



EdTrust-West

Strategic Plan 2023-2026



The Education Trust–West

A Letter From Our Executive Director

The word “unprecedented” attempts but does not fully capture the impact of the past few years on our schools, our colleges, and our lives. As we collectively worked to recover and rebuild our educational institutions in the wake of the pandemic, a clear sentiment emerged: we can’t go back to normal, when in fact, the old normal wasn’t working. From housing to health care, in many sectors of California life, solutions arose during the pandemic that had previously been thought of as impossible, out of reach, or untenable. At The Education Trust–West (EdTrust–West), we challenged ourselves, as many others did, to reimagine what schools, colleges, and education systems could and should look like if California were truly committed to advancing racial equity in education. It is in that spirit of bold action, of pursuing what is possible with unapologetic, deliberate direction, that we launch this 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.

EdTrust–West is at a crucial point in our over twenty-year history as an organization, as are our state and country. This organization has never accepted incrementalism, and we will not respond to heightened threats to fairer, more just educational systems with fear or hesitation. Instead, our strategic vision will push the organization, our partners, and policymakers to be bold. We will continue to do what we do best: put forward thoughtful, student-centered policy proposals. We will also leverage new advocacy strategies, informed by years of listening and learning from students, educators, and communities.

Being bold means our next three years will leverage varied approaches to surfacing evidence, exploring and incorporating multiple ways of knowing in our work. We will continue to use data as a foundational element of our policy advocacy and as a collective launching pad for partnering with advocates around the state. We will center the voices and experiences of students of color and multilingual learners, especially those experiencing poverty, as we work to identify and proactively push the state and local decision-makers to prioritize the most crucial changes and impactful implementation efforts in creative and engaging ways. This next chapter of EdTrust–West also involves bringing more Californians into the fold. We will seek out opportunities to reach a wider audience of potential equity champions, and to galvanize these folks in service of what is right and just for students of color.

Now is the time to reject the notion that because something is difficult, it cannot be pursued. Instead, it is a time to use all of our resources to firmly go after what is truly equitable, to carve out a path forward, and to emphatically forge ahead with a renewed sense of purpose and possibility. I look forward to being a part of this next phase of EdTrust–West’s journey with you all.



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Dr. Christopher J. Nellum



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Mission

The Education Trust–West is committed to advancing policies and practices to dismantle the racial and economic barriers embedded in the California education system. Through our research and advocacy, EdTrust-West improves racial equity in education, engages diverse communities dedicated to education equity and justice, and increases political and public will to build an education system where students of color and multilingual learners, especially those experiencing poverty, will thrive.



