

# English Learner Narrative Change Guide

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The Education Trust–West

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# Why Narrative Change?

Despite numerous policy wins at the local, regional, and state level - including the California Department of Education's adoption of the English Learner Roadmap in 2017 - schools are still failing English Learner students. One often overlooked cause for this slow pace of change is the narratives about English Learners, Dual Language Learners, and their families that educators and decision makers believe. As well-intentioned as any single educator may be, the fact remains that English Learners and those who teach and serve them don't exist in a vacuum. Instead, numerous beliefs and assumptions, reinforced and maintained in our culture, can undermine support for English Learners, including:

- Beliefs that immigrants and their children are undeserving of resources
- Beliefs that whether children succeed or fail in school is mainly tied to how hard they work
- Beliefs that providing more resources for English Learners takes things away from other students
- Beliefs that schools and governments are already failing and therefore shouldn't receive more resources

These beliefs about English Learners can be pervasive in our culture and often drown out more positive and hopeful narratives about English Learners: the benefits of multilingualism and diversity, the importance of immigrants in California and in our communities, and the vitality of English Learners to our continued prosperity as a state. Many of us have seen how some of these narratives – like a belief that individual effort is solely responsible for student success – can manifest in seemingly positive stories that actually, on closer examination, reinforce counterproductive narratives.

Another storyline that most of us are familiar with - the student who, amid familial or societal pressures, overcomes adversity and defies the odds by going the extra mile to graduate at the top of their class - is also, at first glance, positive. This story may feel good to us and inspire us, but as we celebrate the individual student, we fail to examine what's happening in their schools: how well supported do the students feel? Are the educators adequately resourced? What is the school climate? Stories like these instead convey that schools are doing fine and that student success, even for English Learners, is entirely tied to hard work and dedication. As we'll discuss more in this guide, understanding what narratives decision-makers hold is key to developing new narratives and communications strategies that increase our effectiveness as English Learner advocates.

# About This Guide:

## Key Takeaways Suggest A Crucial Opportunity Window



A significant impetus for this guide is the results from research conducted in the summer of 2022 that examines Californians' beliefs and mindsets about English Learners. The statewide study, through a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches, is one of the largest and most comprehensive surveys to focus specifically on English Learners. The results tell us that the education advocacy community must shift narratives around English Learners and shift them soon.

### **A Ripe Foundation**

Survey results point to a few major key takeaways. Most Californians see the ability to speak multiple languages as an asset and, further, view that asset as tied to California's continuing prosperity. Californians also believe that the state has enough resources for everyone, with most survey respondents rejecting the notion that scarcity should limit resource distribution. These findings clearly show that conditions are ripe to capitalize on these beliefs and weave them into a new, updated narrative that can quickly accelerate progress for English Learners. This guide addresses the need for sustained engagement, time, energy, and resources, in order to shift beliefs and narratives and build narrative power structures.

### **Actionable Opportunities**

The recently conducted research shows that we can leverage Californians' beliefs into new narratives about English Learners, and it also reveals which areas of narrative work will need more focus and energy. Specifically, survey results showed that Californians see supporting English Learners as less of a priority than other issues like teacher preparation and school safety. This disparity may be due to a general lack of understanding of what "supports" for English Learners look like and how the issues identified as higher priority also overlap with issues for English Learners. This imbalance needs further exploration through more research and additional strategy work. Organizations should also make tactical shifts to ensure that new narratives are crafted and introduced in a clear and accessible way as they enter into the advocacy discourse.

# About This Guide

This guide is intended to be used by English Learner and Dual Language Learner advocacy organizations and individual advocates. Throughout, we provide guidance on how to approach and implement narrative change with two overarching questions in mind:

How can organizations supporting English Learners build the narrative power infrastructure collectively to ensure that the narrative change work is effective?

How can individual organizations immediately leverage the lessons learned from the narrative change research to start the work of shifting narratives and mindsets about English Learners?

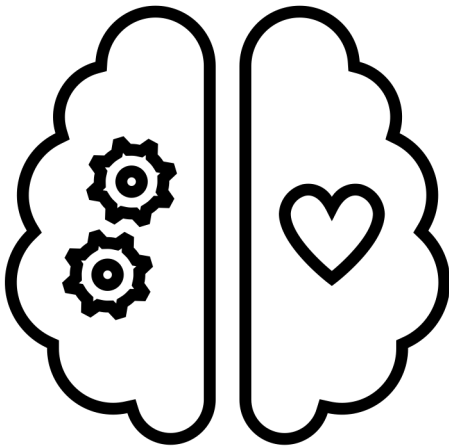
This guide was produced by Jelena Hasbrouck for The Education Trust–West and was informed by:

The narrative change work of Sobrato Philanthropies  
Research study by the Turley Siegel Group  
Invaluable input from a Research Advisors Group,  
surveys and conversations with advocates, and ongoing  
discussions in the field.

The expertise and research of various narrative change experts and organizations, including Frameworks Institute, ReFrame, Mary Lou Fulton, and the work of Rashad Robinson, Makani Themba-Nixon and Hunter Cutting



# What are Narratives?



Our brains are hardwired to determine meaning. We make sense of the world through stories and narratives that tell us how to understand an issue, make decisions, take in new information, and contextualize that new information with what we already know.

**“Narratives are patterns of meaning** that cut across and tie together specific stories. Narratives are common patterns that both emerge from a set of stories and provides templates for specific stories.”

