



*CALIFORNIA  
CHARTER  
AUTHORIZING  
PROFESSIONALS*

# An Assessment of the Needs of California Charter Authorizers to Support English Learners

Prepared by Education First for the California Charter  
Authorizing Professionals (CCAP)  
July 2019

# An Assessment of the Needs of California Charter Authorizers to Support English Learners

Prepared by Education First for the California Charter Authorizing Professionals (CCAP)  
July 2019



With 1.2 million across all 58 counties, California has more English learners (ELs) than any state in the nation. Additionally, 60 percent of children from birth to age five are dual language learners (DLLs), and nearly 20 percent of students in grades K-12 are classified as ELs. Furthermore, 38 percent of California students enter the K-12 education system as ELs.

Each year, the state's 1,306 charter schools and seven all-charter districts<sup>1</sup> are enrolling an increasing number and percentage of students, including ELs. But EL enrollment varies significantly across counties and charter schools and, on average statewide, charter schools enroll a lower percentage of ELs compared to traditional public schools: 16 percent of charter school students K-12 are English learners and 21 percent of students at all other public schools are English learners.<sup>2</sup> And although recent research shows that ELs, on average, achieve better academic outcomes in charter schools compared to other public schools, the education outcomes of ELs varies significantly across charter schools.<sup>3</sup>

As the 5<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world, California can leverage the assets of these students—the many strengths they bring to classrooms and workplaces in the state—to pave the way toward a thriving, multilingual economy of the future. The state's charter authorizers can ensure that charter schools have access to high-quality research and tools to help ELs achieve their potential.

## The Tri-State Alliance for Improving District-Led Charter Authorizing

In the fall of 2018, the [Colorado Charter School Institute \(CSI\)](#) was awarded a three-year \$2.7 million [National Dissemination Grant](#) from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Innovation to improve charter school authorizing best practices.<sup>4</sup> CSI has partnered with the California Charter Authorizing Professionals (CCAP), Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers (CACSA) and Florida Association of Charter School Authorizers (FACSA) to create the Tri-State Alliance for Improving District-Led Charter Authorizing. The Tri-State Alliance's four goals are to:

1. Strengthen authorizing in states with predominantly district authorizers.
2. Educate districts and other key stakeholders about districts' ongoing authorizing and oversight responsibilities under state law as an effective way to expand options for all students, thereby improving access and services for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English Learners.
3. Engage and provide support to a larger proportion of district authorizers in Colorado, Florida, and California, including small and rural districts and districts that authorize a significant number of charter schools experiencing significant low performance or non-compliance with academic financial, governance, or operational requirements.
4. Support states outside the Tri-State Alliance that seek to establish statewide associations for charter authorizers.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As of the beginning of the 2018-19 school year; California Department of Education [Charter School CalEdFacts](#) (2019)

<sup>2</sup> California Department of Education Data Reporting Office (2019)

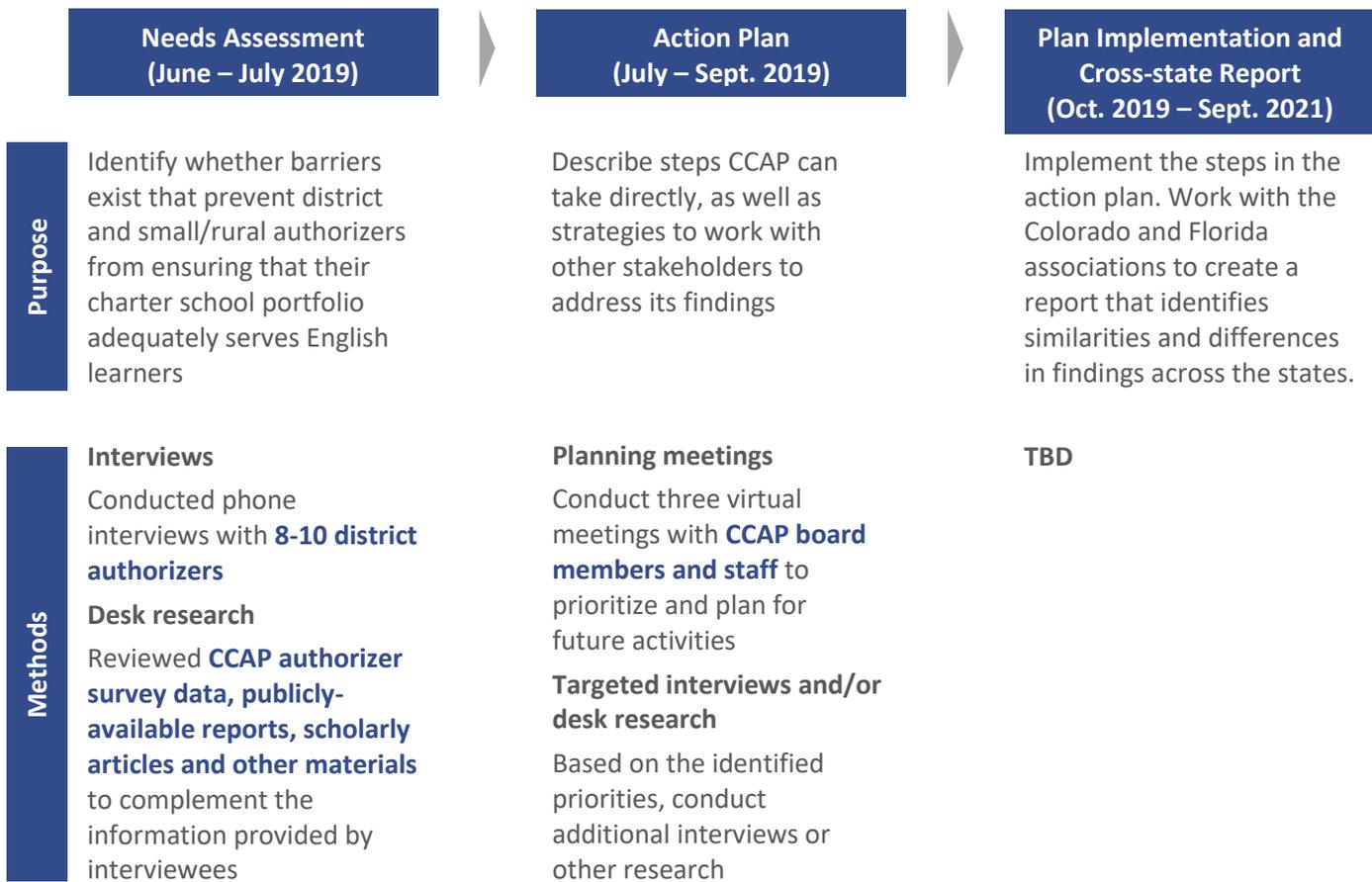
<sup>3</sup> Getting Down to Facts, [Raymond](#) et al. (2018); California Charter Schools Association, [Taylor](#) (2015)

