

ENSURING A MULTILINGUAL-READY UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN WORKFORCE

English Learner Workforce Investment Initiative Central Valley
State Policy Recommendations

AUGUST 2025



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document was a collaboration between Californians Together and the English Learner Workforce Investment Initiative (EL-WIN) with generous support from the Emerging Bilingual Collaborative. We are grateful for the input and recommendations from the following:

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A special recognition to Erin Freschi and Dr. Elizabeth Alvarado for assisting with the writing of this document and for their insights from the field of early childhood education.

Layouts, formatting, type-setting and infographics by Californians Together.

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Ensuring a Multilingual-Ready Universal Pre-Kindergarten Workforce: English Learner Workforce Investment Initiative Central Valley State Policy Recommendations

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Executive Summary

In California, 59% of children under the age of five are multilingual, representing approximately 1.69 million young learners. These children bring invaluable linguistic and cultural assets to the classroom, to our communities and to the future of our state. However, systemic barriers often impede their access to high-quality education and the opportunities it affords. Addressing these barriers is essential to ensuring the success of both young multilingual learners and the educators who serve them.

EL-WIN Central Valley¹

The English Learners Workforce Investment Initiative, or EL-WIN, provides philanthropic resources to California local education agencies (LEAs)—especially those that serve small and rural communities in the Central Valley and LA County—to work in partnership to recruit, prepare, and provide early support to the very best UPK teachers who:

- **Reflect the rich racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of their three- and four-year-olds.**
- **Receive support and guidance to pursue meaningful PreK-3 careers and give back to their communities.**
- **Deliver instruction that celebrates and sustains children’s home languages and cultures while ensuring that children’s first years of schooling set them up for a lifetime of opportunity.**

EL-WIN’s flexible resources are designed to support regional and local partnerships in ways that strategically augment state Universal Pre-K (UPK) and workforce funding, explicitly center multilingual learners, and strengthen the bridges between the Pre-K and TK-12 systems that make up early childhood’s mixed delivery system.

Since 2022, EL-WIN has been collaborating with Central Valley County Offices of Education and their partners in support of these goals, with active partnerships currently established in Fresno, Kern, Merced, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties.

¹ EL-WIN LA County is just underway and therefore not reflected here.

Policy Recommendations

The initiative's success in Fresno, Kern, Merced, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties provides insight into the promising workforce development practices and policies that can ensure the state's multilingual learners² are successful. EL-WIN supports the following policy recommendations:

- 1. State Agency Collaboration:** Convene and fund an inter-agency statewide early childhood education/UPK multilingual education workgroup.
- 2. Local Agency Collaboration:** Support and fund local inter-agency collaborations focused on multilingual prepared UPK workforce.
- 3. Workforce Preparation:** Fund, expand and build capacity of workforce preparation efforts in developing an ML-ready UPK workforce.
- 4. Educator, Administrator, and Faculty Capacity:** Provide funding to expand professional learning opportunities on and integration of the English Learner Roadmap and Policy to UPK teachers and administrators, community college and 4-year university faculty, resource and referral agencies, and other professional development organizations.
- 5. Recognition of Experience and Education:** Establish standards to recognize prior multilingual education, experience, and equivalency within child development permit and credentialing programs.
- 6. UPK Funding and Wage Stabilization:** Establish a statewide stabilization fund to ensure minimum funding and guaranteed wages for mixed-delivery UPK providers with emphasis on multilingual-prepared educators.
- 7. UPK Workforce and Enrollment Data:** Utilize and expand monolingual and multilingual UPK workforce and enrollment data for informed decision-making.

² We define multilingual learners to include both dual language learners (children ages zero to five who speak a language other than English at home) and English learners (TK-12 students whose primary language is not English and need support to become proficient in English)—and their families.

Goal

California's Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) initiative is a cornerstone of the state's efforts to deliver equitable, high-quality early childhood education (ECE) to its diverse population, particularly its growing number of multilingual learners (MLs). MLs account for 59% of children under five in California, representing approximately 1.69 million young learners. These children bring invaluable linguistic and cultural assets to the classroom. However, systemic barriers often impede their access to high-quality education and the opportunities it affords. Addressing these barriers is essential to ensuring the success of both MLs and the educators who serve them.

To meet this challenge, this policy paper outlines high-leverage local and state-level strategies to build and sustain a ML-prepared early childhood education workforce, particularly educators working in Universal Pre-Kindergarten and Transitional Kindergarten (TK) programs. Through sustainable policy solutions, our aim is to ensure that all stakeholders—County Offices of Education (COEs), Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs), Local Education Agencies (LEAs), early care and education providers, and local communities—are aligned in their efforts to build a robust, ML-ready early childhood education workforce that meets the needs of California's multilingual learners.

Background

The English Learners Workforce Investment Initiative, or EL-WIN, provides philanthropic resources to California local education agencies (LEAs)—especially those that serve small and rural communities in the Central Valley and LA County—to work in partnership to recruit, prepare, and provide early support to the very best UPK teachers who:

- **Reflect the rich racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of their three- and four-year-olds.**
- **Receive support and guidance to pursue meaningful PreK-3 careers and give back to their communities.**
- **Deliver instruction that celebrates and sustains children’s home languages and cultures while ensuring that children’s first years of schooling set them up for a lifetime of opportunity.**

The initiative’s work in counties such as Fresno, Kern, Merced, Stanislaus, and Tulare highlights regional strategies that can address statewide challenges. This landscape analysis, identification of opportunities, and subsequent recommendations were developed by Californians Together on behalf of EL-WIN.

By combining insights from EL-WIN, lessons learned in the Central Valley, and broader state and national practices, this paper offers recommendations for building a multilingual-ready workforce. It emphasizes the alignment of state investments, workforce policies, and professional development initiatives to ensure that California’s youngest learners receive culturally and linguistically affirming education. Grounded in the unique

challenges and opportunities of the Central Valley, this paper contextualizes these lessons to provide a framework for systemic workforce development.

Although we recognize early childhood education typically refers to birth through age eight, for the purpose of this document, early childhood education (and ECE) refers to UPK and TK programs serving children ages three through five. In this context, we define multilingual learners to include both dual language learners (children ages zero to five who speak a language other than English at home) and English learners (TK-12 students whose primary language is not English and need support to become proficient in English)—and their families.