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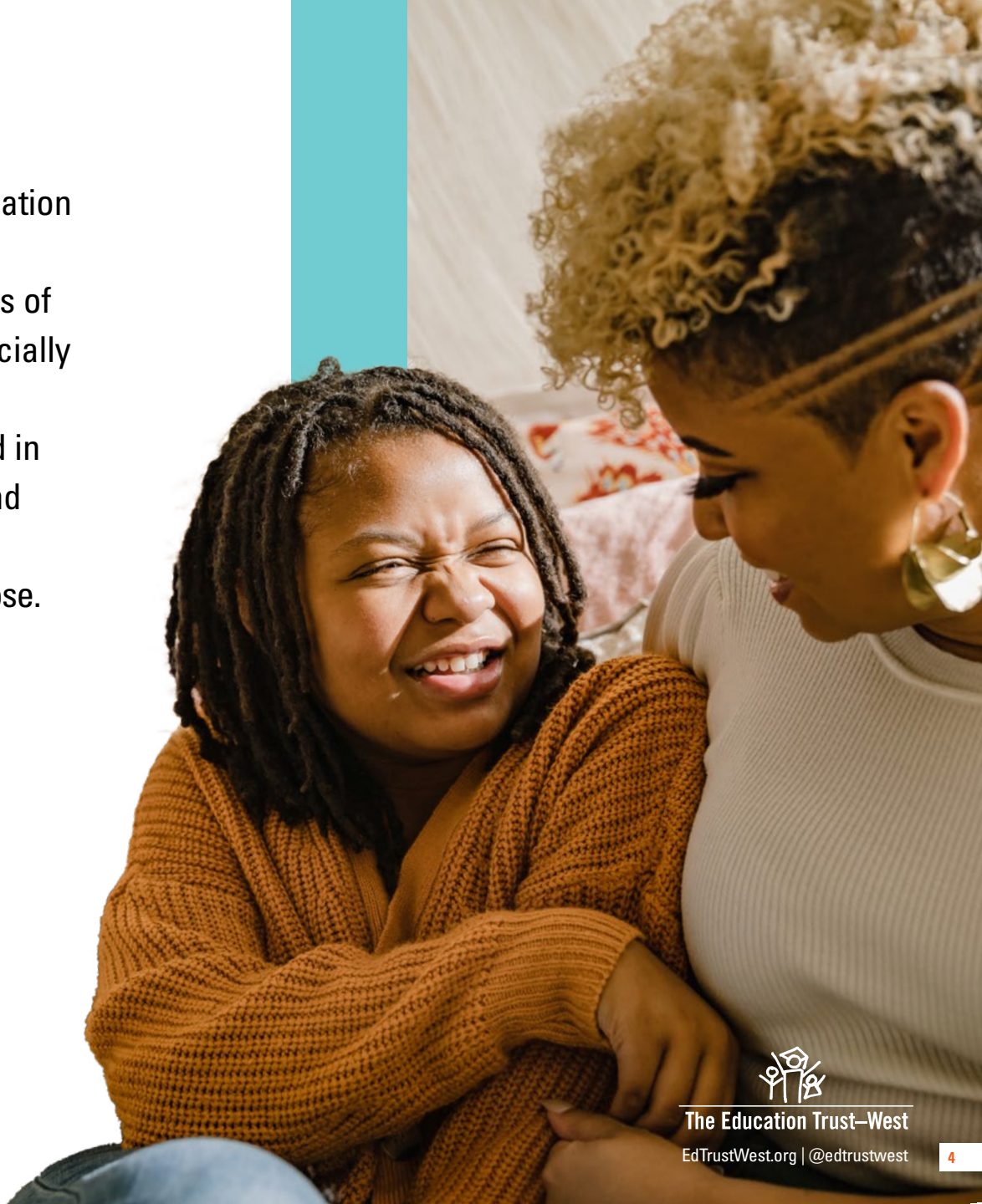
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Our Vision

We envision a California where education equity is baked into every policy and practice decision and where students of color and multilingual learners, especially those experiencing poverty, are fully supported academically and affirmed in their school or college community and equipped to pursue any educational, career, and livelihood options they choose.

Who We Prioritize

We prioritize students of color and multilingual learners, especially those experiencing poverty – including those from Black, Latinx, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Native American communities.



Our Values



Community

We partner with the community to elevate the experiences and voices of families, students, and educators.



Justice

We work to ensure that educational systems are fair.



Equity

We support solutions that lead to equitable educational experiences and outcomes for students.



Trust

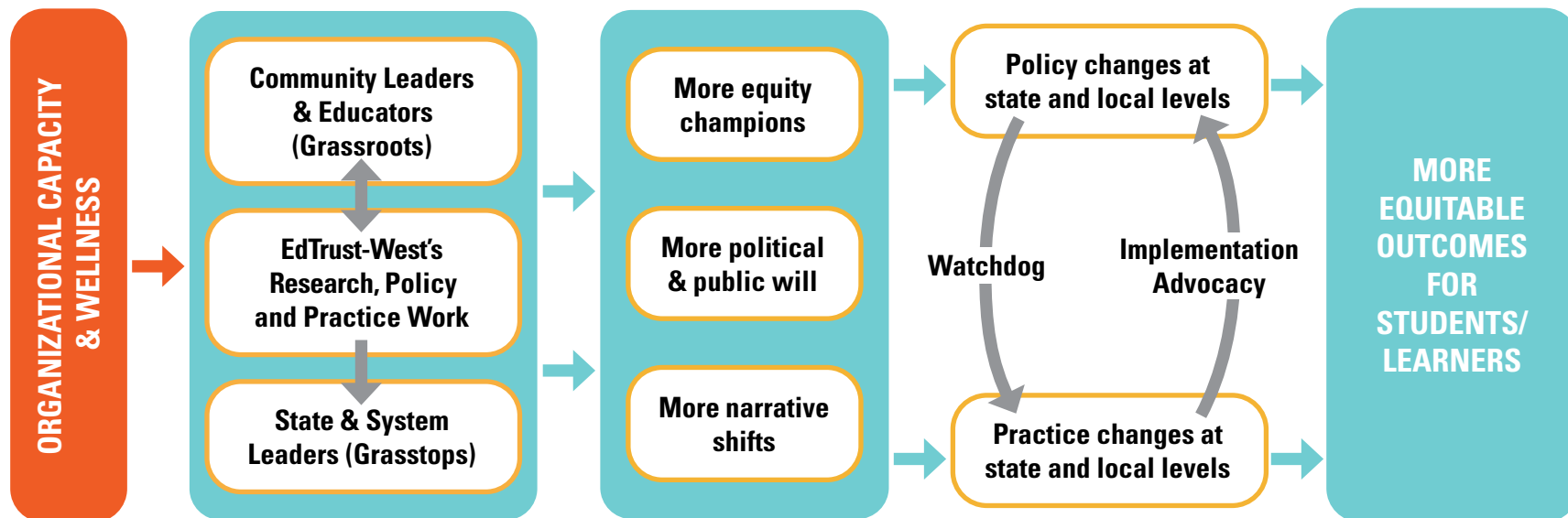
We believe those closest to the problem have the solutions.