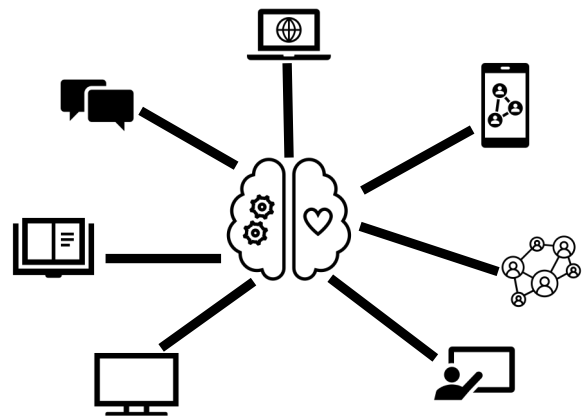
– Frameworks Institute

- **Narratives** influence how decision-makers understand issues and choose to act
- **Counter-narratives** seek to disrupt existing narratives that hinder or harm advocacy efforts
- Advocates can leverage narrative and counter-narrative strategies in a variety of ways to **improve the effectiveness of their work**

# What are Narratives?

**Narratives are formed and reinforced through a variety of elements advocates regularly leverage:**

- Words and Phrases
- Visuals
- Storylines
- Titles
- Messengers
- What we say versus what we don't say
- Choices on what to research and which data points to use



Words, messaging, and framing, alongside visuals, messengers, and many other communication components, are essential elements in crafting and maintaining narratives. However, effective narrative change also requires understanding where our audiences' mindsets are and how that may impact their decision-making so that we can:

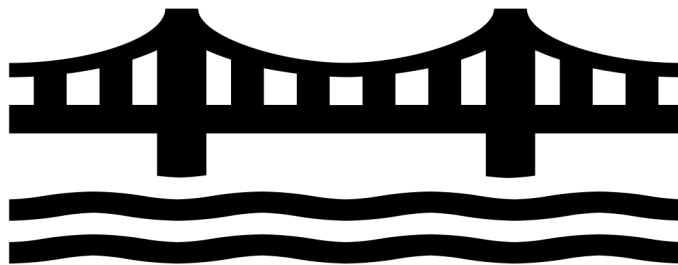
- more effectively reach our audiences
- help make sure the information we share with audiences sticks in their brains in the way we want it to
- develop strategies and tactics that more effectively move audiences to act in the ways we need them to

# What is Narrative Change?

Research shows that our brains take in new information and situate it within the existing narratives we hold in our heads about an issue. Confirmation bias is a term for how our brains tend to retain information that fits with our preconceived notions while rejecting information that challenges those preconceived notions, storylines, or narratives.

One way to think about narrative change in advocacy work is to think about bridges. Narrative change work can act as a bridge to bring audiences along, helping shift their mindsets from an old narrative to a new one, like the need for specific actions that would more fully support English Learners.

**Unhelpful  
narrative**



**Helpful  
narrative**

## **Narrative change work**

This work actively helps move to a new narrative through strategic actions



# Overarching Guidance



Much has been discussed in the English Learner and Dual Language Learner advocacy communities around the terminology the field uses to describe these students. In recent years, advocates have proposed “emerging bilingual” or “emerging multilingual” to shift to a more asset-based terminology. However, this discussion is complicated by the fact that “English Learner” is a term that legal and civil rights policy language uses around the government’s obligation to these students. As such, there are valid concerns that a shift away from this term could impact advocates’ strategic linking of student needs to legal civil rights protections.

However, the recent research on Californians' views toward English Learners suggests that it might be time to revise the terminology that advocates use as they craft new narratives.

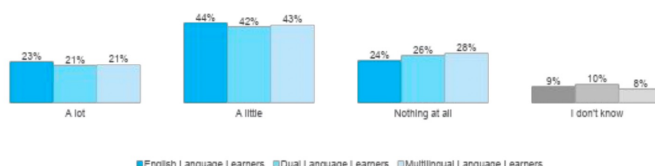
When survey respondents were asked about their awareness of certain terms that the advocacy community uses, the results showed that they tend not to be well understood by the general public: a key audience to involve when attempting to shift narratives. The results below suggest that there is not much more awareness of the term “English Learner” in the general public than there is awareness of other terms, and about one out of every four respondents had not heard anything about any of these terms.

The language we use in communicating effectively about narratives and policy advocacy can be complementary, aligned, and vary by audience and strategy. For instance, one approach advocates could consider moving forward is to use both “English Learner/Dual Language Learner” and “Multilingual student” in their work. Using both terms in a single document or presentation will ensure that the term connected to legal protections for these students is present while also providing new, asset-based language that functions more as a definition or enhanced explanation of these students’ situation. Additionally, new narrative tactics may strategically suggest when to use specific terms. For example, when advocates seek to reinforce and emphasize the benefits of multilingualism they might use specific terms, whereas when they are using policy language that relates to governmental accountability for these students, leveraging other terms might be more effective.

## Respondents have heard the most about ‘English language learners’ in CA

Respondents are most likely to have heard nothing at all about ‘multilingual language learners’

Awareness: English language learner Names  
n = 671, 718, 685



■ English Language Learners ■ Dual Language Learners ■ Multilingual Language Learners

# Emphasizing student and family voices with English Learner narratives

## **An overarching focus on uplifting student and family voices in the context of shifting narratives can:**

- Help ensure storylines “stick” more in an audience’s heads because of the emotional connection to real people
- Honor our ethical responsibility to the students and families we work for by acknowledging their enormous knowledge base and lived experience
- Occur in tandem with other narrative and messaging guidance through overarching, pre-and post- story framing



# The Devil's in the Details: data and deficit-based thinking

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In the arc of education equity and “education reform” efforts, it's essential to understand how data use has been used historically to show unequal, inequitable treatment. Decades ago, the push to collect and report data was a crucial fight and, at times, an uphill battle. In the time since, reporting student achievement data has become a standard practice and is thought of by some as a theory of change in and of itself. Indeed, the need for accurate, accessible data remains a core element of the fight for equity in education. This is largely because data is seen as objective, making it hard for decision-makers to argue against it, when pushed to act.