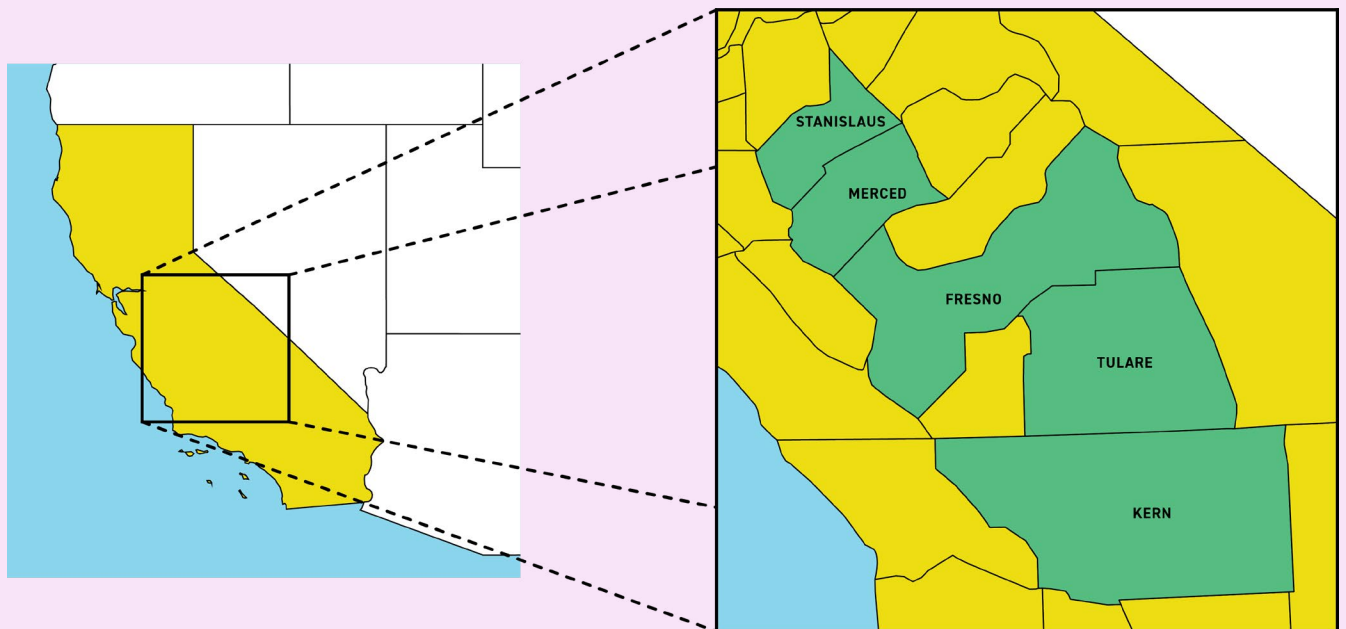
What Is a Multilingual-Ready Workforce?

Building upon a variety of program quality standards and professional development best practices, a multilingual-ready workforce specifically addresses the needs of multilingual children within the context of the UPK setting. In order to prepare a multilingual-ready workforce, policymakers and program administrators must consider the following:

- **Research tells us that young children are most successful when they have strong relationships with educators who reflect their own cultural identity, speak their home language and work collaboratively with their family.**
- **By implementing developmentally appropriate practices, early educators design and implement relationship-based, responsive, play-based learning environments full of joyful hands-on experiences integrating appropriate language development in all areas of learning.**
- **Culturally affirming environments and learning are not only developmentally appropriate, but are culturally and linguistically necessary for each child. By actively and intentionally supporting dual language development in ways that foster bilingualism, multilingual-ready educators affirm young children's dual language identities.**
- **A multilingual-ready workforce can reduce language-related barriers for multilingual learners and their families, increase access to and participation in UPK programs, and ensure all learners are able to access the early learning curriculum fully.**
- **Multilingual-ready early childhood educators can counter historical linguistic and cultural exclusion by recognizing and dismantling systemic inequitable practices, mitigating implicit and explicit biases, and building authentic relationships with children and families.**

California and Central Valley Context

The state has long been an incubator of innovative programs and approaches designed to meet the needs of multilingual learners and those who care for them. However, many challenges still exist. The Central Valley has much to contribute in addressing these statewide challenges and developing solutions. The voices of county, school district, TK-12 education, early childhood education, and community leaders across Stanislaus, Merced, Fresno, Tulare, and Kern counties are articulated through the EL-WIN policy recommendations to develop and sustain a multilingual early childhood and UPK workforce.



California’s Young Multilingual Learners



Image credit: iStock.com/FatCamera.

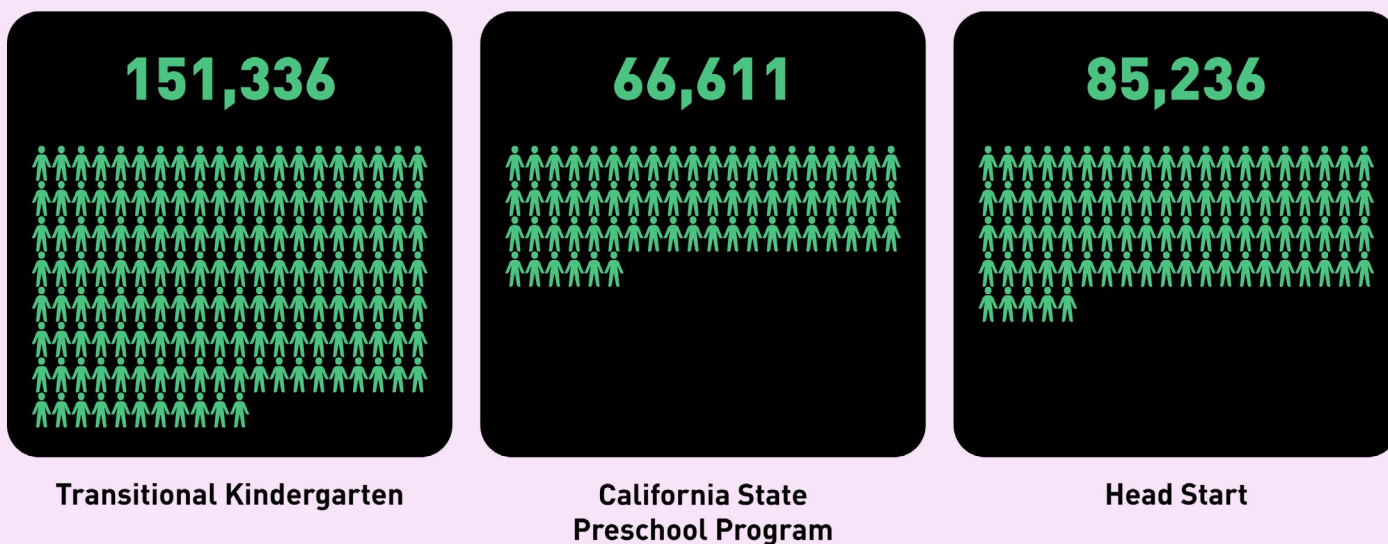
California is home to the nation’s largest population of multilingual learners. Around 60 percent of children under age six are from homes in which languages other than English are spoken. These children bring invaluable linguistic and cultural assets to the classroom. However, systemic barriers often impede their access to high-quality education and the opportunities it affords. An estimated 30–50 percent of children entering kindergarten as dual language learners will not acquire the necessary English skills needed for academic participation after six years or more of instruction.³ Addressing barriers is essential to ensuring the success of both MLs and the educators who serve them.