<sup>4</sup> [Colorado Charter School Institute](#) (2018)

<sup>5</sup> [Tri-State Alliance for Improving District-Led Charter Authorizing](#) (2018)

Because of the English learner enrollment disparity between California’s charter schools (16 percent of charter school students K-12 are ELs) and other public schools (21 percent), CCAP will focus its works under goal two of the Tri-State Alliance project on understanding why California’s charters serve a smaller proportion of ELs. Colorado and Florida will focus on the enrollment gaps for students with disabilities in their states.

This report describes the process for and results of a needs assessment of California authorizers for strengthening practices to support English learners, and it is one of the first steps in the Tri-State Alliance project.<sup>6</sup> For additional information, see the “District & County Authorizer Needs Assessment Report – California” (August 2019), which provides an assessment of greatest needs and priorities for statewide model authorizing materials and other forms of assistance to strengthen the work of California school district and county authorizers in charter school authorizing. While the “District & County Authorizer Needs Assessment Report – California” report takes a wholesale view of authorizer needs, Education First’s report focuses on needs related to support for English learners. In addition, serving students with disabilities in Colorado and Florida is the focus of a separate study and report conducted for the Tri-State Alliance.



**The true measure of the Tri-State Alliance project’s success will be the implementation of best practices to serve disadvantaged students and an increase in enrollment of disadvantaged students by the end of the grant period.**

**English learners experience adverse social and economic circumstances at higher rates than their peers:** they are more likely to be economically disadvantaged, to be classified as a migrant and/or homeless student, and to be identified for special education. On top of the challenges these experiences represent, **ELs often lack access to high-quality supports to succeed academically,** which ultimately restricts the opportunities available to them in college, career and civic life.

<sup>6</sup> Timeline and text in boxes below are adapted from the Tri-State Alliance’s federal CSP proposal.

## Needs Assessment Research Questions

In June – July 2019, Education First interviewed nine leaders in districts and county offices of education who oversee the authorizing responsibilities of charter schools to develop the needs assessment’s findings and recommendations. We also relied on the data and analysis from the 2019 CCAP Authorizer Survey, which was administered in June 2019, and reviewed publicly-available data and research about English learners in California’s charter schools. Our research was guided by four main questions:

1. Who are the students classified as dual language learners (DLLs) and English learners (ELs) in California? Where are they enrolled in charter schools and how does that vary geographically? What are their outcomes?
2. What are the barriers to ELs enrolling in charters that may result as a result of the action of charter schools, school districts, county offices of education, the state, or other stakeholders?
3. What role do authorizers play in creating or overcoming barriers related to ELs during the application process, oversight and monitoring activities, and renewal, expansion and revocation processes?
4. What are the opportunities for authorizers to enhance access to a quality education for DLLs/ELs in California’s charter schools?

