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# Strategic and Economic Analysis of English Learner Programs in California

**Recommendations: Expand Access to Integrated Care**

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# Welcome

This slide deck is part of a series of slide decks summarizing the Strategic and Economic Analysis of English Learner Programs in California project.

There are five slide decks available, listed to the right. You are currently reviewing the Recommendations: Expand Access to Integrated Care.

This slide deck provides a closer look at recommendations in the first area of focus.

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Project Context, Goals, and Methods
- III. Recommendations: Improve the Design of English Learner Programs
- IV. Recommendations: Expand Access to Integrated Care**
- V. Recommendations: Transition to a Multilingual Workforce

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# Project Overview

**In 2024, WestEd partnered with Sobrato Philanthropies to conduct a strategic and economic analysis of English Learner programs in the state of California.**

**The study sought to define the scale of economic challenges and explore underlying conditions impacting the costs of implementing English Learner programs in California in alignment with best practice.**

**Based on the study's conclusions, WestEd identified recommendations related to the following three overarching areas of focus, grounded in the long-term goal of bringing multilingual programs for English Learners to scale in California:**

- A. improve the design of English Learner programs,**
- B. expand access to integrated care, and**
- C. transition to a multilingual workforce.**

# Strategic and Economic Analysis of English Learner Programs in California

Slide Deck Summary

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# Slide Deck Summary

## What key topic is covered in this slide deck?



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# What are we recommending?

This slide deck focuses on the first area of focus:

A. IMPROVE the DESIGN of ENGLISH LEARNER PROGRAMS

**B. EXPAND ACCESS to INTEGRATED CARE**

C. TRANSITION to a MULTILINGUAL WORKFORCE

## B. Expand Access to Integrated Care: Recommendations

**B1**

**Invest in formal English Learner family care navigators** to help the families of these students navigate existing education and community supports and ensure families/caregivers can effectively advocate for their children. Hire navigators who are peers who have lived in the community and speak the languages of the community.

**B2**

**Design, build, and activate coordinated care systems** that link education, health, social, and neighborhood domains at the county level to support, for example, access to health care and immigration services.

**B3**

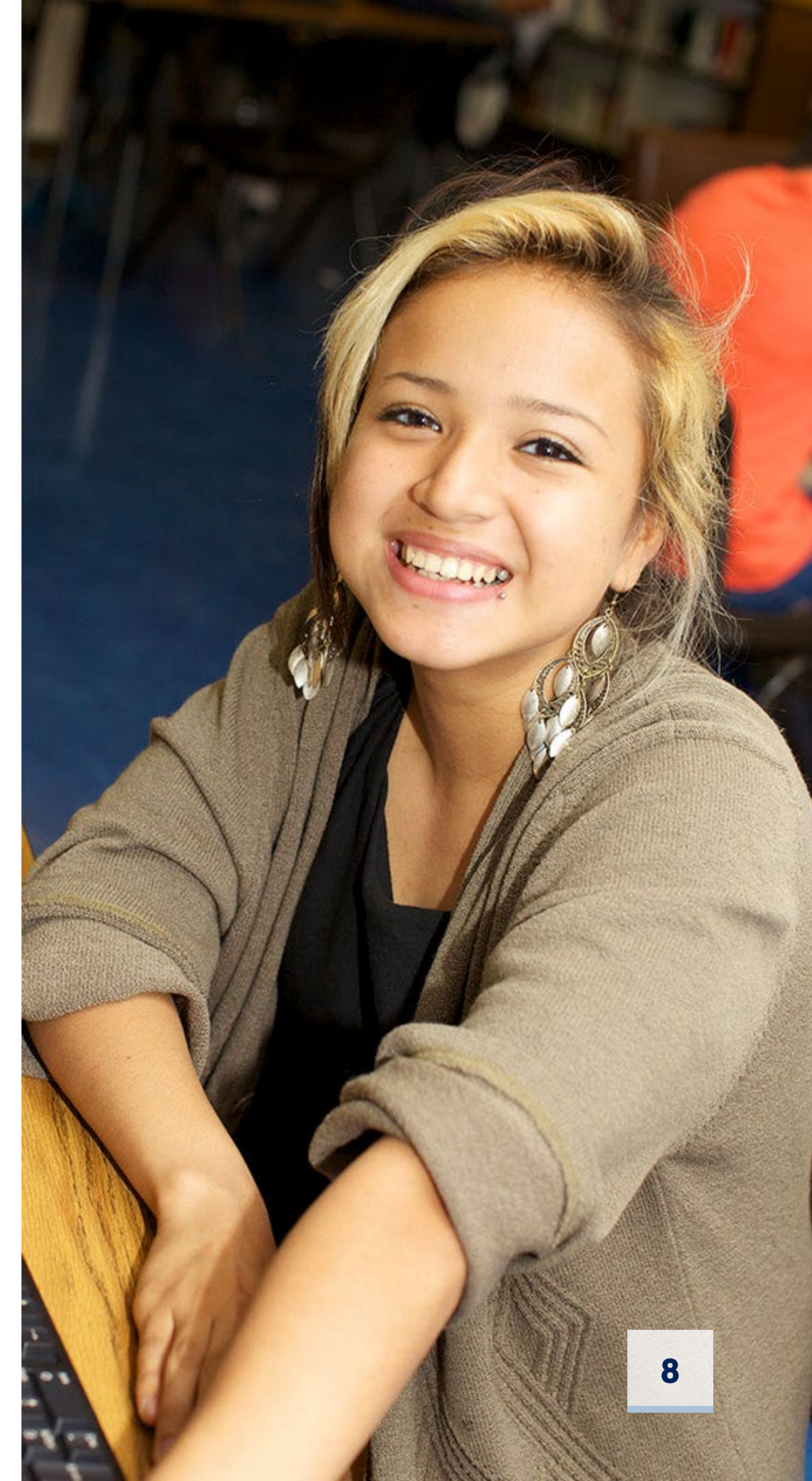
**Design a pilot block grant program** that combines funding resources from several state funding programs that can be directed to a community's greatest needs outside of school.