California’s Mixed Delivery Universal Pre-K Program and Multilingual Learners

California’s Universal Pre-Kindergarten initiative is a cornerstone of the state’s efforts to deliver equitable, high-quality early education to its diverse population, particularly its growing number of multilingual learners. The program

is implemented through a mixed delivery system providing pre-kindergarten services through Transitional Kindergarten, California State Preschool Program (CSPP), Head Start, family child care, and various private programs. Research

California UPK enrollment in 2023-24



³ [The Dual Language Learner Policy Platform: Informing California’s Early Learning and Care Policies and Investments in 2020–21 and Beyond \(Executive Summary\)](#). Zepeda, Crolotte, Doh, Ramos Harris. Early Edge California (2020).

highlights the critical role of early childhood education in fostering MLs' language acquisition, bilingualism, and cognitive development, laying a foundation for long-term academic success. Yet, despite these benefits, MLs enroll in early education programs at lower rates than their peers, a disparity compounded by socioeconomic challenges.

Mixed Delivery System Enrollment

Between 2021–22 and 2023–24, across publicly funded Pre-K programs (TK, the California State Preschool Program, and Head Start) California went from serving about 34% of all 4-year-olds to 50%. When including subsidized child care, this number increased to 55%.⁴ According to data from the American Community Survey, in 2022, about 25% of 4-year-old children in California were enrolled in a private preschool or child care program.⁵

Transitional Kindergarten

Between 2019–20 and 2023–24, TK enrollment doubled, from about 75,000 children to over 151,000— In 2023-24 approximately 59% of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in TK. A recent publication from the Learning Policy Institute estimated that in the academic year 2025–26, more than 300,000 children in California are likely to enroll in TK programs.⁶

California State Preschool Program (CSPP)

In 2023-24, 66,611 4-year olds were enrolled in CSPP part or full day programs, a significant decrease since 2022-23, when over 80,000 were enrolled. While the number of enrolled 4-year olds has decreased, enrollment of 3-year olds continues to increase year after year, most likely due to the expansion of transitional kindergarten.⁷

Head Start

In 2023-24, Head Start served over 85,000 of California's young children. California has the largest Head Start program in the country with 140 programs statewide.⁸



Image credit: Allison Shelley/The Verbatim Agency for EDUimages.

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Students in public UPK Programs

In the 2021–22 school year, 29% of California students attending kindergarten or TK were identified as English learners.⁹ Nearly half of California's ML children live in low-income households, amplifying the urgent need for a workforce equipped to meet their unique needs.

Only 23% of LEAs provided professional development to UPK staff on multilingual development and 21% on engaging culturally and linguistically diverse families.¹⁰ 57% of LEAs provided English-only instruction with home language support, 10% offered dual language programs only, 5% offered a combination of language models, and 1% offered a home language program only.¹¹

4 [Progressing toward universal prekindergarten in California \[Brief\]](#). Melnick, García. Learning Policy Institute (2024).

5 [Enrollment by Type of School](#). Ruggles, Flood, Sobek, Backman, Chen,... Schouweiler. Learning Policy Institute (2024).

6 [Building a Well-Qualified Transitional Kindergarten Workforce in California: Needs and Opportunities](#). Melnick, García, Leung-Gagné. Learning Policy Institute (2022).

7 [Annual Aggregate Reports - Accessing Educational Data](#). California Department of Education (2024).

8 [CA Head Start Annual Report 2023-24](#). California Head Start Association (2024).

9 [Transitional Kindergarten Data](#). California Department of Education (2024).

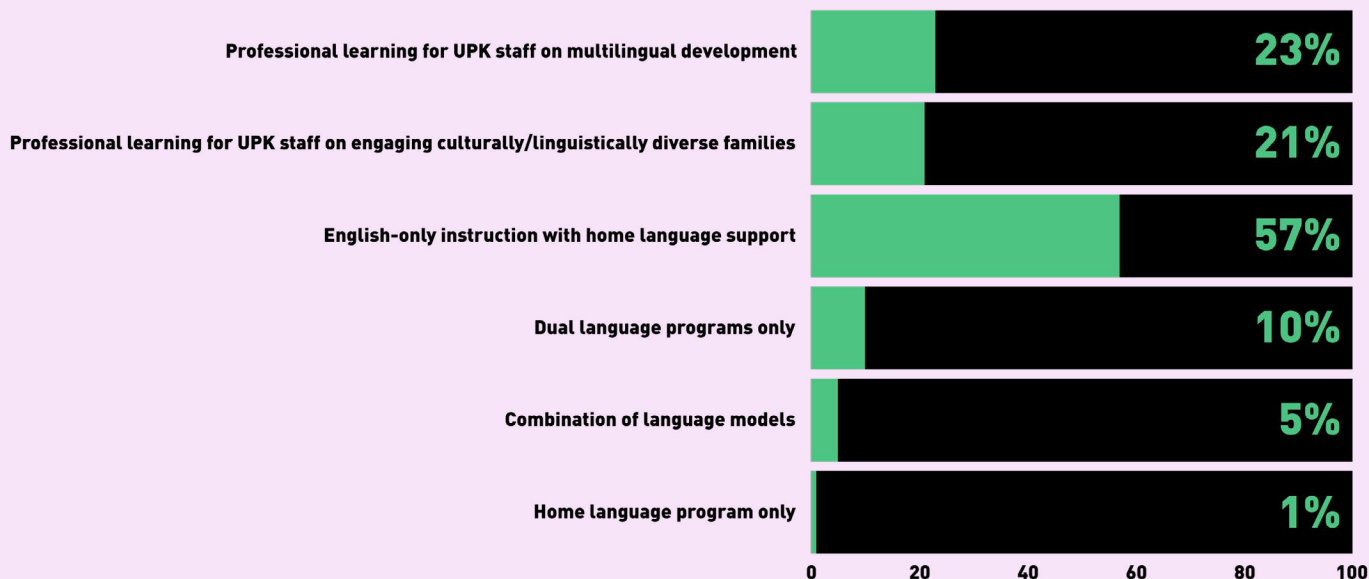
10 [Universal prekindergarten expansion in California: Progress and opportunities](#). Wang, Leung-Gagné, Melnick, Wechsler. Learning Policy Institute (2024).