While data is essential to our work, we must be thoughtful about how we use it in our storytelling and narrative work. An over-reliance on “gap gazing” data - that is, data showing significant student achievement outcome gaps between English Learners and others - can threaten to reinforce the deficit-based narratives and frameworks in some decision-makers' heads.

This is not to suggest that advocates should use fewer data points in their advocacy work, but instead, they should consider the following when using data:

- Sharing student outcome data as a result and coupling it with system input and decision data that speaks to the causes of inequities. This might look like sharing the number of EL-focused staff a district reports in their LCAP along with student outcome data.
- Considering how the graph titles, section headers, sequencing of data points, and other elements can tell a story of cause and effect that clearly points to policy and practice solutions.

# Building Narrative Power

We can make videos and put them online, and have them reach a few hundred people, or reach a million people for a minute.

But we need to build the infrastructure that will make those videos known and loved and referenced by millions more people, in a way that influences their lives.

**- Rashad Robinson, Color of Change**

# A note on how to shift to a new narrative

One big misconception about advocacy communications and narrative change work is that it boils down to word choice and framing. As we continue to reiterate throughout this guide, while narratives encompass those elements, narratives are much bigger than that alone. Often advocates want to shift communication around English Learners to be more “asset-based.” This shift is important framing work for various reasons, but “asset-based” communications are not a new narrative in and of themselves.

When we understand narratives as storylines that are driven by beliefs and reinforced in a wide variety of ways, we can also understand why shifting them requires such a sustained and thorough approach. Consider some recent narratives like Black Lives Matter, or the “Big Lie” (the idea that the results of the 2020 presidential election were fraudulent), or the Schools Not Prisons narrative change effort in California: All of these have clear storylines reinforced in such a wide variety of ways that they easily take hold and persist in folks’ minds.

This section of the guide will discuss cultivating the conditions necessary for the ongoing work of narrative change. Here we suggest that there are fundamental ways that advocates can lay the groundwork for shifting to a new narrative while that narrative is still being created. This approach can help build a narrative infrastructure that will be crucial once the new narrative is formalized in the field. While there is more work to be done to create that new narrative, some immediate shifts in narrative that advocates may consider as they engage in this work include:

- \* A "people" narrative about valuing and supporting the children of immigrants and their families through education
- \* A “language” narrative about the power of language and bilingualism for all students
- \* A "systems change" narrative about transforming public schools so that excellence for ELs and multilingualism becomes the norm
- \* An "economic" or workforce narrative about the state's future workforce and prosperity

# Narrative Power Infrastructure

In the end, we can define narrative infrastructure as the ability to learn, create, broadcast and immerse, and to do all four things strategically—both sequenced and integrated.

– Rashad Robinson  
Color of Change



In pushing progressive movements and advocacy organizations to think differently and more strategically about our work, Color of Change’s Rashad Robinson points out that for narrative change work to be effective, it requires a narrative power infrastructure that guides and sustains the work. Below we outline how we will consider the four following components of narrative infrastructure for this guide:

- **Learn:** how we as advocates learn what the research tells us about narratives and narrative change
- **Create:** how we structure new narratives through developing a clear storyline and creating plans and artifacts that reinforce that narrative
- **Broadcast:** how we spread the new narrative widely
- **Immerse:** how we infuse our work with narrative change efforts that help immerse our audiences in it and tug at their hearts and minds, rather than thinking of it as a one-off or single effort

# Narrative Power Infrastructure Recommendations:

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## Learn

### Recommendations for the field as a whole:

- Conduct focus groups, specifically with homogenous groups of key audiences, to get their most candid views
- Continue reviewing research on public perceptions and views
- Identify capacity constraints to determine what narrative infrastructure needs are most pressing
- Invest in communications workshops focused on narrative power

### Recommendations for organizations:

- Encourage communications staff and content creators to review this guide and the high-level research takeaways
- Learn more about primary audience views and how to tailor content by audience
- Engage in learning opportunities around narrative power
- Seek a deeper understanding, internally, of how to infuse the content creation process with more narrative power efforts





# Narrative Power Infrastructure Recommendations:

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## Create

### Recommendations for the field as a whole:

- Invest in communication professionals who can lend their expertise to shape a new narrative grounded in research findings
- Provide clear guidance about the new narrative, including how to leverage narrative change efforts and how to make the work sustainable
- Collaborate to create a content bank and story bank supporting the new narrative

### Recommendations for organizations:

- Work with partner organizations to populate story and content banks.
- Develop internal processes to incorporate new narrative and narrative change efforts into planned work.
- Develop communications plans that center the new narrative in projects and general external communications.
- Collect stories from fellow advocates, parents, students, and educators that reinforce the narrative.
- Leverage a variety of visual and audio efforts to tell these stories.



# Narrative Power Infrastructure Recommendations:

## Broadcast

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### Recommendations for the field as a whole:

- Incorporate time for individual organizations to share during established English Learner and Dual Language Learner meetings and convenings how they are doing narrative work
- Consider investing in advertisements (social media, radio, billboards) once a new narrative is created
- Seek support from foundations to do more "broadcasting" communications work that can help materials reach more of the target audiences

### Recommendations for organizations:

- Develop communications plans for each project that leverage the highest-return platforms for your specific organization
- Consider "outside the box" strategies and tactics, beyond email and social media, to publicize work
- Develop a dedicated and intentional process for amplifying and sharing other work that uplifts content that attempts to shift narratives

# Narrative Power Infrastructure

## Recommendations:

### Immerse

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#### Recommendations for the field as a whole:

- Consider combining resources (financial, expertise, platforms, etc)
- Incorporate time to share out how individual organizations are doing narrative work in established English Learner and Dual Language Learner meetings and convenings
- Consider investing in public narrative efforts – including art, advertisements, and public displays, – once a new narrative is created
- Develop a dedicated and coordinated strategy for how to immerse target audiences in the storyline of the new narrative

#### Recommendations for organizations:

- Incorporate elements of narrative power into project planning processes and documentation to reinforce the need to be consistently focused on narrative work
- Ensure content creators (including report writers) are examining what narratives they're reinforcing and adjusting content (language, visuals, storylines) as needed



# Actionable Takeaways:

What recent research shows and how to use it.

