely important approach for effective [program] implementation."⁴⁹

The relationship has been mutually beneficial. In 2011, SDSU's DLE program was in jeopardy of being closed due to a lack of tenure track faculty

and declining enrollment as a result of the state's move away from bilingual education. At the time, Cristina Alfaro, professor and department chair of DLE, reached out to local school districts with a plea: "if you need us to continue preparing highly-qualified bilingual teachers, you need to share that with the president and let [him] know that our program is essential."⁵⁰

The program survived and today it is the only stand-alone bilingual teacher preparation program in the state. It is part of SDSU's graduate school of education but not housed in its school of teacher education. This separation has allowed the program to develop core instructional practices that are in-depth and unusual within the context of bilingual teacher preparation the state. For example, many teacher preparation programs require that students take two courses and pass one exam in order to earn the bilingual credential, but the DLE program consists of ten courses across two semesters and a 16-week student teaching experience in a dual language school. Six of the ten required courses are taught in Spanish because many students require support in enhancing their academic Spanish. However, as assistant professor Sera Hernandez explained, "we have students who need lifting in English as well and some feel weaker in one [language] than the other. It's a very intimate

program so we can see the areas where they need help.”⁵¹ During class discussions, professors encourage students to push themselves and use the language where they feel they need to improve.

The DLE department also offers a master’s degree focused on social justice and democratic education with an emphasis on dual language and EL education. The courses are taught in English or bilingually, depending on the composition of enrolled students, and one optional course is offered in Spanish for teachers who are interested in continuing to work on their academic Spanish. Additionally, DLE offers an online dual language certificate for practicing teachers that provides a foundation in academic Spanish, English language development, Spanish language development, and the democratic underpinnings for dual language education.

In reflecting on her experience in the program, Danielle Salgado, who is a teacher on special assignment at CVLCC, said, “because I’m a native-English speaker, and I didn’t learn Spanish until high school and beyond, it was valuable to just be put in that position where I was now the struggling student. And just like our kids do, I had to rely on my friends in the program to help me out that were stronger in Spanish, and then when there was a class that was taught in English, then I was able to help them or tutor them to pass their CBEST and other things.”⁵²

Other graduates of the program said that going through the DLE master’s program enhanced their skills as teachers and raised their awareness of the politics behind bilingual education. “It wasn’t until I went through the master’s program that I realized ‘Oh, critical pedagogy!’ And the importance of learning how to tap those aspects in the curriculum developing lessons where [students] can identify with the topics being taught,” said Pedro Parra, a third grade teacher at CVLCC.⁵³

Beyond preparing teachers, the DLE department also engages with the local community by co-hosting an annual dual language conference in collaboration with the San Diego County Office of Education. The conference includes an opportunity

for DELAC/ELAC members to participate in conversations with leading researchers and to learn strategies for making meaningful contributions to their district’s LCAP plans.