11 [Universal Prekindergarten Planning and Implementation Grant Survey](#). California Department of Education (2023).

A recent study by American Institutes for Research found that English learners from all language groups who attended TK, experienced a substantial boost in their English language development, including speaking skills, listening skills, and overall language proficiency. These transitional kindergarten students were ahead of their peers by 60 points or a full performance level on the California English Language Development Test. English

learners who participated in transitional kindergarten increased their skills in mathematics, giving them a nearly six-month learning advantage over EL students who did not attend transitional kindergarten. TK also improved EL students' literacy skills, putting them ahead of their peers who did not attend transitional kindergarten by more than seven months of learning at kindergarten entry.¹²

California Local Education Agency offerings (2023)



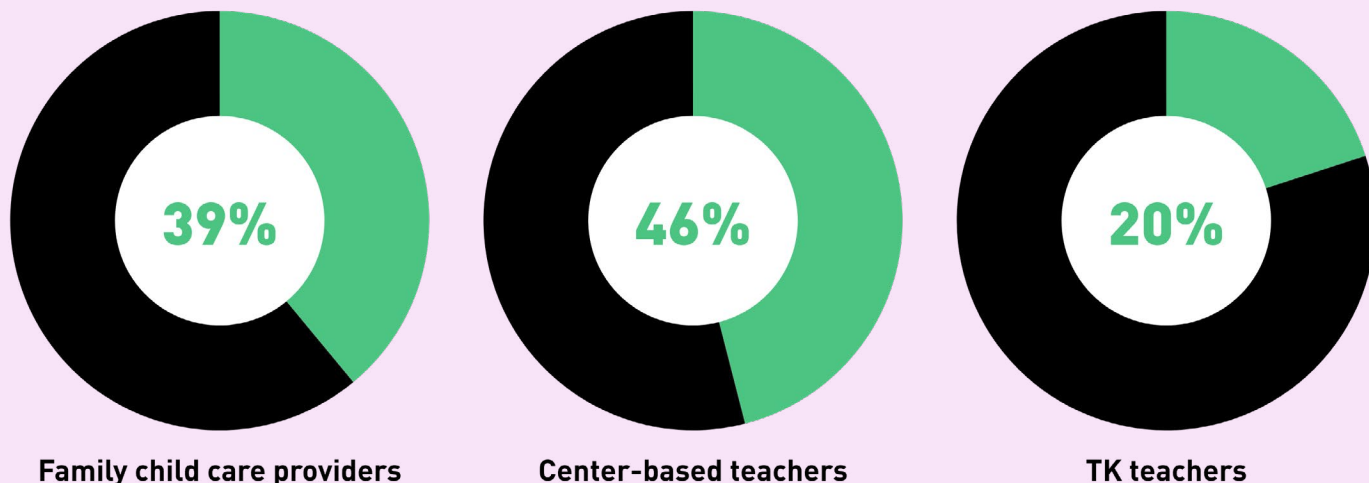
Access to the Mixed Delivery System

California's UPK system is delivered through a patchwork mixed delivery system. In 2021, there were 35,686 licensed child care programs in California with over 25,000 family child care (FCC) homes and 10,000 child care centers. There are approximately 3,000 child care programs in the Central Valley alone, the majority of which are licensed

family child care homes. Although data regarding the number of children in license-exempt or family, friend and neighbor (FFN) care is unclear, we do know that one in five families who access subsidized child care get this care from family, friends, and neighbors.¹³

12 [The Impact of Transitional Kindergarten on English Learner Students](#). American Institutes for Research (2017).
 13 [FY 2021 Preliminary Data Table 4 - Average Monthly Percentages of Children Served in Regulated Settings vs. Settings Legally Operating Without Regulation](#). Administration for Children and Families (2021).

Percentage of multilingual teachers in California's UPK system



In 2022, the Center for the Study of the Child Care Workforce reported that 39% of family child care providers and 46% of center-based teachers in California were multilingual. The majority of early learning professionals were women of color.¹⁴ TK teachers were predominantly female (99 percent) and white (71 percent). About 20% of TK teachers were multilingual.¹⁵

Central Valley

Child care programs are a critical component of the Central Valley UPK system, yet the region's child care supply only serves approximately 18% of children 0-12.¹⁶ Note, availability does not necessarily mean that slots are filled or even accessible. Tulare County reports a gap between the demand for early childhood education services and the number of available spaces, with 40% of children under five in low-income rural areas lacking access to nearby early learning programs.

As the percentage of Hispanic/Latino TK-3 students in the Central Valley has increased over time, so has the percentage of full-time Hispanic/Latino classified staff serving the region.¹⁷

¹⁴ [Demographics of the California ECE Workforce](#). Powell, Kim, Montoya. Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley (2021).

¹⁵ [Teaching Transitional Kindergarten: A Snapshot of the Teacher Experience Before UTK Expansion](#), Montoya, Powell, Austin, Kim, Muruvi, Copeman Petig. Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley (2022).

¹⁶ [Fresno County Family and Child Data](#). California Child Care Resource and Referral Network (2021).

¹⁷ [EL-WIN Central Valley Data Book](#) English Learners Workforce Investment Initiative (2024).

Preparation, Recruitment & Retention, and Compensation of a Multilingual-Ready UPK Workforce

Despite the growing need for multilingual-ready and bilingual early childhood educators, barriers related to workforce preparation, credentialing systems, financial constraints, logistical challenges, linguistic and cultural biases, and workplace conditions hinder the recruitment, preparation, and retention of these educators. Addressing these barriers is essential for ensuring California's mixed-delivery UPK system is equipped to meet the needs of MLs.

Workforce Preparation



Image credit: Allison Shelley for EDUimages

As California prepares to fully implement universal pre-K/TK for all eligible 4- and 5- year olds by the 2025-26 school year, the teacher preparation landscape continues to evolve. According to the Learning Policy Institute, California districts must hire 11,900 to 15,600 additional lead TK teachers by 2025–26 to reach universal pre-K coverage. Furthermore, California needs between 16,000 and 19,700 assistant TK teachers by 2025–26 to arrive at a 10:1 adult-to-student ratio.¹⁸ TK teachers must have 24 ECE units, most of which are obtained through California's community colleges who play a key role in providing unit-bearing courses to current and future UPK teachers.