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Theory of Change



CHANGING
policy

CHANGING THE
narrative

CHANGING
practice



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Our Approach

We **monitor** a range of policy issues across the TK through college spectrum by attending relevant convenings, reviewing research, and maintaining close working relationships with researchers, advocates, and our partners.

We **support** other partner organizations when we sign onto others' policy recommendations, pitch-in on partner campaigns, share policy recommendations, make public statements, and join relevant working groups or coalitions.

When we take a **lead** role, we go all in, marshaling organizational resources and galvanizing our partner organizations toward statewide campaigns to increase awareness and motivate action in the public and among decision makers and leaders.



New & Noteworthy

New

- ▶ Ethnic Studies Priority (TK-12)
- ▶ Mental Health Priority (Higher Ed)
- ▶ Deeper TK-12 & Higher Ed Team Expertise
- ▶ Galvanizing Broader Public Support for Education Equity
- ▶ Growing Advocate Action-Focused Network

Noteworthy

- ▶ Greater Los Angeles Impact
- ▶ Building power via our signature programs:
 - Our student fellowships (FIERCE Fellowship, Russlynn Ali Fellowship)
 - A network of community-based orgs (the CORE Collective)
 - Partnering with educators (Educator Advisory Council)
- ▶ Working across traditional TK-12 and higher ed silos
- ▶ Diversity of our team
- ▶ Targeting regional and Spanish-language media



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We will tenaciously pursue policy changes that will result in more equitable outcomes for students of color and multilingual learners, especially those experiencing poverty – including those from **Black, Latinx, Asian American, Pacific Islander**, and **Native American** communities – by focusing on the following organizational and programmatic priorities



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Strategic Priorities 2023-2026

Programmatic

- ▶ Bold Policy and Advocacy Platform
- ▶ Equitable Implementation of Policies and Practices
- ▶ Effective Coalition Building
- ▶ Clear Communication of Priorities and Impact
- ▶ Courageous Research, Data, and Analytic Leadership
- ▶ Deepened and Formalized Presence in Key Regions Across the State

Organizational

- ▶ Organizational Sustainability
- ▶ Staff Capacity and Well-Being





Bold Policy and Advocacy Platform

Draw on our unique organizational strengths to advance a policy agenda that is community and educator-informed to secure policy and practice changes across the following policy priorities and issues:

TK-12

- ▶ Ethnic Studies Implementation
- ▶ Math Equity
- ▶ K-12 Funding Adequacy & Equity
- ▶ Educator Diversity, Recruitment, & Retention
- ▶ Transitional Kindergarten Roll out & Student Success

Higher Ed

- ▶ Equitable Placement & Completion
- ▶ Dual Enrollment
- ▶ Financial Aid Access & Reform
- ▶ Mental Health Supports
- ▶ Parenting Students

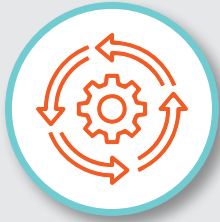
Cross-cutting

- ▶ State Data Systems
- ▶ Multilingual Learners
- ▶ State Funding for Education



We will achieve our **bold policy** and **advocacy platform** by engaging in the following **strategic approaches** that align with our **theory of change** and are informed by two decades of assessing and refining our unique approach





Equitable Implementation of Policies and Practices

Monitor, advocate for, and support the successful implementation of key educational equity reforms — across the state and in priority regions — and work to improve experiences and outcomes for the students we prioritize, by influencing local policies and practices and seeking additional policy change if necessary.