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# What are we recommending?

## Key Takeaways

- **Recommendations in this area of focus are informed by several activities:**
  - Analysis to identify school districts with similar English Learner program settings.
  - Analysis of community context and its relationship to English Learner program setting.
  - Engagement with families in these six districts representing English Learner Advisory Committees (ELACs).
  - Engagement with WestEd experts in English Learner program improvement.

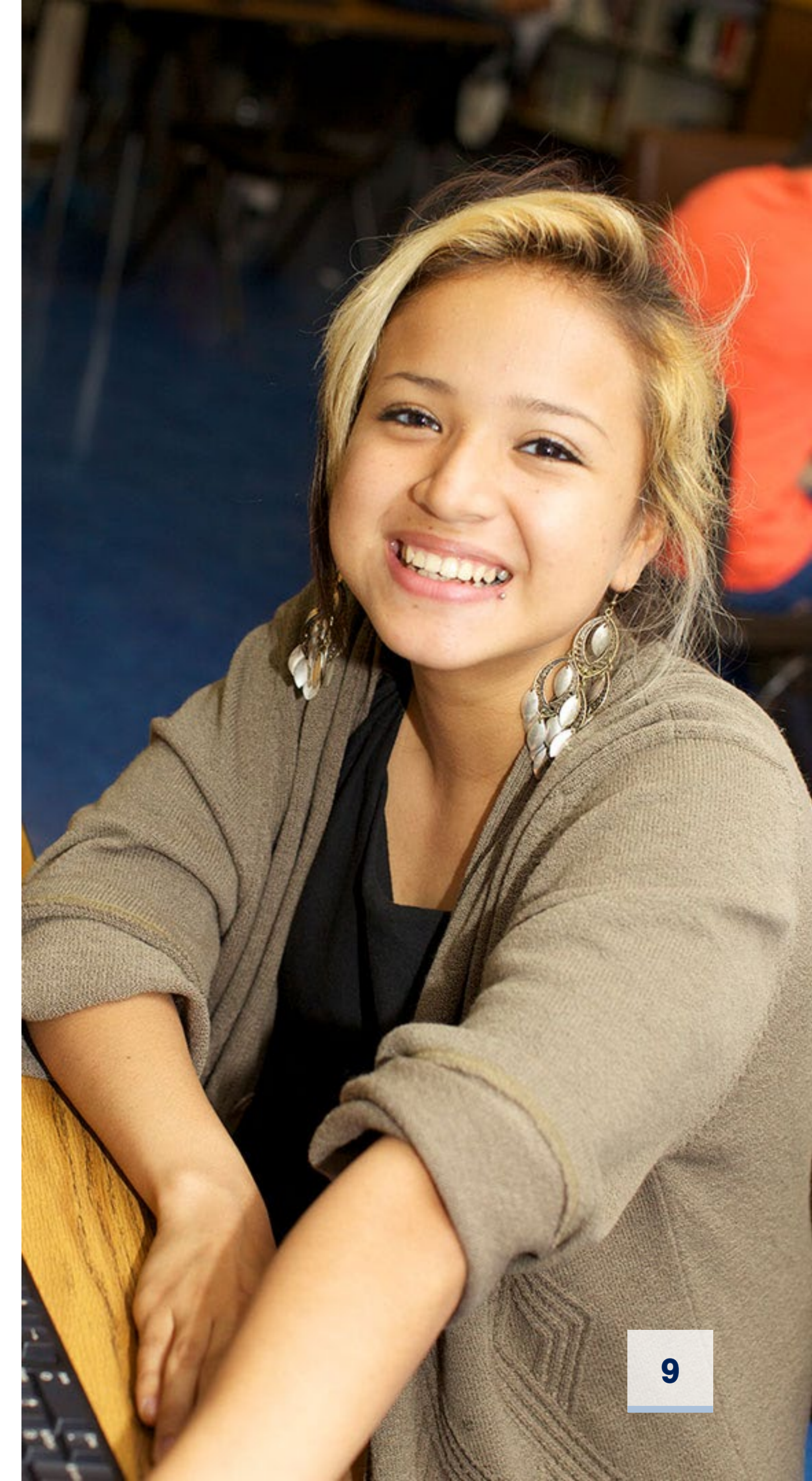


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# What are we recommending?

## Key Takeaways

- **These activities in turn support a key conclusion:**
  1. Most English Learner programs, regardless of their context, could benefit from stronger family and community engagement and better coordinated and integrated supports adjacent to the school setting in the economic, health, social, and neighborhood domains.



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# Strategic and Economic Analysis of English Learner Programs in California

[Additional Detailed Slides](#)

# What are we recommending?

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# Expand Access to Integrated Care

# B. Expand Access to Integrated Care

**B1**

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**B2**

**Design, build, and activate coordinated care systems** that link education, health, social, and neighborhood domains at the county level to support, for example, access to health care and immigration services.

**B3**

**Design a pilot block grant program** that combines funding resources from several state funding programs that can be directed to a community's greatest needs outside of school.

# Expand Access to Integrated Care

<b>Strategic – Adding Value Today</b>	<b>Aspirational – Preparing for Tomorrow</b>	<b>Feasible – Practical in Today’s System</b>
<p>Communities across the state of California can benefit immediately from direct support with navigating and accessing noneducational public services.</p> <p>Improving the systemwide coordination of these services will also immediately benefit communities.</p>	<p>By expanding engagement with English Learner families and communities, family care navigators can foster greater trust and partnership.</p> <p>This sort of collaboration with families and communities is a necessary first step toward a successful transition to multilingual instructional programs.</p>	<p>Ongoing initiatives—such as community schools, the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative, and the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program—are already focused on improving coordination between the education sector and a range of other service sectors.</p> <p>This project’s recommendations are a call to strategically build on those efforts to improve access for English Learner families and communities.</p>

# Expand Access to Integrated Care

What are our key conclusions?

How did we reach these conclusions?

What key findings inform our conclusions?

How can the key audiences contribute to achieving the recommended actions?

How are these recommendations aligned with the field?

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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

*What are our key conclusions?*



**Key Conclusion #1:** Most English Learner programs, regardless of their context, could benefit from stronger family and community engagement and better coordinated and integrated supports adjacent to the school setting in the economic, health, social, and neighborhood domains.