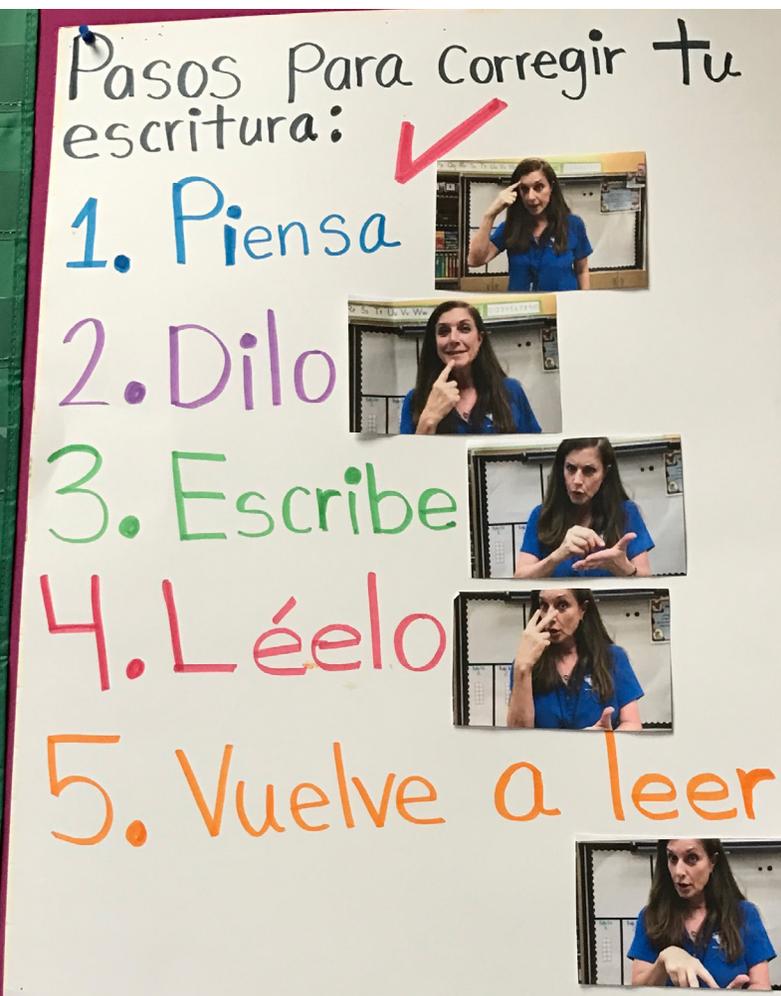
As Jorge Cuevas Antillón from the SDCOE explained, the DLE program at SDSU stands out for its commitment to the community: “They recognize that almost all of the teachers will end up in San Diego county working here so they’re preparing teachers for the local districts and they see that they’re accountable for making sure that they put out the best product possible in terms of teacher preparation.”⁵⁴

Professional Development to Prepare All Teachers to Work with ELs

Beyond ensuring the preparation of new teachers, the district has made substantial investments in ongoing professional development for all teachers to work effectively with EL students. Specifically, it has two Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) certified bilingual resource teachers who work with schools and teachers to build their capacity to serve their linguistically diverse students. The district also offers a two-day GLAD training.

GLAD is an instructional approach that integrates English language development strategies within grade-level academic content. The program is widely used on the West Coast and is packaged as a set of strategies rather than lesson exemplars or curricular frameworks.⁵⁵ As described in a 2015 evaluation of the program by researchers at Education Northwest, GLAD “gives teachers a set of very specific, multistep instructional strategies to support students at various levels of English language proficiency, including native speakers. Like other approaches, it uses scaffolds, intentionally designed small group interaction, graphic organizers, and nonlinguistic representations of content to ensure ELs can access the content being taught.”⁵⁶

Bilingual resource teachers Lorena Beifuss and Gloria Montano-Velarde emphasized that GLAD is



A GLAD-aligned chart. Photo: Amaya Garcia.

very visual, using pictorial adaptation charts and relying on color coding to chunk information and make it easier for students to understand. Moreover, the approach places strong emphasis on oral language production and students are expected to spend 50–60 percent of instructional time talking. That means you see a lot of turn and talk, pair share, whole group, small group, and one-on-one discussions during the course of a class period.

A visit to a second grade classroom at Silver Wing Elementary School showed this strategy in action. Two English learner students were working together on a math word problem using a checklist developed by their teacher that incorporated GLAD strategies. The two girls spoke through the entire process and practiced their academic language by asking each other questions such as “what are the vocabulary words?” and breaking apart the vocabulary used in the program. They asked each other, “what does *how many* mean?” and then concurred that “how many” was prompting them to add the numbers in order to find the answer to the problem.

One strength of providing all teachers with GLAD training is that it allows for consistency of practice across school buildings and the district. These trainings are even made available to some of the student teachers from SDSU and gives them a leg up on these strategies before they enter the classroom as full-time teachers. Outside of GLAD training, dual language immersion teachers are also offered specialized professional development and additional collaboration time during the week. These shared opportunities are one way that the district is able to provide some support centrally and still grant substantial site level freedom, noted Cuevas Antillón.