California's center-based early childhood teachers have extensive practical experience, averaging 15 years of teaching children birth to age four. At least 37% (about 31,000 teachers)

¹⁸ [Building a well-qualified transitional kindergarten workforce in California: Needs and opportunities.](#) Melnick, García, Leung-Gagné. Learning Policy Institute (2022).

meet or exceed the requirement for TK teachers to complete 24 college units in early childhood education. 49% of center-based ECE teachers have a Bachelor's degree or higher.¹⁹

Yet, the pathway to becoming an ML-prepared educator particularly in TK-12, is complex and fragmented, with misaligned coursework, credit transferability issues, and limited alternative credentialing options.²⁰ Key research findings indicate that rigid course schedules and requirements make it difficult for nontraditional students—many of whom work full-time or support families—to complete teacher preparation programs. Limited articulation agreements between community colleges and four-year universities disproportionately affect bilingual candidates, who are more likely to begin their education at two-year institutions.²¹ Insufficient bilingual teacher preparation programs mean that candidates seeking a credential and/or multilingual authorization must navigate complex, unclear pathways to obtain certification.²²

Options for future college students are growing – 200,000 high school students in California were dually enrolled at a local community college during the 2022-23 school year. Black students were underrepresented in dual enrollment both statewide and nationally while Hispanic/Latino students made up nearly half of dually enrolled students in California.²³

Linguistic and Cultural Barriers

Although nearly 50% of the UPK workforce in California is multilingual, teacher preparation programs in the U.S. have historically been designed for monolingual, English-speaking candidates, creating significant barriers for bilingual educators-in-training. Licensure exams (such as the CBEST and CSET) often prioritize English proficiency over bilingual instructional skills, disproportionately disadvantaging bilingual and non-native English-speaking candidates.²⁴

Similarly, the majority of the UPK workforce are women of color, yet our higher education systems do not consistently provide for culturally affirming coursework or support. Lack of culturally responsive mentorship contributes to higher attrition rates for bilingual teacher candidates, who often report feeling isolated or unsupported in their preparation programs.²⁵

Research supports the creation of bilingual mentorship programs, culturally affirming support systems, alternative licensure pathways, and revised assessment measures that better evaluate the competencies of diverse ML-prepared educators. Cabrillo College is working to achieve this through their 20-unit Spanish/English Early Childhood Teaching Skills Certificate.

Central Valley

EL-WIN was created in response to the expansion of Transitional Kindergarten. It was conceptualized as a way to seize the opportunity to focus early and often on the needs of multilingual learners and families through a well-prepared TK/UPK workforce.

Across the five counties in EL-WIN Central Valley, it is estimated that more than 8,000 additional UPK staff are needed to meet the needs of the region's mixed delivery system.²⁶

19 New Data Shows Early Educators Equipped to Teach TK. Williams, Montoya, Kim, Austin. Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley (2021).

20 Preparing Bilingual Early Childhood Educators: Research and Policy Implications. Zepeda, Montoya, Shivers. Early Childhood Research Quarterly (2019).

21 English Learners' Pathways in California's Community Colleges Under AB 705. Hayward, et al. Policy Analysis for California Education (2022).

22 Bilingual Teacher Shortages in California: A Problem Likely to Grow (fact sheet). Carver-Thomas, Darling-Hammond. Learning Policy Institute (2017).

23 How Many Students Are Taking Dual Enrollment Courses In High School? New National, State, and College-Level Data. Fink. Community College Research Center (2024).

24 How to Grow Bilingual Teacher Pathways: Making the Most of U.S. Linguistic and Cultural Diversity. Williams, Zabala. The Century Foundation (2023).

25 Increasing the diversity of the teaching workforce: a review of minority teacher candidates' recruitment, retention, and experiences in initial teacher education. Yip, Xu. Pedagogy, Culture & Society (2024).

26 EL-WIN Central Valley Data Book. English Learners Workforce Investment Initiative (2024).

Credentialing

California's early childhood teacher credentialing system consists of multiple, distinct pathways that vary depending on the educational setting, funding requirements, and age group served. These variations create structural barriers for educators seeking required authorizations, particularly those working in Transitional Kindergarten, California State Preschool Programs, Head Start, and community-based early learning settings.

The Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) approved a new teaching credential to teach children in pre-kindergarten through 3rd grade. This PK-3 ECE Specialized Instruction credential authorizes the holder to teach all subjects in a self-contained general education classroom setting and to team teach or to regroup students across classrooms, in preschool through 3rd grade. The English learner (EL) authorization provided through this credential aligns with the EL authorization that is earned upon completion of a Single Subject, Multiple Subject, or Education Specialist teaching credential program. There are several equivalency options. However, none of them accept a Child Development Permit of any level as the equivalent to a PK-3 credential program, creating a barrier for many well-qualified ECE teachers.

By August 1, 2025, all California TK teachers (with the exceptions of those who were assigned to TK before July 1, 2015) will be required to hold at least 24 units in

Early Childhood Education/Child Development and/or the new PK-3 ECE Special Instruction Credential— or be qualified based on the district's adopted "LEA Choice." This allows districts to determine "professional experience" comparable to 24 units of Child Development course work. This option does not transfer to other districts.

The Child Development Permit, also issued by the CTC, is not required by Title 22 licensed child care programs schools, but government funded programs such as Head Start, CSPP and college campus programs do require it. Only one level of the Child Development permit requires designation of a specialization from a provided list of options including bilingual/bicultural development.²⁷ There is no general requirement within the Child Development Permit framework to obtain education in dual language development or bilingual education however CTC is exploring the addition of a bilingual specialization.

Research consistently shows that the high cost of obtaining an ECE credential or degree is a major barrier to teacher pipeline expansion, particularly for bilingual and first-generation college students.²⁸ Studies find that the cost of tuition, exams, and required unpaid student teaching discourages linguistically diverse candidates from pursuing credentials.²⁹

Institutes of Higher Education



Image credit: Bobak Ha'Eri for Wikimedia Commons.

California Community Colleges are the primary provider of required early childhood education units for the CTC Child Development Permit—and potentially for those required to obtain 24 ECE units for the subject matter competency requirement of the PK-3 ECE Special Instruction Credential. However, community colleges were not included in the legislation funding the development of the PK-3 credential. The Child Development Training Consortium's Curriculum Alignment Project has supported the alignment of core ECE courses across 100 community colleges throughout the state. Many colleges are also aligning the core courses to the Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs).³⁰

²⁷ Child Development Permits (CL-797). California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (2025).