# Expand Access to Integrated Care

What are our key conclusions?

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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

### *How did we reach these conclusions?*

**Key Conclusion #1:** Most English Learner programs, regardless of their context, could benefit from stronger family and community engagement and better coordinated and integrated supports adjacent to the school setting in the economic, health, social, and neighborhood domains.

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- **Key Finding #1:** Cluster analysis identified school districts with similar settings, specifically similar English Learner student populations, program sizes, and instructional staff demographics and qualifications.
- **Key Finding #2:** Logistic regression analysis of the Centers for Disease Control Social Determinants of Health framework suggests that economic and social needs outside of school are statistically significantly associated with the context of schools' English Learner programs, such as the students served, the size of the program, and the staff supporting it.



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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

### *How did we reach these conclusions?*

#### How did we analyze English Learner programs to identify school districts with similar program contexts?

- **Step 1:** We identified a suitable analysis method known as cluster analysis, in particular k-means clustering. The goal is to maximize the similarity of those in the group and minimize their similarity with those not in the group with respect to the data included.
- **Step 2:** We then selected a limited set of data measures to include in our analysis; (1) English Learner Percent; (2) Percent of Economically Disadvantaged English Learners; (3) Percent of Migrant Students; (4) Percent of Non-Spanish Speaking English Learners; (5) Percent of Non-White English Learners; (6) Percent of Bilingual Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) Authorized Staff, and (7) Percent of Non-White Staff.
- **Step 3:** We purposefully selected the top five percent school districts with respect to English Learner enrollment given their unique context and then clustered the remaining school districts with English Learners into five clusters using k-means clustering.



## Expand Access to Integrated Care

### *How did we reach these conclusions?*

#### How did we analyze English Learner programs to identify school districts with similar program contexts?

- **Step 4:** We analyzed the resulting five clusters to determine along which dimensions they are most distinct from the other clusters. This resulted in the following cluster profiles:
  - 1. Very Small, Less Diverse:** Lower than average percent of English Learners and non-Spanish speaking English Learners, and lower than average percent of non-White staff.
  - 2. Small, Low Economic Disadvantage:** Lower than average percent of English Learners and economically disadvantaged English Learners. Higher than average non-Spanish speaking English Learners.
  - 3. Medium Size, Very Low Economic Disadvantage:** Lower than average percent of English Learners and non-White English Learners, and much lower than average percent economically disadvantaged English Learners. Higher than average non-Spanish speaking English Learners.



## Expand Access to Integrated Care

### *How did we reach these conclusions?*

#### How did we analyze English Learner programs to identify school districts with similar program contexts?

- **Step 4:** We analyzed the resulting five clusters to determine along which dimensions they are most distinct from the other clusters. This resulted in the following cluster profiles:
  - 4. Large, Diverse:** Higher than average percent of English Learners and economically disadvantaged English Learners. Lower than average non-Spanish speaking English Learners.
  - 5. Very Large, Very Diverse:** Higher than average percent of English Learners, economically disadvantaged English Learners, percent migrant students, and non-White staff. Lower than average non-Spanish speaking English Learners.
- **Step 5:** We also analyzed the geographic locations of the districts by cluster to determine whether they are clustered by regions of the state or more geographically diverse.

# Expand Access to Integrated Care

What are our key conclusions?

How did we reach these conclusions?

**What key findings inform our conclusions?**

How can the key audiences contribute to achieving the recommended actions?

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# Expand Access to Integrated Care

*What key findings inform our conclusions?*

Our school district clusters are driven by **program relevant measures**, with each cluster favoring a specific combination of characteristics.

