

**Seizing the Opportunity to Narrow the Achievement Gap for English Learners:  
Research-based Recommendations for the Use of LCFF Funds  
Civil Rights Project at UCLA**

**Executive Summary**

The new state funding formula (LCFF<sup>1</sup>) provides an unprecedented opportunity to innovate and reshape the way schools address the educational needs of English learners. However it is critical that funds be spent carefully on interventions that are supported by solid research. The following recommendations are organized according to the state's 8 LCAP<sup>2</sup> priorities and are culled from the research on English learners. Clearly no school or district can adopt all or probably even most of the recommendations with current funding and in the short run, rather this should be seen as a menu of research-based options. Schools and districts must set their own priorities. There are no silver bullets in education but the research tells us that, on balance, the options recommended here provide the best odds of making a significant difference for the education of EL students. (The full policy report, which follows, provides expanded descriptions of the recommendations, related research summaries, with citations, and metrics for tracking the implementation of these recommendations).

**PRIORITY 1: BASIC SERVICES**

- 1.1 Use resources to attract highly effective, fully credentialed bilingual teachers.
- 1.2 Provide full-day kindergarten where it does not now exist, and preschool to the extent possible.
- 1.3 Provide extended learning time.
- 1.4 Increase social workers, parent liaisons, nurses, counselors, psychologists, and librarians with specialization in books about the cultures and in the languages of the students, and who to the extent possible, are bilingual.
- 1.5 Provide library books, consumables, and other supplementary materials that can be used at home with parents, in the language of the parents whenever possible.
- 1.6 Ensure adequate nutrition during school hours.

**PRIORITY 2: IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STANDARDS AND ELD STANDARDS**

- 2.1 Conduct needs assessment of teachers, administrators, and instructional support staff, including on-campus after school program providers, to identify critical professional development needs.
- 2.2 Build strong infrastructure for professional development of teachers, administrators, and school-based after school program providers
- 2.3 Provide professional development around the implementation of the Common Core State Standards for English Learners, specifically, and how to align these with ELD standards.

**PRIORITY 3: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

- 3.1 Increase bilingual personnel (or bilingual skills of existing personnel), especially front office staff, teachers and counselors, regardless of type of language program provided.
- 3.2 Use bilingual parent liaisons to develop links between the community and school.

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<sup>1</sup> Local Control Funding Formula (AB 97, SB 91, and SB 97)

<sup>2</sup> Local Control Accountability Plan (Education Codes 52060-52077)

- 3.3 Provide parent empowerment, advocacy, and family literacy programs in schools serving English Learners.
- 3.4 Broaden the representation of EL parents in school decision-making.
- 3.5 Fully fund District English Learner Advisory Committees (DELAC/ELAC) committees.
- 3.6 In teacher evaluations or reviews, include the ways in which they integrate, accommodate, and seek ELs' parental participation.

#### **PRIORITY 4: PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT**

- 4.1 Establish bilingual and two-way dual language programs where a critical mass of parents of EL students (and others) request such a program
- 4.2 Assess and report outcomes in both English and the native language if ELs are currently or have recently received instruction in the native language, and if valid instruments are available in that language.
- 4.3 Monitor reclassification rates for schools and districts, but student academic progress as EL and as reclassified EL (R-FEP) should be the primary measure of success, not rates of reclassification alone.
- 4.4. Train personnel to evaluate transcripts from non-U.S. schools so that students can be accurately placed and receive credit for courses taken and passed outside the U.S.

#### **PRIORITY 5: PUPIL ENGAGEMENT**

- 5.1 Link every EL student to at least one extra-curricular activity of his or her choice.
- 5.2 Integrate EL students with academically successful non-ELs for at least part of every day.
- 5.3 Through professional development for both faculty and staff, dispel stereotypes about the academic potential of EL students

#### **PRIORITY 6. SCHOOL CLIMATE**

- 6.1 Incorporate innovative measures to reduce racial, socio-economic, and linguistic segregation among students.
- 6.2 Increase awareness of and prevent practices and incidents that create a hostile or exclusionary environment for EL students.

#### **PRIORITY 7. COURSE ACCESS**

- 7.1 Ensure EL students have full access to rigorous academic content in all core content areas and enrichment courses.
- 7.2 Ensure access to the full range of college preparatory courses or course content at the middle and high school level for EL students.
- 7.3 Provide EL and reclassified (R-FEP) students the option of taking an extra year to complete graduation requirements and/or a college preparatory curriculum.
- 7.4 Provide ongoing monitoring and support for R-FEP students as they transition to mainstream classrooms.

#### **PRIORITY 8. OTHER PUPIL OUTCOMES**

- 8.1 Establish a differentiated process for identifying EL students for special education.
- 8.2 Ensure access to training in the use of computers and other technologies for EL students
- 8.3 Provide career and college planning guidance geared to EL's needs.