²⁸ *Early Childhood Workforce Index*. Whitebook, McLean, Austin, Edwards. Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (2018).

²⁹ *The teacher shortage is real, large and growing, and worse than we thought*. García, Weiss. Economic Policy Institute (2019).

³⁰ *Specific Course Numbers at Aligned Colleges*. Child Development Training Consortium.

A small number of community college programs offer ECE courses in languages other than English, and very few offer courses specifically focused on dual language development and the needs of multilingual learners. CSU Channel Islands provides the most robust Early Childhood Studies degree program focused on dual language learners and their development which includes course options such as Young Dual Language Learners, Early Language and Literacy in Multilingual Classrooms in PK, TK, and Early Elementary and requires each student to take at least one Spanish language course.

The California State University system prepares 48.9% of the state's teachers and awards approximately 5,200 teaching credentials annually.³¹ The new PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential can provide a bridge and accelerated pathway for current Multiple Subject Credential holders as well as Child Development Teacher Permit holders with a BA degree to earn the credential and begin serving in Transitional Kindergarten settings. The English learner authorization provided through this credential aligns with the EL authorization that is earned upon completion of a Single, Multiple or Education Specialist teaching credential program. Fresno State University's PK-3 credential program is slated to begin in summer of 2025. Seventeen additional CSU campuses, as well as CalStateTEACH—the CSU's fully online program—are in various stages of developing their PK-3 Credential programs. These programs require approval by the Commission on Teaching Credentialing.

The number of institutes of higher education in the state offering ECE courses on culturally responsive care, dual language learners, multilingualism, and other related topics is minimal. Many faculty in teacher education programs lack training in bilingual education pedagogy, leading to missed opportunities for integrating home language support into coursework and field experiences.³²

However, throughout California, there are a number of community colleges and four-year universities providing stand-alone or certificate track courses on dual language learners and multilingualism in early childhood. Additionally, at many institutes of higher education, content specific to multilingual learners is embedded throughout other ECE courses.



Image credit: iStock.com/andresr

31 Two CSU Campuses are First Universities Approved to Offer PK-3 Early Childhood Credential Programs. The California State University (2024).

32 How to Grow Bilingual Teacher Pathways: Making the Most of U.S. Linguistic and Cultural Diversity. Williams, Zabala. The Century Foundation (2023).

Central Valley

Although the 20 colleges and universities serving the Central Valley EL-WIN region cannot fully meet the training needs to ensure all UPK workforce positions are filled with well-trained candidates, the Central Valley does, however, continue to work toward better supporting the multilingual workforce. Two IHEs offer ECE coursework in Spanish, and all 10 community colleges in the Central Valley offer tutoring and mentoring to Spanish-speaking students.³³ All 4-year universities in the Central Valley offer Bilingual Crosscultural, Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) Authorization (Spanish) for BA/BS candidates, with CSU Stanislaus offering it in six additional languages. Three IHEs provide stand-alone courses focused on young multilingual learners. Fresno City College offers a Child Development Certificate in Race, Equity, and Language in Early Education which includes the course: Language and Literacy Development for Multilingual Learners. CSU Bakersfield offers an upper division course, Supporting Multilingual Learners: Context and Approaches.

Additionally, the five counties in the EL-WIN network, recognizing the need for a broad recruitment campaign for UPK educators in the Central Valley region, came together to support the development of recruitment messages and collateral—including videos and a social media toolkit that supports “grow your own” efforts throughout the Central Valley. [Change Consulting](#) has been leading that effort, with final products available for free, wide use, beyond the EL-WIN network, in 2025.

Recruitment and Retention



Image credit: Allison Shelley for EDUimages

California ECE directors and teaching staff alike have shared concerns regarding educator pay and cost of living as top drivers in turnover of ECE staff. The Center for the Study of the Child Care Employment (CCSCCE) estimated a 40 percent turnover of lead teachers and 50 percent turnover of assistants in the 2023-2024

school year. About one in five Family Child Care (FCC) educators had a vacant assistant position.³⁴

Head Start employed over 26,800 staff in 2021. Of these, over 2,300 staff left their positions during the program year, and just under half (48%) of those positions were filled—leaving 1,100 positions vacant. Head Start staff recruitment and retention remain a critical challenge consistent with the greater ECE field in California.³⁵

Workplace Challenges

Even after entering the workforce, bilingual educators face systemic challenges that contribute to high turnover rates. Studies highlight a lack of professional development opportunities tailored to ML-prepared educators.

Additionally, inconsistent recognition of bilingual teaching skills leading to limited career advancement opportunities, as well as high stress levels and mental health concerns that are exacerbated by the challenges of dual-language instruction in under-resourced settings, all contribute to the high turnover rates of bilingual educators.³⁶

33 [Preparing the UPK Workforce Centered on Multilingual Learners in the Central Valley: The Institutions of Higher Education Capacity Study](#). English Learners Workforce Investment Initiative (2024).

34 [2024 Profiles of California Early Care and Education Programs: Enrollment and Staffing Trends](#). Powell, Muruvi, Copeman Petig, Austin. Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley (2025).

35 [Annual Report 2021-22](#). Myers, Maricle. California Head Start State Collaboration Office (2022).

36 [The Invisible Burden Some Bilingual Teachers Face](#). Mitchell. Edweek (2020).

Compensation

Low wages for the early education sector make it difficult for educators—especially those in high-demand bilingual programs—to remain in the field.³⁷ The living wage in California for a single adult is \$19.97, yet the median salary for the ECE workforce is \$15.66, a 22% living wage gap.³⁸ A recent salary analysis found that 43% of preschool teachers in California rely on some type of public assistance, compared to only 21% of the overall U.S. workforce.³⁹ In most family child care programs, owners make less than minimum wage and assistants make less than those working in retail or fast food industries.⁴⁰

Pay parity issues across the ECE to TK-12 system also create ripple effects in which the early education continuum undermines itself. In 2024, the median hourly wage for preschool teachers in California was \$17.76 an hour (or about \$35,000 per year) compared to that of kindergarten teachers, which is \$41.68 per hour (or about \$73,000 per year).⁴¹ And while there is promise that preschool teachers with the appropriate credentials are well suited to make the transition to TK classrooms given their deep experience with 4-year olds, and that transition offers an increase in pay upwards of 130-200%, stakeholders including early childhood directors, expressed concern that

such transitions may subsequently exacerbate workforce issues in center-based and family child care settings.⁴²

A recent study elevated the fact that with the full implementation of TK, many CSPP, Head Start and private programs are having to shift enrollment to accept more infants, toddlers and young preschoolers as 4-year olds enroll in TK. The cost of caring for younger children is greater than that of older preschoolers due to lower ratio requirements, specific infant/toddler coursework needs, and costs to adjust environments. Reimbursement rates do not cover operational costs.