Takeaway 1 is an overarching takeaway useful in particular for those foundations, organizations, and advocate leaders engaged in planning around how the field approaches narrative change.

For takeaways two through five, we share some context and the implications for advocates, followed by tangible examples for organizations and key data points behind the takeaways.

## Takeaway #1

**Results of public opinion research show that the conditions are right to craft a new narrative for English Learners**



## Research showed:

- Most Californians do not hold strong deficit-based views of English Learners.
- Public opinion results show that Californians are primed for a new narrative.
- The lack of a cohesive, accessible, and specific narrative shared by English Learner advocates suggests a need for a robust and ongoing narrative infrastructure.

## Recommendations for advocates and the field:

- Convene advocates and communication professionals for the explicit purpose of applying the results of the research to tested messages and thinking together about more extensive narrative and storyline shifts that would engage broader audiences
- Dedicate time to focusing on visioning activities that help link specific resource needs to a positive, aspirational vision
- Consider incorporating additional research questions into existing public opinion research (e.g., PPIC polling) to continue surfacing knowledge about public opinions that will help shape a new narrative

## Californians are primed for a new narrative and English Learner advocates would benefit from working on a shared new narrative and vision

**KEY TAKEAWAY:** Most Californians reject the foundational pillars of the anti-immigrant, anti-immigration narrative

**KEY TAKEAWAY:** Californians also reject the “deficit mindset.”

- They view the ability to speak more than one language as a benefit and only 28% believe ELs are less likely to excel academically than native English speakers. Rather than being “othered,” 75% believe that “English language learners are an integral part of our student population” and that “creating programs that nurture bilingual education will help all children thrive.”
- Cross-tabs indicate that the outliers are local and state-level policy makers who are more likely than others to question whether ELs can be as academically successful as native English speakers.
- Substantial majorities approve of policies that would increase support and services for ELs, increase funding for professional development, and develop specialized services for long-term ELs.
- Overall, asset-based messages perform well.

The ecosystem of ELL advocacy organizations is rich and varied. It comprises diverse coalitions, community-based organizations, educator associations, civil rights groups, and parents groups. There are exceptions, but by and large the language used on advocates' websites, FaceBook pages and other public communications does not convey a shared narrative. Mission statements showcased on websites tend to be jargony or academic.

*For more recent public opinion data, see resources list at the end of this guide*

**Some specific asset-based frames seem to already be held by many audiences**

**Advocates should use these frames and storylines as bridges to calls to action that link needed supports for English Learners to the existing asset-based frames in folks' heads**



## Research showed:

- Far more respondents agreed with prosperity framing than achievement gap framing, linked fate, or trailblazer framing
- Respondents tend to agree with the idea that the “pie is big enough for all” in California
- Messaging that reinforces a narrative around global competitiveness is less effective than messaging that supports a narrative about multilingualism being an asset for careers and communities

## Recommendations for advocates:

- Incorporate or layer prosperity framing onto content
- Link specifics of programs and supports to prosperity narrative framing and to career and community benefits
- Leverage policy and discourse opportunity windows that align with asset-based frames



## Takeaway #2 Examples

### Strategies could look like:

- Developing a LCAP-focused communications campaign using the “pie is big enough for all” framing
- Developing a storytelling campaign that showcases how multilingualism is an asset in the employment sector
- De-emphasizing the achievement gap when showing data and instead emphasizing the need to improve schools as linked to prosperity messaging

### Tactics could look like:

- Sending an email about the LCAP process and developing accompanying social media content with a catchy "pie is big enough for all" storyline
- Visuals for social media and presentations that clearly show multilingual workers in different employment sectors
- Blog posts that detail a school improvement process framed through the possibility of increased prosperity in the local community