GOALS

- ▶ Monitor implementation and evaluate the impact of equity-focused policies
- ▶ Advocate for the adoption of new equity-centered policies and practices
- ▶ Increase the organization's profile as a trusted partner and technical assistance provider





Effective Coalition Building

Strengthen the partnerships and connections between state and system leaders, community leaders, and educators; build thriving coalitions, and engage with stakeholders via multiple modalities about educational equity priorities statewide and in priority regions.

GOALS

- ▶ Provide education equity champions with high-quality and valuable support to advance racial equity in education across the TK-16 continuum locally and statewide
- ▶ Deepen relationships with new education equity leaders and organizations, particularly those working to advance outcomes for Indigenous/Native American, Asian / Asian American, and Pacific Islander students
- ▶ Cultivate at least 3 education equity champions in the AAPI, Black, and Latino caucuses of the Legislature
- ▶ Explore strategies to build political power throughout the state





Clear Communication of Priorities and Impact

Enhance awareness of critical educational equity issues and solutions in EdTrust-West's policy and advocacy platform and elevate our role in the education ecosystem by raising our profile and communicating our impact regionally and across the state.

GOALS

- ▶ Position EdTrust-West as a seen and sought after source by legislators, fellow advocates, local education agencies, parents and students
- ▶ Creatively expand avenues of communication to include regional and Spanish-language earned media
- ▶ Build public relations capacity of the EdTrust-West team
- ▶ Galvanize new groups of education equity supporters who are actively engaged in advocating for California's students



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Courageous Research, Data, and Analytic Leadership

Leverage mixed-methods research that is both rigorous and asset-based to identify root causes of educational inequity, inform evidence-based design of policy solutions, and support stakeholder engagement with data to advance advocacy across the state and in priority regions.

GOALS

- ▶ Produce timely, actionable research focusing explicitly on racial equity, featuring intersectional analyses where possible and relevant
- ▶ Create opportunities for community-based organizations, local leaders, families, and educators to build data fluency on equity issues across the TK-16 continuum
- ▶ Disseminate learnings from direct engagements with students, educators, schools, districts, educational institutions, and community-based organizations





Deepened and Formalized Presence in Key Regions across the State

Build partnerships and relationships to engage a local network of advocates in key regions across the state who can inform and help advance our policy agenda as well as lead and participate in local advocacy; engage with stakeholders via multiple modalities about regional educational equity priorities that can improve experiences and outcomes for students of color and multilingual learners, especially for those experiencing poverty.

BROAD GOAL

Explore opportunities to maximize partnerships and local networks of advocates to increase potential impact in the Central Valley, Inland Empire, and the Bay Area.

GREATER LOS ANGELES REGION GOALS

- ▶ Solidify financial sustainability and growth for the Greater Los Angeles regional strategy for 3 years and beyond
- ▶ Secure a location and dedicated regional staff to address regional equity issues across the TK-16 continuum
- ▶ Create a regional policy agenda and implement advocacy strategies that are community and educator informed, impactful, strategic, and advance our mission in Greater Los Angeles
- ▶ Increase visibility in the Greater Los Angeles Region through media engagement, hosting events, and growing relationships with regional advocates



Organizational Sustainability

Ensure the sustainability and appropriate growth of EdTrust-West by aligning and regularly assessing organizational policies, practices, and funding opportunities with the mission, vision, values, and theory of change.

GOALS

- ▶ Recruit, retain, and support a well-qualified and racially diverse staff
- ▶ Build institutional knowledge
- ▶ Continue values-aligned internal spending
- ▶ Enhance internal communications





Staff Capacity and Well-Being

Enhance staff experience and sustainability by investing in employee development, monitoring capacity, and fostering an organizational culture anchored in structures, and systems that share power, decision-making, and feedback with opportunities and resources to achieve goals, and advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

GOALS

- ▶ Establish an equitable decision-making framework
- ▶ Leverage data to enhance staff experience
- ▶ Equip people managers with tools to efficiently and equitably manage



*I tell my students, 'When you get these jobs that you have been
so brilliantly trained for, just remember that your real job is
that if you are free, you need to free somebody else.
If you have some power, then your job is to empower somebody else.
This is not just a grab-bag candy game.'*

Toni Morrison



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