A large share of educators report having little-to-no savings for retirement, particularly family child care (FCC) providers— less than one third of FCC providers had such savings. The historic agreement between the State of California and CCPU, which includes an \$80-million retirement fund, is a welcome development for FCC providers but has not been extended to all early educators to ensure equitable access to retirement benefits.⁴³

Further, bilingual early childhood educators are often expected to take on additional instructional responsibilities (e.g., translating materials, providing family language support) without additional pay or recognition, leading to burnout and turnover.⁴⁴

Central Valley

Across California, early childhood educators earn on average 40% less than their TK-12 counterparts, creating financial disincentives for staying in the profession. For instance, in Stanislaus County, family child care providers who typically work year-round, earn between \$13,000-\$55,000 per year depending on the size of the program with 53% of FCC providers enrolled in a public assistance program such as Medi-Cal. Community-based center-based providers, 50% of whom have a Bachelor's Degree or higher and also typically work year-round, earn between \$34,000-41,000⁴⁵ while beginning TK and Kindergarten teachers in the county earn an average \$62,000 per year.⁴⁶

37 *Rethinking Compensation in Early Childhood Education*. Austin, Edwards, Chávez, Whitebook. Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley (2019).

38 *California – Early Childhood Workforce Index*. Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley (2024).

39 *New Analysis Highlights Troubling Pay Gap Between Pre-K and TK-12 Teachers*. Early Edge California (2019).

40 *Key Findings – Early Childhood Workforce Index*. Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley (2024).

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42 *Double or Nothing? Potential TK Wages for California's Early Educators*. Powell, Kim, Montoya, Austin.

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46 *Selected Certificated Salaries and Related Statistics*. California Department of Education (2024).

Opportunities to Build a Multilingual-Ready Workforce

California has worked hard to address many of the challenges faced by the early childhood education field and the families and communities they serve. Given the current and emerging landscape within the state, it is important we capitalize on opportunities and existing efforts to build a system that can meet the needs of young multilingual learners and the professionals who serve them. EL-WIN member organizations implementing promising practices present significant opportunities to the state at large. California can learn from the experiences of EL-WIN members as well as other states that have successfully implemented various workforce related strategies.



Image credit: Allison Shelley for EDUimages.

Statewide Partnerships

Through a variety of efforts and initiatives, California has a robust network of early childhood education and dual language learner centered organizations who, together, have created lasting change throughout the state. Statewide associations and coalitions include the following and many more:

- **Black ECE**
- **California Association for the Education of Young Children**
- **California Community College Early Childhood Educators**
- **California Family Child Care Network**
- **The California Preschool Instructional Network**
- **Californians Together**
- **Catalyst California**
- **Child Care Resource and Referral Network**
- **Early Edge California**

- **DLL Master Plan Advocates**
- **First 5 California**
- **PEACH Early Childhood Higher Education Collaborative**
- **Tribal Child Care Association of California**

Each of these groups focuses on specific policy or programmatic efforts, while often working collectively to address statewide issues in early childhood education.

Additionally, cross-state agency ECE-focused partnerships have grown over recent years with coordinated efforts between the California Department of Education, California Department of Health and Human Services, and the California Health and Human Service Department. Most recently, these large state agencies have collaborated on the implementation of the Master Plan for Early Childhood Education through aligned and coordinated funding priorities, and support of the mixed delivery of ECE services.

Recruitment and Retention of Multilingual-Ready Early Childhood Educators

Expanding Recruitment and Retention Efforts to Address Multilingual Learner Prepared Early Educator Shortages

Preparing educators to meet the unique needs of MLs requires targeted training and culturally sustaining practices. By focusing on bilingual proficiency, dual language development, and culturally responsive pedagogy, California can ensure that its educators are equipped to provide high-quality instruction to the state's youngest multilingual learners.

Through strategic partnerships and collaboration, Grow Your Own strategies, dual enrollment, and other models for recruitment in multilingual communities, we can work to address the shortages of ML-prepared early educators across the mixed-delivery system, especially in underserved and rural areas. By clarifying and streamlining roles and responsibilities for recruitment—including the state, county



Image credit: Allison Shelley/The Verbatim Agency for EDUimages.

offices of education, school districts, and IHEs—interest holders can collaborate more effectively to attract and prepare a strong workforce of multilingual educators.

Central Valley

EL-WIN's implementation in the Central Valley offers valuable insights into building an ML-prepared workforce. EL-WIN has identified the importance of “backbone support”—dedicated resources for coordination, collaboration, and systems alignment—as a catalyst for advancing multilingual equity efforts. Through intentional multilingual-centered collaborative efforts, EL-WIN partners have successfully addressed challenges such as workforce shortages in rural areas and navigating complex funding requirements.

Central Valley counties leveraged EL-WIN's partnership funding to establish lead coordinators and facilitate multilingual-centered, cross-sector collaborations. This model has begun to yield results with counties developing integrated workforce plans and streamlining efforts across mixed delivery systems.

The initiative also highlights the role of flexible, responsive funding in supporting innovative recruitment and retention efforts. For example, EL-WIN has encouraged counties to build upon existing Grow Your Own models that recruit multilingual paraprofessionals, high school students, and community members into the teaching pipeline. This approach not only addresses workforce shortages but also ensures that educators reflect the linguistic and cultural diversity of the communities they serve.

For example, Lodi Unified School District has successfully staffed their growing number of TK classrooms, provides ongoing professional development for TK teachers, and has implemented developmentally appropriate practices across the district. Fresno City College will begin offering an ECE certificate in Spanish in Spring 2025 serving mixed-delivery bilingual providers within the county. Fresno State offers nationally recognized teacher residencies in partnership with school districts across the Central Valley, which prepare the next generation of educators through robust hands-on work in rural multilingual communities. Cal State Bakersfield offers several teacher residency programs including the Black Educator Teacher Residency and The Cultivando Maestras/os Kern Multilingual Residency Program.

The Fresno County Superintendent of Schools is focused on creating and marketing strong pathways for UPK educators across the mixed delivery system who reflect the diverse student population. One example of this is the partnership with the Fresno County Regional Occupational Program which offers teacher preparation programs and dual enrollment pathways for high school students. The collaborative effort aims to build the capacity of teachers working with diverse students while also introducing high school students to teaching career pathways.