# Public Opinion Research Data:

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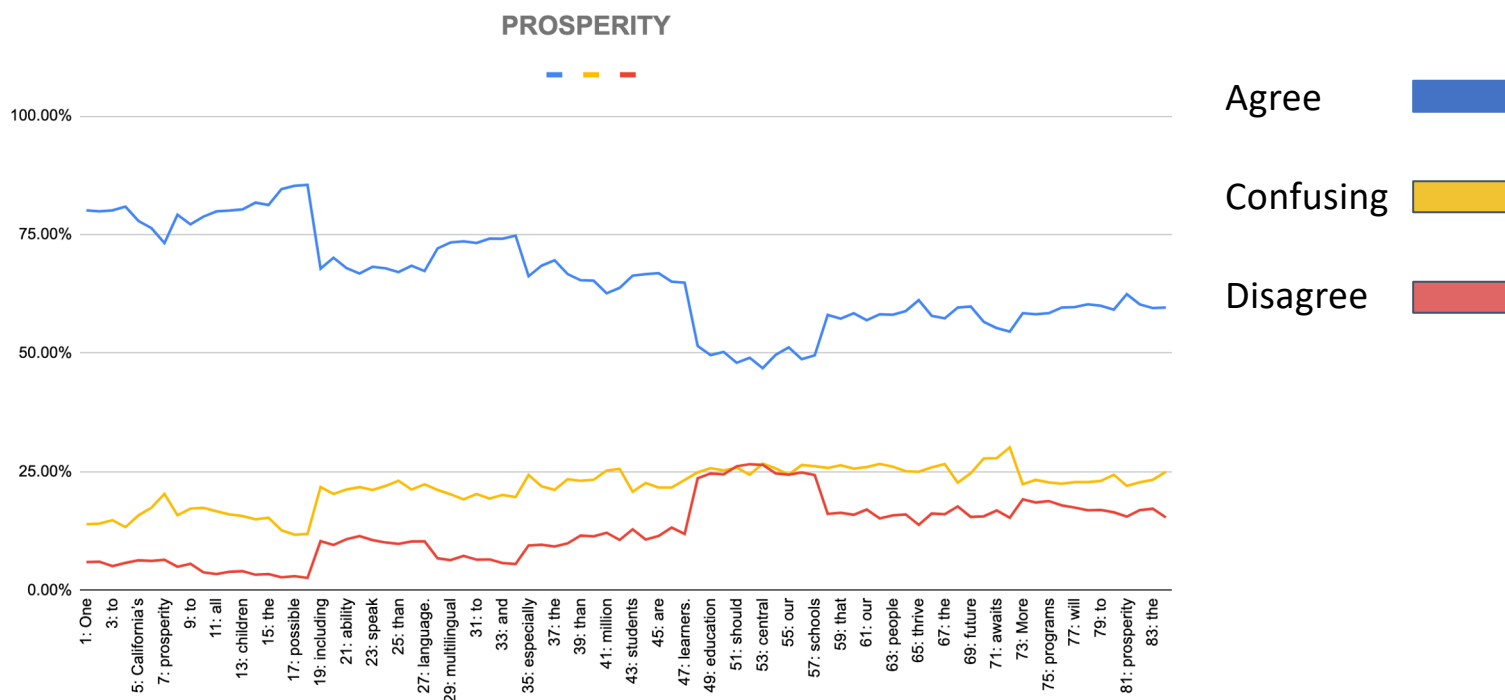
**Prosperity, Diversity, and Achievement Gap were the top performing messages across audiences**

Message Name	Average “Agree” Score
<b>PROSPERITY</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>DIVERSITY</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>ACHIEVEMENT GAP</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>LINKED FATE</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>TRAILBLAZER</b>	<b>49%</b>

*For more recent public opinion data, see resources list at the end of this guide*

## Prosperity message resonated most with respondents

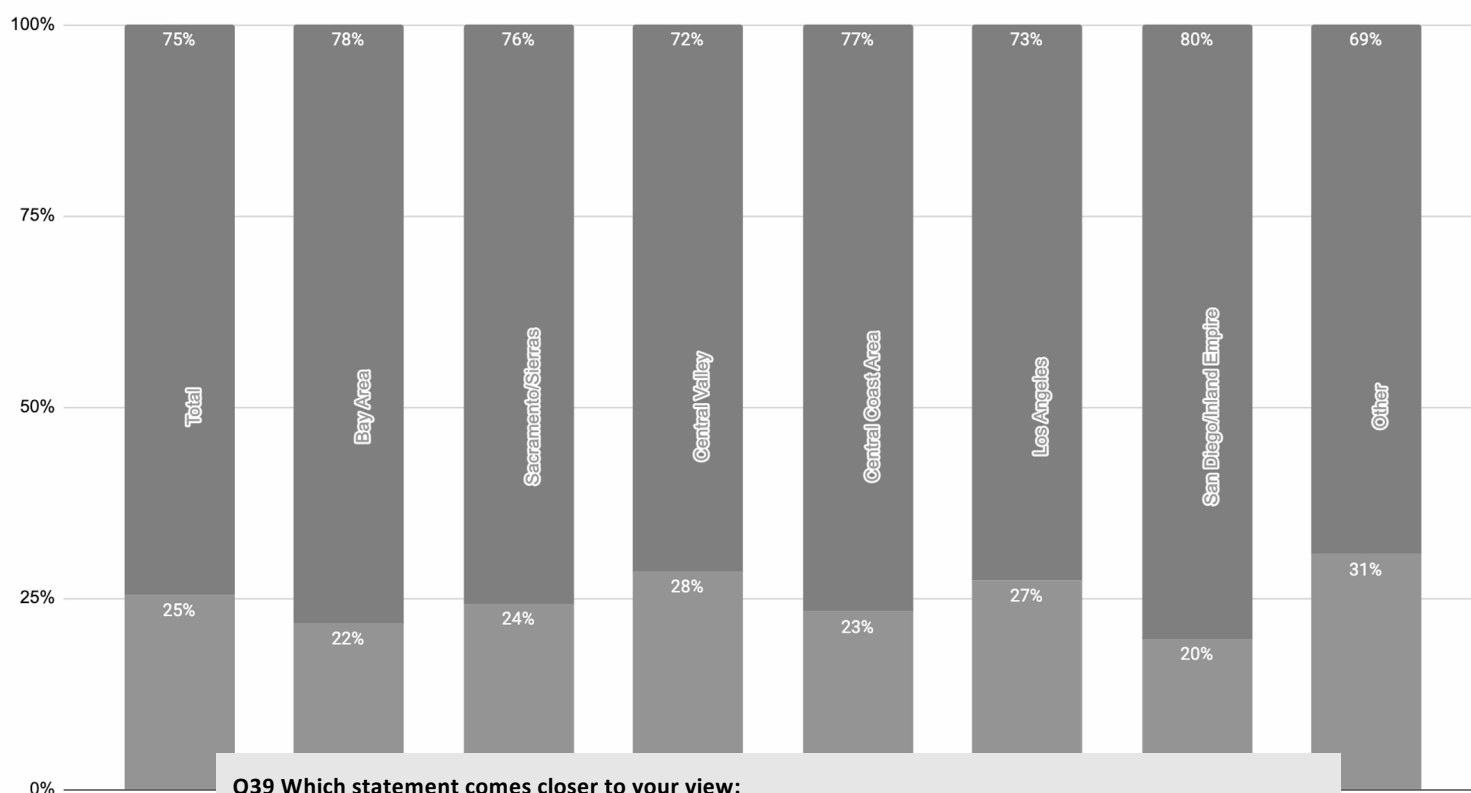
*“One way to ensure California’s continuing prosperity is to provide all our children with the best possible education, including the ability to speak more than one language. Being multilingual leads to growth and opportunity, especially for the more than one million California students who are English learners. Bilingual education programs should be central in our public schools so that all our young people can thrive in the diverse future that awaits them. More bilingual programs today will lead to more prosperity in the future.”*