Key Measure	Very Small, Less Diverse	Small, Low Economic Disadvantage	Medium Size, Very Low Economic Disadvantage	Large, Diverse	Very Large, Very Diverse
English Learner (%)	- (low)	- (low)	- (low)	+ (high)	+ (high)
ED English Learners (%)	N/A	- (low)	- (low)	+ (high)	+ (high)
Migrant Students (%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	+ (high)
Non-Spanish Speaking English Learners (%)	- (low)	+ (high)	+ (high)	- (low)	- (low)
Non-White English Learners (%)	N/A	N/A	- (low)	N/A	N/A
BCLAD Authorized Staff (%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-White Staff (%)	- (low)	N/A	N/A	N/A	+ (high)

# Expand Access to Integrated Care

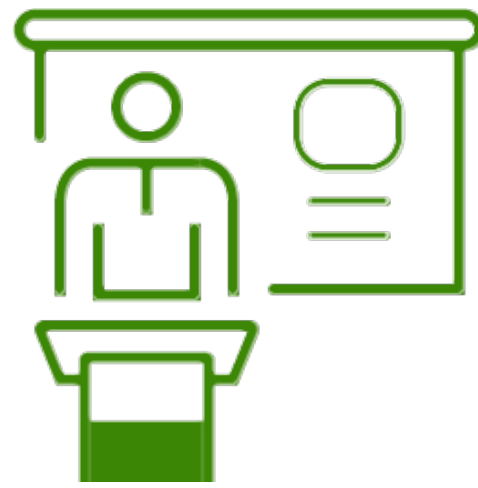
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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

*How did we reach these conclusions?*

**How did we analyze community context and its relationship to English Learner program setting?**

- **Step 1:** First, we identified measures within each of the Center for Disease Control's Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) four noneducational domains—Economic Stability, Health and Wellness, Social and Community Context, and Neighborhood and Built Environment.
  - These measures were drawn from data maintained in the Agency of Healthcare Research and Quality Social Determinants of Health Database.
- **Step 2:** We then used confirmatory factor analysis techniques alongside measures of internal reliability to determine if the identified measures are consistent with each other and measure a single underlying unmeasured quality, like Neighborhood and Built Environment.

# Expand Access to Integrated Care

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# Expand Access to Integrated Care

*What key findings inform our conclusions?*

We found that the identified measures within the SDOH framework domains are **highly internally reliable**.

Economic Stability	Health and Wellness	Social and Community Context	Neighborhood and Built Environment
Lower economic vulnerability	Greater health insurance coverage	Lower measures of social vulnerability (including a global measure, language status, minority demographics)	Lower spending on housing >30% of income
Higher employment	Better air quality	Larger number of social associations (e.g., labor organizations, community organizations)	More access to reliable transportation
Lower child poverty	Greater access to medical services		Less White/Non-White residential segregation
Higher food access	Greater use of clinical services		
	Greater access to green spaces		

# Expand Access to Integrated Care

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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

### *How did we reach these conclusions?*

#### How did we analyze community context and its relationship to English Learner program settings?

- **Step 3:** We generated composite variables representing an average of the standardized measures in each SDOH domain.
- **Step 4:** We then estimated a series of school district-level logistic regression models in which the outcome variable was a school district's membership in a study program cluster (e.g., Very Small, Less Diverse, etc.) and the SDOH composite variables were the key independent variables of interest.
  - We also included several additional variables in the regressions to account for relevant factors and improve the analysis: percent of long-term English Learners, percent of students testing in low levels of English proficiency, percent of staff with Master's degrees or higher, percent of inexperienced staff, and percent of young staff.



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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

*How did we reach these conclusions?*

**How did we analyze community context and its relationship to English Learner program setting?**

- **Step 5:** We estimated a regression for each study cluster and identified cases where an SDOH composite variable had a statistically significant relationship with cluster membership.
  - A positive relationship indicates that an increase in the composite variable (i.e., more economic stability, etc.) was associated with a greater likelihood of being found in a cluster.
  - Conversely, a negative relationship indicates that an increase in the composite variable was associated with a lower likelihood of being found in a cluster.

# Expand Access to Integrated Care

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# Expand Access to Integrated Care

*What key findings inform our conclusions?*

Depending on the program context (i.e., cluster), some critical out of school factors are more likely to be **strong** or **weak**.