### About CCAP

Members of the [California Charter Authorizing Professionals \(CCAP\)](#) advance quality public education for all students by providing charter school authorizing professionals with the support, resources, and collective voice necessary to foster high-performing, fiscally sound, autonomous, and accountable charter schools. Currently, CCAP has 32 district and county office authorizer members who collectively oversee 425 schools, more than one-third of the state’s charter schools.

## California’s Charter Authorizers and English Learners

Currently, California has 337 authorizers (336 districts/counties and the State Board of Education), which oversee 1,306 charter schools and seven all-charter districts, serving a total of 652,933 students—or about 10 percent of public school students in the state.<sup>7</sup> California’s districts vary in size from single-school districts, serving fewer than 100 students in rural communities, to the Los Angeles Unified School District, with 277 charter schools and over 154,000 students. There are over 1,000 individual school districts in California, each of which is a potential authorizer. Local school districts are the most common charter authorizing agencies in the state. These authorizers typically authorize a small number of charter schools. Of California’s 337 authorizers, 93 percent have portfolios of fewer than six charter schools and 67 percent have only one or two schools. At the other end of the spectrum, the five largest authorizers account for 30 percent of the charter schools in the state, and eight percent of authorizers account for 58 percent of the charter schools in the state.

California serves the nation’s largest population of English learners in its education systems: 38 percent of children enter the state’s K-12 system as an EL. Although there are English learners in all 58 counties of the state, there is a wide range of the number of students served in each. Seventy (70) percent of the state’s ELs are concentrated in just 12 districts, while about 350 districts each have fewer than 100 ELs.<sup>8</sup>

The greatest concentration of English learners are in the central and most southern parts of the state. In fact, roughly 42 percent of ELs are concentrated in three counties—Los Angeles (25 percent), Orange (9 percent) and San Diego (8 percent), with each having 100,000 or more ELs in their region. Other counties with large numbers of ELs include: Kern, San Bernardino, Riverside, Santa Clara, Alameda, Sacramento and Fresno counties.



**Dual language learners (DLLs)  
in early childhood education (ECE)**



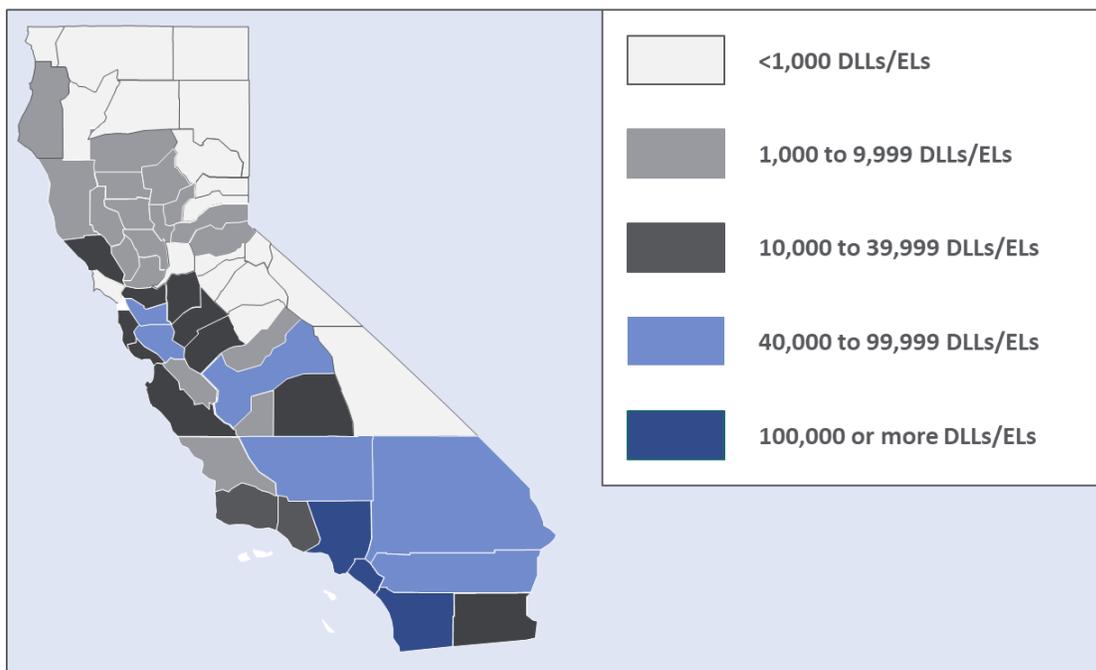
**English learners (ELs)  
in kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade (K-12)**

In ECE, *all children* are learning and developing their home language. Hence, English learners in these settings are referred to as DLLs—they are learning both their home language and English simultaneously. There is no common methodology ECE providers in California use to classify students as DLLs; rather, each ECE provider uses their own approach (e.g., parent survey or parent conferences).

When children enter kindergarten, the DLLs from ECE are referred to as ELs. The term EL denotes the K-12 system’s focus on students’ English development. In the K-12 system, the EL designation is officially given to a student who: (a) lives in a family where a primary language other than English is spoken; (b) has completed an assessment of English language skills and been identified as needing extra support to learn English, and (c) has not yet been reclassified as fully English proficient.