For more recent public opinion data, see resources list at the end of this guide

The majority of Californians embraced the notion that the “pie is big enough for all of us and English language learners are an integral part of our student population.” This belief is slightly more prevalent in San Diego/Inland Empire

■ The pie is big enough for all of us and English language learners are an integral part of our student population. Creating programs that nurture bilingual education will help all children t...  
 ■ Additional resources for English language learners takes away resources from other students who are also struggling and need support.



Q39 Which statement comes closer to your view:

Additional resources for English language learners takes away resources from other students who are also struggling and need support.

The pie is big enough for all of us and English language learners are an integral part of our student population. Creating programs that nurture bilingual education will help all children thrive.

For more recent public opinion data, see resources list at the end of this guide

## Respondents are most likely to agree that bilingualism can lead to practical, career-related advantages

Respondents are least likely to agree that speaking another language at home has a positive influence on a student's ability to learn additional languages

### Statement Agreement: Bilingualism ("Strongly Agree" + "Somewhat Agree")

n = 2047



How much do you agree with the following statements? Choose one answer in each row.

28

For more recent public opinion data, see resources list at the end of this guide

## Takeaway #3

**Social media framing often focuses on scarcity and deficits**

**Advocates should intentionally focus on asset-based language and stories of effective educators and compelling examples of EL achievement**



## Research showed:

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- What types of content are most shared: resources, events, highly visual content
- Who is most represented in the social media audience looking at this content: teachers, advocates, researchers
- “English Language Learner” was used most on social media, “Multilingual learner” was used more with values context, and “DLL” was used with policy context
- Social media conversations diverge from traditional media conversations, which is more asset-based

## Recommendations for advocates:

- Consider using existing asset-based resources and news pieces more on social media
- Examine the framing of content to be shared on your organization’s social media platforms and shift away from deficit-based language
- Consider shared content or storybanks as a lower-lift strategy to increasing asset-based content

## Takeaway #3 Examples

### Strategies could look like:

- Determining a collaborative place (for example, a shared drive or google doc file) for organization team members to easily aggregate positive english learner news stories that the communications team members can leverage
- Engaging communications team members in both ongoing (e.G., Each project) and intermittent (e.G., At retreats or set times a year) reviews of language to identify opportunities to shift to asset-based framing
- Using opportunities like internships to develop projects that create content banks of images, social posts, and blog posts that are not time sensitive and can be used throughout the year

### Tactics could look like:

- Using #ThrowbackThursday to share asset-based new stories from the past few years
- Co-hosting a twitter chat with fellow organizations focused on “where it’s working” to share examples of best practices in the field
- Incorporating positive visuals into reports and repurposing them on social media with asset-based language about what readers will find in the reports

## Takeaway #4

**Those furthest from the classroom are most likely to hold deficit-based views**

**Advocates should work to cultivate and uplift asset-based stories from the classroom and target these to state policymakers and other decision-makers**



## Research showed:

- Initial data suggests that state- and local-level policy-makers tend to hold more deficit and scarcity attitudes - this finding should be the subject of further research.
- Data shows that in ca's general population, only 28% of people believe that English learners are less likely to excel academically than native English speakers.

## Recommendations for advocates:

- Target asset-based communications to those furthest from the classroom
- Uplift stories from classrooms – share student and teacher voices
- Consider using the sandwich method with sharing gap data - give context for why the gap exists rather than leaving it up to your audience to guess

## Takeaway #4 Examples

### Strategies could look like:

- Starting legislative meetings and/or briefings off with a specific story about an educator or program in the legislator's district
- Developing a way to capture more stories from educators at events, workshops, other networking events
- Ensuring communications targeting audiences far from the classroom always include an example where students are achieving at high levels when sharing gap data