Program Cluster	Economic Stability	Health and Wellness	Social and Community Context	Neighborhood and Built Environment
Very Small, Less Diverse	N/A	↓ (weak)	↑ (strong)	↑ (strong)
Small, Low Economic Disadvantage	↓ (weak)	↑ (strong)	↑ (strong)	↑ (strong)
Medium Size, Very Low Economic Disadvantage	N/A	↑ (strong)	↓ (weak)	↓ (weak)
Large, Diverse	↑ (strong)	↑ (strong)	↓ (weak)	↓ (weak)
Very Large, Very Diverse	N/A	↑ (strong)	↓ (weak)	↓ (weak)
Top Five Percent	N/A	↑ (strong)	↓ (weak)	N/A

# Expand Access to Integrated Care

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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

### *How did we reach these conclusions?*

**Key Conclusion #1:** Most English Learner programs, regardless of their context, could benefit from stronger family and community engagement and better coordinated and integrated supports adjacent to the school setting in the economic, health, social, and neighborhood domains.

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- **Key Finding #3:** Primary focus group data gathered from English Learner Advisory Committee representatives in the six case study school districts across the state suggest that families (1) struggle to access information about the English Learner programs provided to their child(ren) and (2) would benefit from support provided by school staff to access noneducational services.
- **Key Finding #4:** WestEd English Learner program experts identified a need in California to improve engagement with English Learner families. These engagement activities are commonly conducted informally by program staff, typically a bilingual paraprofessional.



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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

### *How did we reach these conclusions?*

#### How did we engage with local English Learner Advisory Committees in the six case study school districts?

- **Step 1:** Alongside interviews with English Learner program staff in the case study school districts, we also conducted focus groups with representatives from their English Learner Advisory Committees (ELAC) and District English Learner Advisory Committees (DELAC).
  - These interviews were conducted in Spanish given that this was the language other than English of the families participating.
- **Step 2:** The focus group included questions about the participants' experiences with the English Learner program in their school district, and additional educational and noneducational services provided and/or needed in their community.
- **Step 3:** We were able to conduct focus groups in all but one of the communities we engaged, ultimately conducting five focus groups.



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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

*How did we reach these conclusions?*

How did we engage with English Learner program experts in WestEd's English Learner and Migrant Education Services team?

- **Step 1:** We identified a panel of English Learner program experts in WestEd's English Learner and Migrant Education Services team including folks with experience working in the field, leading and designing professional development for English Learner program staff, and conducting evaluations of English Learner programs.
- **Step 2:** We convened the panel and engaged panelists in a semi-structured interview process focused on the key design and resource components of effective English Learner programs.
- **Step 3:** We analyzed the qualitative interview data to identify themes in the panelist responses.

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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

*What key findings inform our conclusions?*

Through our engagement with ELAC and DELAC representatives we were able to identify a few common themes:

- The need and value of **more individualized instruction, one-on-one support.**
- The need for **stronger communication** between the school and home about what the English Learner program entails and student performance and progress.
- Comments that families are **struggling with economic disadvantage** that impacts their ability to engage with their student's education and would benefit from school support accessing available services.



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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

*What key findings inform our conclusions?*

Through our engagement with the WestEd English Learner program expert panel we found:

- **Broad agreement that engagement with English Learner families in California needs improvement, and particularly the importance of two-way partnership as opposed to one-way communication.**
- **Further, the panel noted the challenges of partnering with families to implement multilingual programs, and especially two-way dual language immersion.**
- **The panel identified stronger engagement as a strategy for both improving current programs and establishing the stronger engagement necessary for a transition to multilingual programs.**
  - This includes both ensuring families are supportive of this transition and engaging them to inform how the transition can best be accomplished.

# Expand Access to Integrated Care

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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

*How did we reach these conclusions?*

**Key Conclusion #1:** Most English Learner programs, regardless of their context, could benefit from stronger family and community engagement and better coordinated and integrated supports adjacent to the school setting in the economic, health, social, and neighborhood domains.

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- **Key Finding #5:** Analysis of primary data from the six case study districts points to potential underinvestment in family support and engagement, with the majority of these districts reporting that they have no English Learner program family/community liaisons.