But even if a district serves a significant number of ELs, there still may be schools, including charters, within the district that serve very few ELs. As of the 2016-17 school year, there were more than 2,200 public schools with fewer than 30 ELs, which is the threshold for school-level accountability requirements.

### Number of DLLs/ELs by County in California (2018)



Source: Advancement Project, [Harris](#) (2018)

Charter schools are located throughout the state, in 54 of California’s 58 counties, in rural, suburban and urban areas, with more charter schools opening in the state every year. Generally, the student populations at charter schools in the state are diverse and tend to reflect the student populations of the districts in which they are located.

In the 2018–2019 school year, there were 98,681 English learners and 554,252 non-EL students enrolled in the state’s charter schools. Similar to their counterparts in traditional public schools, ELs in charter schools face an array of challenges on top of learning English. The overwhelmingly majority of ELs in charter schools – 85 percent – are from socioeconomically disadvantaged families, and 2 percent are homeless. Less than 1 percent are migrants. And 15 percent of ELs in the state’s charter schools receive special education services. These percentages are all slightly or significantly higher than non-ELs attending charter schools.<sup>9</sup>

While charter schools in California are enrolling an increasing percentage of students, including ELs, there also remain significant gaps between the number of students they serve who are English learners (compared to traditional public schools). Overall, 16 percent of charter school students are ELs, compared to 21 percent for all other public schools. Moreover, of the 1,300+ charter schools across California, just over 700 serve a student population consisting of 55 percent or more of ELs and low-income students.<sup>10</sup> Authorizers should, of course, zoom in on the schools they authorize and the regional and neighborhood demographics to better understand how enrollment gaps—or lack thereof—manifest themselves.

<sup>9</sup> California Department of Education Data Quest (2019)

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

EL enrollment in charter schools can vary significantly by county, district and neighborhood geographic location. In some parts of California, charter schools enroll more ELs compared to the traditional public schools in the local district, while in other areas charter schools enroll fewer ELs compared to their traditional public school counterparts. For example, charter schools in San Jose enroll 23 percent more ELs compared to San Jose Unified School District. In contrast, charter schools in Los Angeles enroll 8 percent fewer ELs compared to Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Further, there may also be EL enrollment disparities within districts, especially large districts. For example, there may be certain neighborhoods within LAUSD where charter schools are enrolling more ELs compared to the traditional public schools in the area.

The state's rural areas, however, have the largest gap in EL enrollment between charter schools and traditional public schools. For example, charter schools in urban settings statewide enroll 2 percent fewer ELs compared to traditional public schools. In contrast, charter schools in rural areas statewide enroll 11 percent fewer ELs compared to traditional public schools.<sup>11</sup>

## Outcomes for California's English Learners

In general, ELs experience adverse social and economic circumstances at higher rates than their peers: they are more likely to be economically disadvantaged, be homeless, be classified as a migrant, and to be identified for special education. On top of the challenges these experiences represent, ELs often lack access to high-quality supports to succeed academically, which ultimately restricts the opportunities available to them in college, career and civic life.

As students advance in the state's education system, stark outcomes gaps persist between English learners and other students. For example:

- Only 12 percent of the state's ELs were proficient in math and English language arts in 2017–18.
- Seventy (70) percent of ELs graduate from high school in four years (compared to 83 percent of all students).
- Even fewer ELs graduate high school prepared for college or career compared to their peers – 15 percent versus 42 percent of all students.

These outcome gaps widen the longer ELs are in school and remain classified as ELs since they have less access to rigorous core content instruction compared to their reclassified and non-EL peers.<sup>12</sup> It is estimated that 30–50 percent of ELs entering kindergarten fail to develop the English skills needed for academic participation after six years or more of instruction and become long-term ELs. And in California, 60 percent of ELs in grades are long-term ELs.

In California's charter schools, however, recent research shows that ELs achieve better academic outcomes in charter schools compared to other schools by different state measures, such as the Academic Performance

## Disparities in numbers of EL students served

Charter authorizers and advocates have explored possible explanations why charter schools enroll fewer ELs than traditional public schools. Each requires further study to fully understand:

- Charter schools may reclassify students at a higher rate than traditional public schools, thereby resulting in lower percentages of EL students.
- Charter schools may not recruit EL students effectively enough to enroll similar percentages as traditional public schools.
- Potential barriers to choice, such as access to transportation, confusion about a charter application or enrollment in a decentralized system, may be more pronounced for families of ELs.
- Some charter schools may not have effective EL support structures, resulting in lower enrollment and/or poor persistence of EL students.