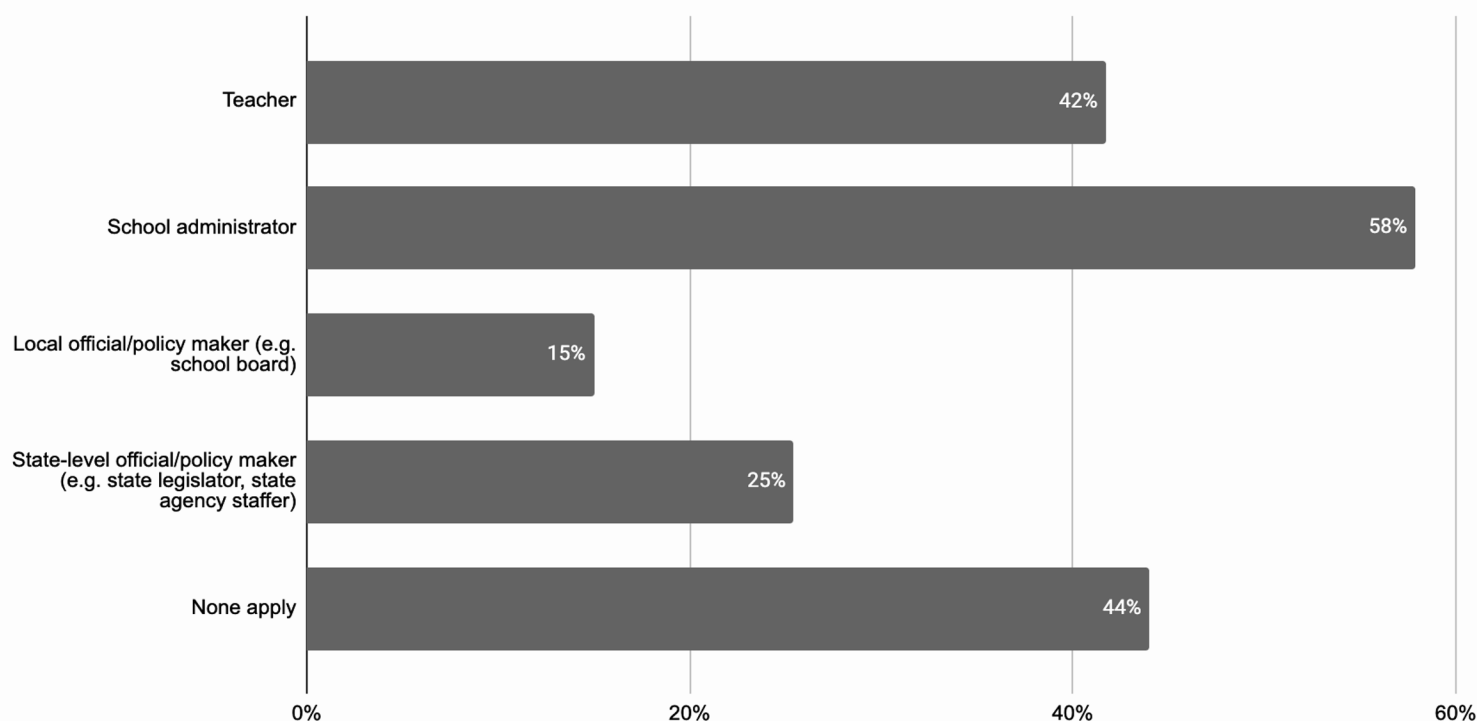
### Tactics could look like:

- Posting images of asset-based quotes from educators on social media during critical state or local votes, tagging decision-makers
- Incorporating easy photo or video capture portions into events at schools
- Highlighting stories about student growth and learning, including which supports helped them, in blog posts written by students or co-written.



**Compared to the general populations and local and state officials, school administrators (58%) and Teachers (42%) tend to reject the notion that English language learners are less likely to excel academically**

Q38 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: English language learners are less likely to excel academically than native English speakers? (%Strongly Disagree + Disagree by Occupation)



*For more recent public opinion data, see resources list at the end of this guide*

## Takeaway #5

**Survey respondents were confused or less responsive to broad gap and supports language**

**Advocates should focus on what the specific supports are rather than use broad language**



## Research showed:

- Audiences are confused by vagueness
- Specifying types of supports can help tap into other existing narratives that may benefit English Learner advocacy
- Gap language leaves inferences up to the audience on both why inequities exist and what the solutions are

## Recommendations for advocates:

- Get very specific with what “supports” or “programs” actually mean, and help audiences visualize these things.
- Frame gaps and inequities as the result of schools and districts not providing specific supports or programs
- Highlight stories of English Learners achieving at high levels and emphasize specific supports that helped

## Takeaway #5 Examples

### Strategies could look like:

- Consider research approaches that more directly identify data on supports and resources (for example, the number of English Learner support staff a district provides versus how many schools they cover or qualitative research on roadmap implementation)
- Leverage easy-to-use tools like “find” in documents to locate where broader language like “support” is overused and replace it with more specific language
- Use language “starters” when providing data points that help clarify the inputs that lead to outcomes (such as “As a result of...” or “Without additional professional development time for educators....”)

### Tactics could look like:

- Micro blog series that focuses on the specifics of “support” and highlights 4 key practices from a latest report
- Webinar featuring panel of local educators, framed with specifics on the types of support rather than more vague “supporting educators” language
- Social media images of professional development opportunities that clearly convey specifics

**Hiring more teachers is perceived to be the highest priority issue while closing the educational achievement gap is a lower priority**

How much of a priority do you think the following issues are:

Education System Issue Priority ("Top Priority" + "High Priority")  
n = 2047

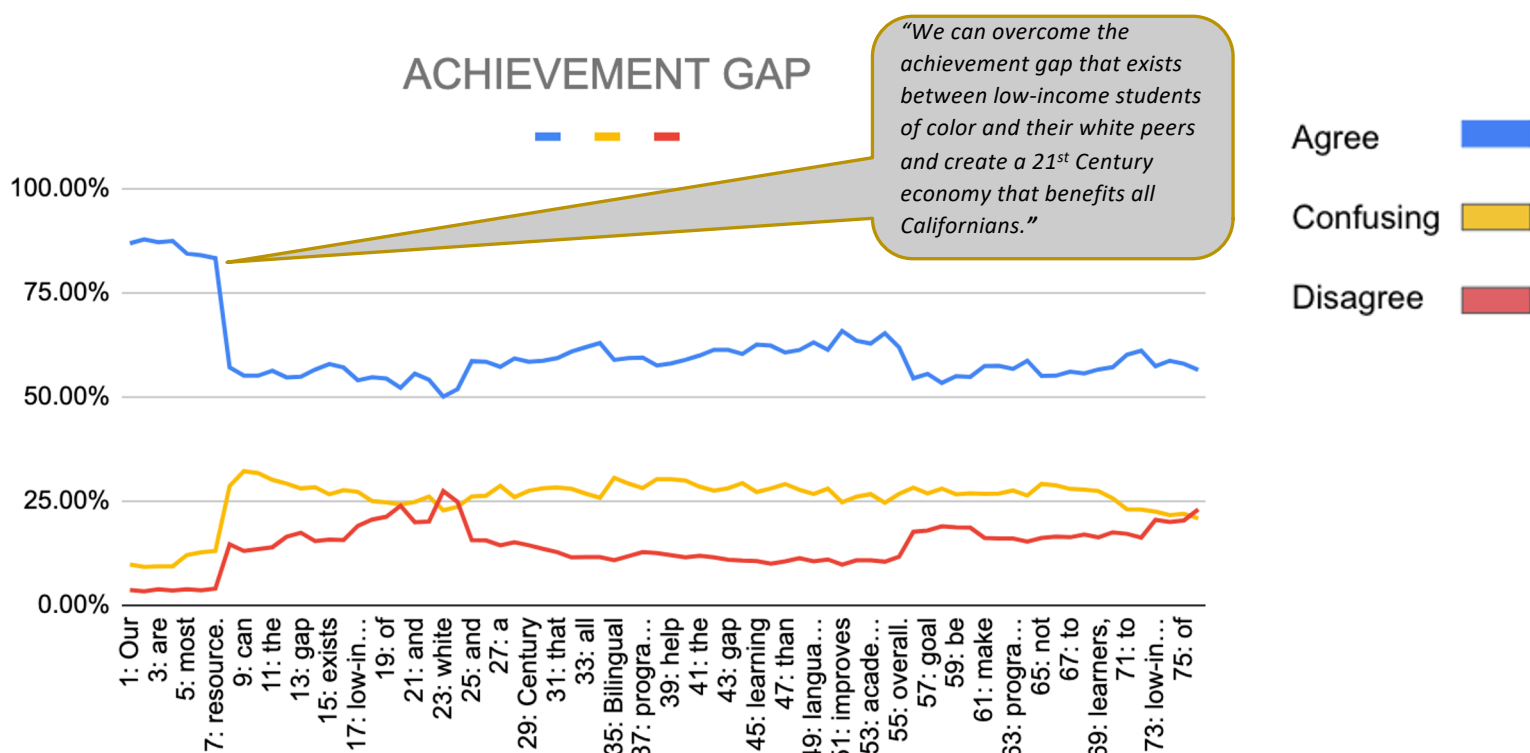


More than half of respondents feel each issue they evaluated should be prioritized

*For more recent public opinion data, see resources list at the end of this guide*

## Prosperity message resonated most with respondents

*Our children are our most precious resource. We can overcome the achievement gap that exists between low-income students of color and their white peers and create a 21<sup>st</sup> Century economy that benefits all Californians. Bilingual education programs can help close the achievement gap because learning more than one language actually improves children's academic performance overall. Our goal should be to make bilingual programs available not only to English learners, but to all low-income children of color.*



For more recent public opinion data, see resources list at the end of this guide

Researchers identify a need to be more specific and concrete



“Although there is widespread support for the general proposition that ELs should have increased support and services, the results of the message testing show that people find the phrases “expanding bilingual programs in our schools” and “bilingual education programs should be central in our schools” confusing. **This suggests that a more specific and concrete vision of what advocates are calling for is needed.**”

*For more recent public opinion data, see resources list at the end of this guide*

# Tools and Resources



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The Education Trust–West

# Narrative Planning Chart

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For advocates to use in looking ahead at their work and identifying opportunities for narrative work – Blank chart template

<i>[Fill out a new row for each item coming up in the next six months]</i>	<b>What narrative does this leverage?</b>	<b>How is this narrative being conveyed?</b>	<b>Do we need to adjust or shift this narrative? If so, in what ways?</b>	<b>Existing or needed tactics to shift narrative in this piece of work?</b>	<b>Staff members to support narrative work in this piece</b>	<b>Words, phrases, images to uplift</b>
<b>Reports, briefs, etc</b>						
<b>Social media campaigns</b>						
<b>Events</b>						
<b>Webinars</b>						
<b>Testimony/ Briefings</b>						
<b>Presentations/ Workshops</b>						
<b>Other</b>						
<b>Other</b>						





# Narrative Planning Chart

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**For advocates to use in looking ahead at their work and identifying opportunities for narrative work – Example chart partially filled out**

<i>[Fill out a new row for each item coming up in the next six months]</i>	<b>What narrative does this leverage/lead with?</b>	<b>How is this narrative being conveyed?</b>	<b>Do we need to adjust or shift this narrative? If so, in what ways?</b>	<b>Existing or needed tactics to shift narrative in this piece of work?</b>	<b>Staff members to support narrative work in this piece</b>	<b>Words, phrases, images to uplift</b>
<b>Reports on teacher PD and the EL Roadmap</b>	Achievement gap - Need for more PD because of student achievement gaps	Graphs of student outcomes	Put more emphasis on assets and how teachers have asked for PD	Highlight story of teacher whose students are achieving at high levels, couple this with the “cause” of educator PD	Author, content writer for emails and social	
<b>Social media campaign on end of the year giving</b>						
<b>Back to school welcome breakfast with parent organizers</b>						
<b>Webinar on EL Roadmap PD Report</b>						
<b>Briefing for district office on EL Roadmap PD Report</b>						



# Audience Strategy Chart

For advocates to use in identifying who they are trying to reach and strategically tailor content and approach – Blank chart template

Audience	What is their connection to this issue?	What do they care about?	Who or what do they listen to?	Where can we easily reach them?	What do we need them to do?	Any other things to consider?



# Appendix/Additional Resources

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- [Summer 2022 Narrative Change Research Findings](#)
- [Frameworks Institute](#)
- [ReFrame](#)