# Improve the Design of English Learner Programs

## *How did we reach these conclusions?*

### How did we estimate the gaps between current investment and the Ohio study recommendations?

- **Step 1:** We conducted a review of recent literature assessing the cost of English Learner programs to achieve success and identified the *Ohio English Learner Cost Study* as our key benchmark for standards-based costs.
  - The study can be accessed at <https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Student-Supports/English-Learners/English-Learner-Programs/English-Learners-Cost-Study.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>.
- **Step 2:** We estimated the investment for key English Learner program personnel roles based upon the recommendations in the Ohio study per English Learner pupil for each case study school district.
  - A key recommendation includes **250:1 caseloads for family/community liaisons**.
- **Step 3:** We compared the Ohio study standards-based investment amount to the current investments estimates for each case study school district.

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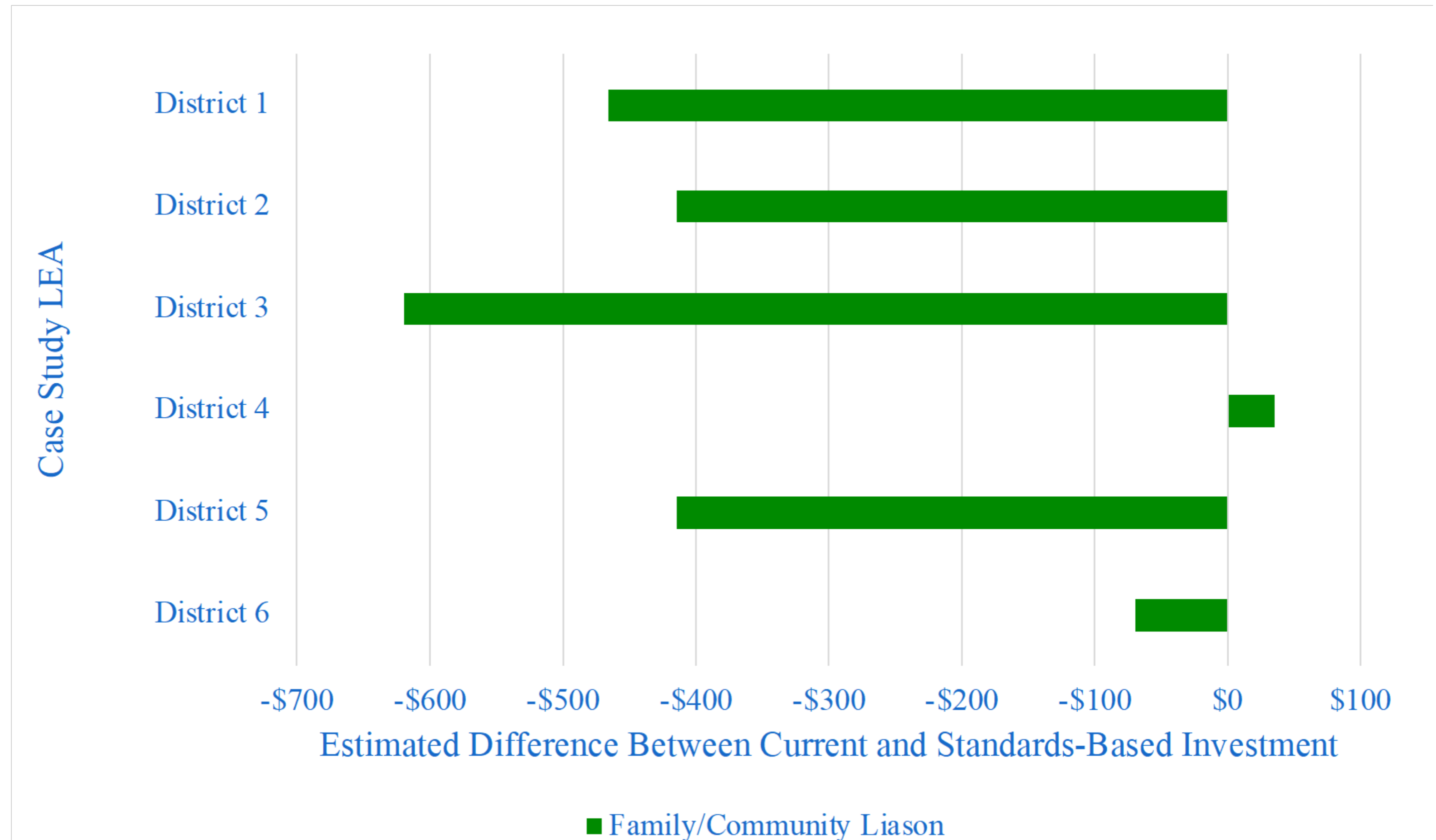
How are these recommendations aligned with the field?