From the perspective of the SDCOE’s Olympia Kyriakidis, who works with several districts in San Diego County, CVESD is leading the way in terms of its commitment to offering professional development: “they give those opportunities to their staff, [while] many districts don’t, or other things take priority and maybe the dual language or English learner training is more for that group and it’s not seen as everyone’s responsibility. But in Chula Vista language development is everyone’s responsibility and that’s really how it should be. They also understand that teachers need time to plan to do this work well; they need planning time and time to collaborate together. That too is very lacking in many districts.”⁵⁷

LOOKING FORWARD

As more California school districts seek to implement dual language immersion programs, there will be increased competition for bilingual teachers with the pedagogical skills and knowledge needed to help these programs thrive. The state is taking some action to address these challenges. First, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing is awarding grants of up to \$250,000 to institutes of higher education to develop four-year integrated teacher preparation programs with priority given to programs that train math, science, or bilingual teachers.⁵⁸ Currently, it takes five years to earn a teaching degree, which maybe seen as a disincentive to enter the profession. “A young person might ask, ‘why take an additional year with no salary and an additional year of loans when in four years I could graduate and be a nurse or computer engineer?’” said Joseph Johnson, dean of the SDSU College of Education.⁵⁹

Additionally, California is providing \$5 million in grant funding to school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education to provide professional development for teachers who have a bilingual authorization but have not been teaching in bilingual settings and for bilingual instructional

assistants who are interested in becoming teachers.⁶⁰ Leaders in Chula Vista are anticipating the need for more bilingual teachers and have identified 200 current bilingually certified teachers in the district who are working in English-only programs. The question they are tackling is whether to provide financial or other incentives to these teachers to work in dual language programs. “There is more work for dual language teachers...who have to score work in both languages. They have double the work in some ways. How do we support them? Their commitment is there. They are passionate about the program. We need to work on supporting them,” said Emma Sanchez, executive director of Language Acquisition and Development at CVESD.⁶¹

There is still work to be done in CVESD, but as other districts move to starting new dual immersion programs under the increased flexibility offered under Proposition 58 Chula Vista provides an important model to consider in its partnership with San Diego State University, its community-driven approach to DLI program development and implementation, and its emphasis on training all teachers to work effectively with EL students.

Notes

¹ Ruby Takanishi and Suzanne Le Menestrel, eds., *Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2017), 11, <http://www.nationalacademies.org/hmd/Reports/2017/promoting-the-educational-success-of-children-and-youth-learning-English.aspx>.

² National Center for Education Statistics, “Table 204.20. Number and Percentage of Public School Students Participating in English Language Learner (ELL) Programs, by State: Selected Years, Fall 2004 through Fall 2014,” *Digest of Education Statistics* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 2016).

³ U.S. Supreme Court, *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), No. 72-6520, retrieved from <http://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-supreme-court/414/563.html>.

⁴ The 1968 Bilingual Education Act was also reauthorized in 1974 and defined bilingual education as, “instruction given in, and study of, English, and, to the extent necessary to allow a child to progress effectively through the educational system, the native language,” as cited on page 5 in Ann-Marie Wiese and Eugene E. García, “The Bilingual Education Act: Language Minority Students and Equal Educational Opportunity,” *Bilingual Research Journal* 22, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 1–18.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 830.

⁶ Thomas B. Parrish, Amy Merickel, María Pérez, Robert Linqanti, Miguel Socias, Angeline Spain, Cecilia Speroni, Phil Esra, Leslie Brock, and Danielle Delancey, *Effects of the Implementation of Proposition 227 on the Education of English Learners: K–12 Findings from a Five-Year Evaluation* (Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research, 2006).

⁷ Brian Edwards and Mary Perry, *Charter Schools in California: An Experiment Coming of Age* (Palo Alto, CA: EdSource, 2004), <https://edsourcesource.org/wp-content/publications/CharterSchools04.pdf>.

⁸ Interview with Jorge Ramirez, March 2, 2017.

⁹ In the 2017–18 school year, Chula Vista has a total 48 schools with a total enrollment of 29, 600 students.