<sup>11</sup> California Charter Schools Association, [Taylor](#) (2015)

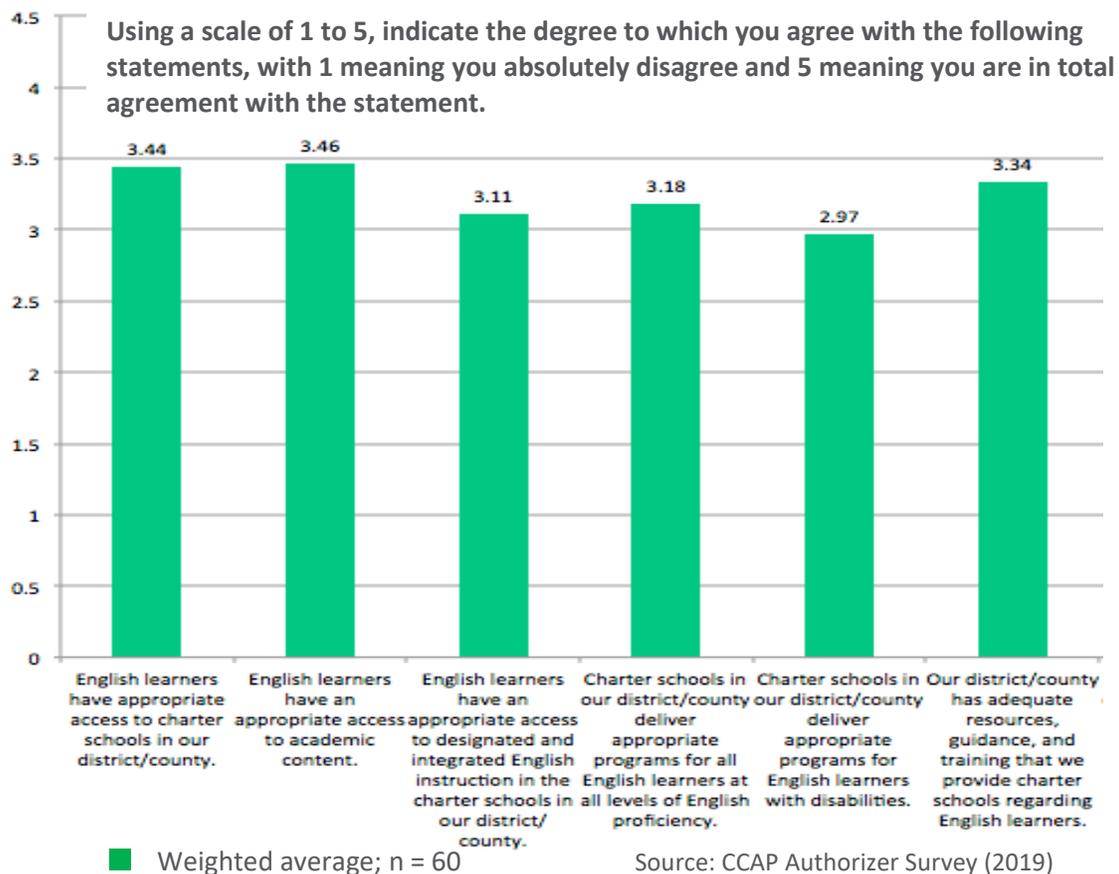
<sup>12</sup> ELs who have not met reclassification criteria within a timeframe considered typical (average is 5-7 years) are then classified as a Long-term English learner. Before students are classified as a long-term English learner, other factors are considered, such as grade level, advancement in English proficiency and ELA test scores. California Department of Education (2018).

Index (API), Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) and the California English Language Development Test (CELDT).

Between 2008 and 2013, ELs in charter schools had, on average, an API growth score that was about 20 points higher than ELs in traditional public schools. An analysis of EL student proficiency rates in English Language Arts and Math on AYP also showed that charter school ELs consistently outperformed those at traditional public schools, though the differences were small. Additionally, ELs in charter schools grew 36 more days in reading and 50 more days in math compared to their EL peers in traditional public schools. This outperformance is also consistent across various types of charter schools, including in urban/rural settings and schools with varying levels of autonomy. And long-term ELs experienced even higher rates of growth at charter schools than did short-term ELs. Further, in terms of closing the achievement gap, charter schools showed higher levels of academic growth with EL students than with non-ELs compared to traditional public schools.<sup>13</sup>

## Authorizer Needs and Opportunities Related to Supporting ELs

It is important to acknowledge that CCAP authorizer survey respondents were largely positive about access to high-quality programming and instruction for English learners in the charters they authorize (see chart below). At the same time, authorizers expressed a need for additional tools and guidance to support their authorizing activities related to ELs, such as petition review and annual oversight checklists. Interviewees, for the most part, were in agreement. They described schools that provide access to ELs but that could increase access with better communication to families and communities in their district or county with large numbers of ELs—and not relying primarily on word of mouth from family to family. They also described schools that provide all students, including ELs, high-quality core academic instruction and expect them to meet California’s A-G requirements and have the option to attend college (without requiring remedial courses post-secondary). But they also described ways as authorizers can help the schools they authorize improve their work with ELs.