# Expand Access to Integrated Care

*What key findings inform our conclusions?*

Differences for Family/Community Liaisons reflect that many case study districts report **no English Learner program family/community liaisons.**



# Expand Access to Integrated Care

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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

*How can the key audiences contribute to achieving the recommended actions?*

The study team considered the following key audiences who can take action to support these recommendations:

**State and Local Policymakers**

**Regional and Local Practitioners**

**Statewide and Community Organizations**

**Philanthropy**

## Expand Access to Integrated Care

*How can the key audiences contribute to achieving the recommended actions?*

Audience	Action
State Policymakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support through existing funding efforts in this area.</li><li>• Adjust future policy to allow for and incentivize child- and youth-focused agencies to support family care navigators.</li></ul>
Local Policymakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make strategic investments in family care navigators.</li></ul>
Regional Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lead coordination of cross-agency teams, supporting more effective and coherent organization of services for students and families.</li></ul>
State and Community Orgs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mobilize to support family care navigators. Encourage connecting multilingual families to these services through the public education school system.</li></ul>
Philanthropy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaborate across sectors with an aim to facilitate system coherence and increase the integration of educational and noneducational services.</li></ul>

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## Expand Access to Integrated Care

*How are these recommendations aligned with the field?*

California and the broader field of English Learner program improvement have a robust infrastructure including two key documents:

- The **California English Learner Roadmap (2017)** outlining guidance for supporting English learner students
- The Center for Applied Linguistics' **Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (2018)**.

Moreover, momentum has been growing in the field around the goal of expanding multilingual instructional programs for English Learners in California, including the following activities:

- The state committed to expanding these programs in its **Global California 2030 Initiative** goals.
- A recent Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles report – **Meeting its Potential: A Call and Guide for Universal Access to Bilingual Education in California** – made recommendations on reaching universal access to these programs in California.

# Expand Access to Integrated Care

*How are these recommendations aligned with the field?*

Project Recommendations	English Learner Roadmap	Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education
<p><b>B1. Invest in formal family care navigators</b> to help families navigate existing education and community supports and ensure families/caregivers can effectively advocate for their child(ren).</p>	<p><b>Principle One:</b> Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools</p>	<p><b>Strand 6:</b> Family and Community—<i>Principle 2: The program promotes family and community engagement and advocacy through outreach activities and support services that are aligned with the three core goals of dual language education.</i></p>
<p><b>B2. Design, build, and activate coordinated care systems</b> that link education, health, social, and neighborhood domains at the county level to support, for example, access to health care and immigration services.</p>	<p><b>Principle Four:</b> Alignment and Articulation Within and Across Systems</p>	<p><b>Strand 6:</b> Family and Community—<i>Principle 1: The program has a responsive infrastructure for positive, active, and ongoing relations with students’ families and the community.</i></p>
<p><b>B3. Design a pilot block grant program</b> that combines funding resources from several state funding programs that can be directed to a community’s greatest needs outside of school.</p>	<p><b>Principle Three:</b> System Conditions That Support Effectiveness</p>	<p><b>Strand 6:</b> Family and Community—<i>Principle 3: The program views and involves families and community members as strategic partners.</i></p>

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# Keep digging!

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# Acknowledgements

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This project was made possible by the generosity of **Sobrato Philanthropies**, and the WestEd team would like to thank them for their financial support and thought partnership on this project.

The authors would also like to acknowledge the partnership and advice provided by a wide range of **experts in the improvement of English Learner programs in California**.

We are grateful for the donation of their time and the thoughtful input and feedback they provided on the project work throughout the process.

That said, the work of this project is entirely that of the **WestEd team**. All errors are our own.