¹⁰ For more, see Rachel A. Valentino and Sean F. Reardon, “Effectiveness of Four Instructional Programs Designed to Serve English Learners: Variation by Ethnicity and Initial English Proficiency,” *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 37, no. 4 (2015): 612–63; Jennifer L. Steele, Robert O. Slater, Gema Zamarro, Trey Miller, Jennifer Li, Susan Burkhauser, and Michael Bacon, “Effects of Dual-Language Immersion Programs on Student Achievement: Evidence from Lottery Data,” *American Educational Research Journal* 54, no. 1S (April 2017): 282S–306S; Ilana Umansky and Sean F. Reardon, “Reclassification Patterns Among Latino English Learner Students in Bilingual, Dual Language Immersion, and English Immersion Classrooms,” *American Educational Research Journal* 51, no. 5 (2014): 879–912; and “Programs for English Learners in Grades Pre-K to 12,” in *Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures*, eds. Ruby Takanishi and Suzanne Le Menestrel (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2017), <http://www.nationalacademies.org/hmd/Reports/2017/promoting-the-educational-success-of-children-and-youth-learning-English.aspx>.

¹¹ *Why Multiliteracy? A Symposium on Multiliteracy and Dual Language Learning for All* (presentation, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC, September 23, 2016), <http://edstream.ed.gov/webcast/Play/d765d204444d45738054f55f758ecda61d>.

¹² Desiree Carver-Thomas and Linda Darling-Hammond, *Bilingual Teacher Shortages in California: A Problem Likely to Grow*, fact sheet (Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute, 2017), <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/bilingual-teacher-shortages-california-factsheet>.

¹³ Vickie Ramos Harris and Araceli Sandoval-Gonzalez, *Unveiling California’s Growing Bilingual Teacher Shortage: Addressing the Urgent Shortage and Aligning the Workforce to Advances in Pedagogy and Practice in Bilingual Education* (Long Beach, CA: Californians Together, 2017), <https://www.californiantogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/June-2017-CalTog-Bilingual-Teacher-Full-Brief-r4-1.pdf>.

¹⁴ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 1, 2017.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

- ¹⁶ CVLCC’s student demographics in the 2016–17 school year: 38 percent EL, 62 percent socio-economically disadvantaged, 4 percent students with disabilities, 94 percent Latino, 4 percent white, 2 percent other, according to California Department of Education, DataQuest, <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>.
- ¹⁷ Cristina Alfaro, Richard Durán, Alexandra Hunt, and María José Aragón, “Steps Toward Unifying Dual Language Programs, Common Core State Standards, and Critical Pedagogy: Oportunidades, Estrategias y Retos,” *Association of Mexican-American Educators Journal* 8, no. 2 (2014): 19.
- ¹⁸ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 2, 2017.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 2, 2017.
- ²² State of California, Department of Education, Smarter Balanced Assessments, Test Results for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics, <http://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/SB2016/Search>.
- ²³ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 2, 2017.
- ²⁴ Natalie Gross, “The New Bilingualism,” *The Atlantic*, August 4, 2016, <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/08/the-new-bilingualism/494489/>.
- ²⁵ Tara García Mathewson, “Rising Popularity of Dual-Language Education Could Leave Latinos Behind,” *The Hechinger Report*, July 31, 2017, <http://hechingerreport.org/rising-popularity-dual-language-education-leave-latinos-behind/>.
- ²⁶ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 1, 2017.
- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 2, 2017.
- ²⁹ California Department of Education, DataQuest, *2016–17 Enrollment by English Language Acquisition Status (ELAS) (with School Data), Chula Vista Elementary District Report*, <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/longtermel/ELASLevels.aspx?cds=3768023&agglevel=District&year=2016-17>.
- ³⁰ Interview (Chula Vista, CA) March 3, 2017.
- ³¹ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 2, 2017.
- ³² Phone interview, March 1, 2017.
- ³³ California Department of Education, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/cr/elac.asp>.
- ³⁴ California Department of Education, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/cr/delac.asp>.
- ³⁵ Phone interview, March 1, 2017.
- ³⁶ According to a 2007 report from the Center for Applied Linguistics, there are 28 different Spanish-language assessments that can be used by dual language programs to assess a variety of domains including oral language, reading, writing, academic subjects, and vocabulary. These assessments vary in the age range that they target, with some focused on early childhood and others on K–12 students. For more, see Julie Sugarman, Igone Arteagoitia, Cate Coburn, Colleen Gallagher, Meg Montee, and Jamie Schissel, *Spanish-Language Assessments for Dual Language Programs* (Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics, July 2007), <http://www.cal.org/twi/assessments.pdf>.
- ³⁷ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 2, 2017.
- ³⁸ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 1, 2017.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ California Department of Education, LCFF Frequently Asked Questions, 2017, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/lcfffaq.asp#FC>.
- ⁴¹ “A Guide to California’s Local Control Funding Formula,” EdSource, 2016, <https://edsources.org/2016/local-control-funding-formula-guide-lcff/89272#>.
- ⁴² Amaya Garcia, “The Art of Implementation: California’s LCAPs Fall Short for ELs,” *EdCentral* (blog), New America, May 29, 2015, <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/edcentral/california-lcff/>.
- ⁴³ Laurie Olsen, Elvira Armas, and Magaly Lavadenz, *A Review of Year 2 LCAPS: A Weak Response to English Learners* (Long Beach, CA: Californians Together, 2016), 13–19, <http://www.ciclt.net/ul/calto/LCAPSReview2016Web.pdf>.
- ⁴⁴ “A Guide to California’s Local Control Funding Formula,” EdSource, 2016, <https://edsources.org/2016/local-control-funding-formula-guide-lcff/89272#>.