<sup>13</sup> The API was one element of California’s accountability system under No Child Left Behind; since the adoption of the Local Control Funding Formula in 2013, the state no longer uses API. The growth in days data is based on the 2010-11 school year. Getting Down to Facts, [Raymond](#) et al. (2018); California Charter Schools Association, [Taylor](#) (2015)

These student outcomes and survey and interview data are encouraging. Yet with low EL enrollment numbers in charters relative to traditional public schools, as well as persistent achievement gaps between ELs and non-ELs, there are opportunities for authorizers to strengthen their practices to better support English learners in their charter portfolios. It's also critical to recognize that the data presented above generalizes across a large state and, in some cases, across large districts or regions with many schools. Authorizers, with support from CCAP, should seek to understand the contexts of their local schools and the nuances related to student enrollment and outcomes that accompany them.

Based on our research, including interviews with district and county office of education authorizers and the CCAP authorizer survey, authorizers have identified three areas in which they, with leadership from CCAP, can strengthen their authorizing practices to better support ELs in the schools they oversee:

1. **Serving as a hub** for authorizing policies, best practices, professional development, research and tools to support English learners
2. **Communicating clear legal requirements and disseminating resources** (described in #1) related to English learners to authorizers
3. **Sharing stories and providing access to exemplar authorizers and charter schools** that are serving English learners using evidence-based best practices and tools

### **Serving as a hub for authorizing policies, best practices, professional development, research and tools to support English learners**

CCAP can fill a gap in the authorizer field by becoming the go-to place for the resources and guidance authorizers need to fulfill their responsibilities. The capacity of offices and personnel responsible for authorizing activities in districts and county offices varies. Some authorizers—particularly those with large portfolios of schools and/or those that are large urban districts—have adequate staff to dedicate time and other resources to creating the tools and processes they use for oversight. Many authorizer offices or departments, however, are understaffed, often operating as a “one-person shop,” as more than one authorizer described it.

The authorizers that feel most adept at serving EL students, or feel most able to provide great support and oversight to the charter schools they authorize, are the ones that have access to a best-in-class district/county EL team outside of the authorizing office. Many districts and counties, especially smaller ones, do not have access to EL experts in other divisions to inform the professional development for or ongoing monitoring of charter school EL compliance and programs.

While it is critical that charter schools retain their autonomy, there is a role for the authorizer to play in developing and implementing authorizer practices that 1) ensure equitable access to families (e.g., auditing applications to make sure there's no barriers to entry), 2) ensure a high bar (e.g., a school performance framework or achievement gap closure measure that is measured and/or reported out), and 3) in accordance with, but not duplicative of, the oversight required by law, meaning monitoring in a way that is effective but not overly burdensome. CCAP can create, curate and share guidance and exemplar policies and practices to address these three issues.

When asked about barriers to providing services to English learners in charter schools in their districts or counties, CCAP survey respondents identified a lack of professional development and lack of EL-specific criteria in charter petition review tools, such as matrices. Interviewees were in agreement and described additional resources that would be helpful to authorizers:

- Explicit model checklists for English learner services, including legal requirements, for both petition review and annual oversight

- Notifications about current research on English learners in California (e.g., by the Sobrato Foundation) and the most effective tools to assist English learner education (e.g., from Loyola Marymount University)
- Tools, practices and policies from experienced authorizers on lottery and admission procedures and student discipline, which could also be developed into templates and shared in trainings

Authorizers vary in their approach to developing and providing professional development to schools they authorize. For example, one district authorizer we interviewed described their office’s role in this way: “Operators don’t reach out to us to get help for ELs or other student groups. We do not provide professional development as a district to charters. But we are proactive in that if we see something that is possibly a deficit we’ll share with the charters what it should look like. We’ll bring them together and share that information. We have been generous in that sense. But we as a district do not provide professional development to charters.” On the other end, a different district authorizer shared that charter school staff and educators regularly participate in the professional development the authorizer provides, for example, “We also invite charter school teachers to attend our PD modules on academic language development and integrating language standards into the core curriculum. Not all charter teachers choose to attend but many do.”

Regardless of whether or not authorizers provide professional development directly to schools and educators, staff in authorizing offices need training themselves to fulfill their duties successfully. In fact, authorizer survey respondents ranked items that could fit within the scope of a hub as the top four (of 12) most helpful types of authorizer assistance:

1. An online archive of best practice procedures, materials, templates and forms
2. An online community where authorizers can post questions and share information/ideas with peers
3. Webinars and other remote training opportunities
4. Training and “bootcamps” for new districts staff after they are assigned to charter school oversight

Within its role as a hub for authorizing practices related to ELs, CCAP can broker meaningful professional development for authorizers, collect and curate resources for monitoring visits and capacity interviews, and create a consortium of authorizers to share challenges, best practices, and other resources that would allow more authorizers access to quality EL programs as a way to improve their own practices.

CCAP is in the process of redesigning its website and, in collaboration with the Colorado and Florida state partners in the Tri-State Alliance project, is creating an enhanced online platform. The platform will include resources created through [CARSNet](#) that have been curated and updated and new resources developed under the Tri-State grant. Furthermore, the second and third areas in which CCAP can lead the field—communicating clear legal requirements and disseminating resources, and sharing stories and providing access to exemplar authorizers and charter schools—are a natural extension of CCAP’s role as a hub.

### **Communicating clear legal requirements and disseminating resources (described in #1) related to English learners to authorizers**

There are frequent changes in state and local laws and policies affecting authorizers and charter schools. Authorizers need an organization, like CCAP, to track those changes and communicate them quickly, clearly and in a way that emphasizes what it means for authorizers and/or the charter schools they authorize. For example, when discussing potential barriers to access for ELs, one district authorizer shared, “We found that almost all of our charters have students who are 3s, 4s and 5s in terms of their EL classifications; they don’t have the 1s and 2s at the same rates of the traditional public schools.” This district authorizer suspects that this may be some structural issue related to enrollment requirements for charter students—for example, a requirement to have enrollment completed in February for the upcoming school year—and not having slots to take in students throughout the school year, when migrant students, new immigrants, highly mobile students or others that are more likely to be less proficient in English enroll. Learning about and receiving guidance to understand state and

local policies can help authorizers uncover root causes of disparities for ELs (and other students) and make plans to address them.

Every authorizer we spoke with bemoaned the time and effort it requires to stay current with the ever-changing state of laws and policies. And those who completed the survey ranked “Regular updates and newsletters with news and developments in the field” in their top five requests for types of assistance for authorizers. As one county office of education authorizer shared, “CCAP can help by being a curator of resources, both best practices for authorizers and informational updates about changes to code, policies and timelines that come down from the state.”

Communicating changes in and guidance for state law and policies fits within CCAP’s role as a resource hub. As does the dissemination of the authorizing best practices, professional development, research and tools to support English learners curated by CCAP. Authorizers do not necessarily need a one-size-fits-all set of resources and tools, but they do need a menu of options and information pushed out to them on where to find the resources. CCAP can get authorizers, and other interested organizations, the information they need via regular email newsletters, blog posts, webinars, social media and other formats. CCAP’s redesigned website will also serve as a two-way communication channel by housing resource and research libraries, providing links and information about webinars and other learning and networking opportunities, and inviting in new members.

### **Sharing stories and providing access to exemplar authorizers and charter schools that are serving English learners using evidence-based best practices and tools**

Authorizers, like others in the education field, tend to work within their silos, both their content specialty and geographically. California’s 337 authorizers, including CCAP’s 32 district and county office authorizer members, have expertise and experience to share and be used to improve peers’ practices. The authorizers we interviewed also asked for more opportunities to hear and see how another authorizer, especially one with a similar charter school portfolio or in a similar context (e.g., small or large, urban or rural), overcame a certain challenge or innovated in an effective way.

Time is an obvious constraint for authorizers’ participation in visits, convenings or meetings—in person or virtual. Providing some stories via an online hub in the format of social media, blog posts, short videos or written testimonies about an excellent piece of work could allow users to access them on their own time. And starting with a small number of resource sharing and networking opportunities—virtually and in person—for authorizers to opt in to could test the appetite of authorizers to engage in these ways. Ultimately, CCAP can provide a venue for authorizers to learn from one another about topics of shared interest, including supporting English learners.

### **Next Steps to Get from Recommendations to Actions**

This needs assessment lays the foundation for an action plan that CCAP is developing to turn the recommendations into reality. See the separate action plan document for specific activities CCAP, in partnership with its members, will undertake immediately and in the coming months to become a hub for authorizing policies, best practices, professional development, research and tools to support English learners.

Finally, we acknowledge that authorizers have additional needs related to English learners beyond the ones above, and we recognize that the potentially changing political and policy landscape may exert its influence. As CCAP continues its planning for actions that will strengthen authorizing practices, there are issues to consider exploring further:

- Assess the outcomes from the current and future legislative cycles to understand and communicate how new policies affect authorizers and charter schools
- Investigate early childhood pipelines for EL students in charter schools and their impact on enrollment
- Assist authorizers in conducting a local landscape analysis to identify where enrollment and outcomes disparities between ELs and non-ELs exist and where they do not exist, so that the resources and tools described above can be used effectively

## Glossary



**Dual language learners  
in early childhood education (ECE)**



**English learners  
in kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade (K12)**

In ECE, *all children* are learning and developing their home language. Hence, English learners in these settings are referred to as DLLs—they are learning both their home language and English simultaneously. There is no common methodology ECE providers in California use to classify students as DLLs; rather, each ECE provider uses their own approach (e.g., parent survey or parent conferences).

When children enter kindergarten, the DLLs from ECE are referred to as ELs. The term EL denotes the K12 system’s focus on students’ English development. In the K12 system, the EL designation is officially given to a student who: (a) lives in a family where a primary language other than English is spoken; (b) has completed an assessment of English language skills and been identified as needing extra support to learn English, and (c) has not yet been reclassified as fully English proficient.