⁴⁵ John Fensterwald, “Suit Claims LA Unified Underfunding Low-Income Kids, English Learners,” EdSource, July 1, 2015, <https://edsources.org/2015/suit-claims-la-unified-underfunding-low-income-kids-english-learners/82377>.

⁴⁶ David Sapp, “Making the Local Control Funding Formula Work,” ACLU of Southern California, August 16, 2015, <https://www.aclusocal.org/en/news/making-local-control-funding-formula-work>.

⁴⁷ Theresa Chen and Carrie Hahnel, *The Steep Road to Resource Equity in California Education* (Oakland, CA: Education Trust–West, 2017), https://west.edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/11/ETW_Steep-Road-to-Resource-Equity-in-CA_Final_Report_April_11_2017.pdf.

⁴⁸ John Fensterwald, “Superintendents, Advocacy Groups at Odds over Revising LCAP,” EdSource, July 11, 2016, <https://edsources.org/2016/superintendents-advocacy-groups-at-odds-over-revising-lcap/566851>.

⁴⁹ *Why Multiliteracy? A Symposium on Multiliteracy and Dual Language Learning for All* (presentation, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC, September 23, 2016), <http://edstream.ed.gov/webcast/Play/d765d204444d45738054f55f758ecda61d>.

⁵⁰ Phone Interview, October 26, 2016.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 2, 2017.

⁵³ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 2, 2017.

⁵⁴ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 2, 2017.

⁵⁵ Theresa Deussen, Angela Roccograndi, Makoto Hanita, Elizabeth Autio, and Claudia Rodriguez-Mojica, “The Impact of Project GLAD on Fifth-Grade Literacy: Sheltered Instruction and English Learners in the Mainstream Classroom” (paper, Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, April 2015), <http://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/events/resources/impact-of-project-glad-paper-508.pdf>.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 6.

⁵⁷ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 2, 2017.

⁵⁸ California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, “Request for Proposals To Develop and Implement Four-Year Integrated Programs Leading to a Baccalaureate Degree and Teaching Credential,” <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/commission/files/rfp-integrated-2016-09.pdf>.

⁵⁹ Interview (San Diego, CA), February 28, 2017.

⁶⁰ Ashley Hopkinson, “New Funds Available to Train Bilingual Teachers in California,” EdSource, July 11, 2017, <https://edsources.org/2017/new-funds-available-to-train-bilingual-teachers-in-california/584497>.

⁶¹ Interview (Chula Vista, CA), March 1, 2017



This report carries a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license, which permits re-use of New America content when proper attribution is provided. This means you are free to share and adapt New America's work, or include our content in derivative works, under the following conditions:

- **Attribution.** You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

For the full legal code of this Creative Commons license, please visit creativecommons.org.

If you have any questions about citing or reusing New America content, please visit www.newamerica.org.

All photos in this report are supplied by, and licensed to, [shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com) unless otherwise stated. Photos from federal government sources are used under section 105 of the Copyright Act.