### The ECE and K12 systems have different classifications for DLLs/ELs as these students progress in their education:

<b>Dual Language Learner (DLL)</b>	All children from birth to age five are developing their home language. In the ECE system, ELs are classified as DLLs. These children are learning a second language while developing their home language.
<b>English Learner (EL)</b>	An EL is a K12 student who has not yet developed listening, speaking, reading and writing proficiencies in English sufficient for participation in the regular school program, based on the results of the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC). These students were previously referred to as Limited English Proficient (LEP).
<b>Newcomer</b>	Students who have recently arrived in the U.S. from another country are often loosely termed newcomers. Research underscores that newcomers have unique needs compared to non-newcomer ELs. For example, students who recently immigrated are learning English, while also trying to adapt to a new country and a new education system with different norms and expectations, which may require differentiated support.
<b>Initially Fully English Proficient</b>	Students who speak a language other than English at home but demonstrate English proficiency when they first enter school.
<b>Reclassified Fluent English Proficient</b>	Students who are initially classified as ELs but are exited out of the status once they demonstrate English proficiency and readiness to enter mainstream instructional services.
<b>Long Term English Learner</b>	ELs who have not met reclassification criteria within a timeframe considered typical (average is 5-7 years) are then classified as a Long-term English learner. Before students are classified as a long-term English learner, other factors are considered, such as grade level, advancement in English proficiency and ELA test scores.

### DLL/EL instructional methods may be delivered in a variety of learning environments:

<b>Bilingual Program</b>	Programs that serve language minority students and provide some instruction in English and students' home language.
<b>Dual Immersion Program</b>	Programs that provide instruction in English and a target language and serve English-only students and students who speak the target language.
<b>English Immersion Program</b>	Programs that serve all students (ELs and non-ELs) providing instruction in English with modifications and supports to increase ELs' access to and comprehension of English.
<b>Alternate Program</b>	A language acquisition process in which ELs receive English language development instruction targeted to their English proficiency level. Academic subjects are taught in the primary language, as defined by the school district. Placement in an alternative program is triggered by the parents through a parental exception waiver.

## References

In addition to conducting interviews with authorizers, we reviewed publicly-available data on DLLs/ELs and research about their experiences in charter schools.

- California Department of Education Data and Reporting Office, “2017-18 Enrollment for charter and Non-Charter Schools” (2019), <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/EnrCharterLevels.aspx?cds=00&agglevel=state&year=2017-18>.
- California Department of Education Data and Reporting Office, “English Learner Students by Language by Grade, State of California, 2018-19,” (2019), <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/SpringData/StudentsByLanguage.aspx?Level=State&TheYear=2018-19&SubGroup=All&ShortYear=1819&GenderGroup=B&CDSCode=00000000000000&RecordType=EL>.
- California Department of Education Data Quest, “2018-2019 Enrollment by Ethnicity and Grade,” (2019), <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/EnrEthGrd.aspx?cds=00&agglevel=state&year=2018-19&ro=y>.
- California Department of Education Data Reporting Office, “2016-17 Enrollment by English Language Acquisition Status (ELAS) and Grade, Statewide Report,” (2019), <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/longtermel/ELAS.aspx?cds=00&agglevel=State&year=2016-17>.
- California Department of Education, “Facts About English Learners in California” (2018), <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/cb/cefelfacts.asp>.
- Ejel, Benjy, “California now world’s fifth-largest economy, bigger than Britain,” *The Sacramento Bee*, May 4, 2018, <https://www.sacbee.com/news/business/article210466514.html>.
- Hill, Laura, *K-12 Reforms and California’s English Learner Achievement Gap* (San Francisco: Public Policy Institute of California, 2018), <https://www.ppic.org/publication/k-12-reforms-and-californias-english-learner-achievement-gap/>.
- Raymond, Macke, Kirsten Slungaard Mumma and Martin West, *Charter Schools in California, Getting Down to Facts II* (Palo Alto: Stanford University and Policy Analysis for California Education, 2018), <https://gettingdowntofacts.com/publications/charter-schools-California>.
- Taylor, Matt, *Success for English Learners in Charter Schools* (Sacramento: California Charter Schools Association, 2015), [https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/sites/default/files/files/field\\_publication\\_attachment/SuccessForEnglishLearnersInCharterSchools.pdf](https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/sites/default/files/files/field_publication_attachment/SuccessForEnglishLearnersInCharterSchools.pdf).
- Ugo, Iwunze, and Laura Hill, *Charter Schools and California’s Local Control Funding Formula* (San Francisco: Public Policy Institute of California, 2017), <https://www.ppic.org/publication/charter-schools-and-californias-local-control-funding-formula/>.

For additional information, please contact:

**Victor F. Torres**

Executive Director

**California Charter Authorizing Professionals**

[victor.torres@calauthorizers.org](mailto:victor.torres@calauthorizers.org)