In addition, Fresno County is promoting deep partnerships and collaboration among local education agencies, institutes of higher education, and community-based organizations to build institutional pathways for a diverse UPK workforce. The development of the Fresno County Higher Education Roundtable was created to ensure that students can seamlessly transition from high school to college and career. By identifying barriers and creating solutions, such as offering online courses, we can increase the number of students who mirror our population in the teaching profession.

Stanislaus County Office of Education's Parent-to-Teacher Program was developed to address the staffing shortages in the county office's early childhood programs. Parents from the county's Head Start program complete the four core Child Development courses needed (12 units), including their 50 days of experience hours for the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing Associate Teacher Permit. Participating parents take their classes in an in-person cohort style, rotating through the classes every eight weeks. This helps to build a system of support for the participants and encourages collaboration and better engagement so they can successfully become teachers in Head Start and CSPP programs.

Enhancing Compensation for Early Childhood Educators

Addressing the issue of low compensation is vital to stabilizing the early childhood workforce. Equitable pay structures, opportunities for professional growth, and targeted financial incentives are critical to retaining qualified educators, particularly in high-need areas. As

the state continues to expand Transitional Kindergarten and Universal Pre-Kindergarten through a mixed delivery system, there is an opportunity to ensure UPK providers working in community-based settings receive compensation in alignment with Transitional Kindergarten teachers and reflective of Rate Reform, a statewide effort to overhaul how early education services are funded reflective of the true cost of care. For example, Contra Costa County recently began piloting a wage enhancement program.

PROMISING PRACTICES



Colorado is conducting a two-year (2023-2025) livable wage pilot program for early educators using Child Care Development Fund dollars. Participating programs were selected randomly through a lottery. Three hundred early educators are receiving wage increases of between \$2.99 and \$7.58 per hour, depending on their role and geographic location. The pilot is currently being evaluated to understand how programs implement the wage increases, as well as the impacts on recruitment and retention.



In **Illinois**, Smart Start Workforce Grants offer child care programs stable, ongoing funds that they need to cover costs and invest in quality staff without burdening families by raising tuition or Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) co-pays. Eligible programs receive consistent funding in advance, and funds will cover the cost of higher wages and operating a classroom. Programs receiving these grants are required to pay classroom staff minimum required wages (a “wage floor”) for teachers and assistant teachers, starting at \$17 per hour. Illinois is investing state funds to continue and build from grants they initiated with pandemic relief funding.



New Mexico's [Early Childhood Educator Wage Supplement Program](#) provides salary supplements for early childhood educators working in underserved communities. By offering tiered wage enhancements based on qualifications and experience, this program helps to retain skilled educators and attract new candidates to the field.



In **Texas**, many school districts, such as Houston ISD and Dallas ISD, offer stipends for bilingual educators to attract and retain talent. Bilingual teachers can receive monthly stipends ranging from \$2,000 to \$6,000 per year, depending on the district. These stipends are meant to address the shortage of bilingual educators, particularly in areas with high numbers of emergent bilingual students. The stipends aim to make bilingual teaching positions more competitive and help districts retain skilled educators, especially in underserved areas.

Workforce Development

Building Capacity to Serve Young Multilingual Learners

By using the [English Learner Roadmap Policy in Early Childhood Education](#) as the cornerstone, and by tapping into resources from California Early Childhood Online and the now sunsetted [Faculty Initiative Project](#), two rich statewide ECE professional development programs, the state can capitalize on the rich resources available to support educators at every level—mixed delivery early childhood education, TK-12, County Offices of Education, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Institutes of Higher Education, and other professional development providers—to ensure all multilingual learners receive the language and learning supports they need, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

Strengthening and Expanding Partnerships to support ML-Ready UPK Workforce

Collaboration between Local Educational Agencies, Institutes of Higher Education, and County Offices of Education is essential for addressing fragmented credentialing pathways. By aligning professional development opportunities and creating accessible career pathways, California can better support prospective educators from diverse backgrounds to become multilingual-ready educators. Many initiatives have focused on coordinated efforts to align professional development of the UPK workforce.



Image credit: Allison Shelley for EDUimages.

For instance, the Tribal Child Care Association of California has developed a [Workforce Pathways program](#) to support native child care providers in all settings. The program supports participants by identifying barriers and overcoming them through financial supports and resources, and incentivizing goal completion with a stipend program.

[Workforce Pathways LA Stipend Program](#) increases the skills, competencies and the abilities of early educators, increases the number of ECE professionals with Child Development Permits, and increases the number of professionals with degrees in early childhood. It serves as a support mechanism for early educators to create professional development plans, receive guidance, and earn a financial incentive for completing a milestone in professional development, college coursework, Child Development Permits, or college degrees.

Engaging with current UPK workforce initiatives, [UPK Teacher Pipeline](#) efforts, and exploring opportunities to expand activities is critical in developing and maintaining a robust pipeline of multilingual educators. [The Vision 2030: A Roadmap for California Community Colleges](#) prioritizes actions to increase system capacity to decrease faculty shortages in key sectors, including early childhood education. The [California Community College Early Childhood Educators \(CCCECE\)](#) and [PEACH Higher Education Initiative](#) both play a key role in ensuring the UPK workforce is prepared to teach diverse and multilingual learners in a mixed delivery UPK system.

Central Valley

UC Merced offers a [Child Development and Care Dual Enrollment program](#) in partnership with local high schools. Schools can lease curriculum for four child development and education courses which are approved for twelve-semester units of UC Merced undergraduate credit. Courses may be transferable for academic credit at California community colleges, California State Universities, and the University of California (check with the receiving institution for their specific transfer policies).

Child Development Dual Enrollment courses meet the academic requirement for an early childhood associate teacher permit from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Nearly all juniors and seniors in the pilot program have successfully applied to two and four-year colleges.

The Stanislaus County Office of Education (SCOE) Teacher Apprenticeship is a registered apprenticeship program that addresses the professional development needs of the ECE workforce by integrating on-the-job training, coaching, no-cost college coursework, cohort learning, and increased compensation. All registered apprentices are required to have already obtained an Associate Teacher permit from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) and be employed by one of our three partner agencies. The SCOE Teacher Apprenticeship program is working with these current employees to obtain their associate's degree in child development through Modesto Junior College and to upgrade their permit to a Teacher-level permit.

In order to increase the capacity of school leadership and ECE teachers to understand the developmental needs of dual language learners, Fresno County has developed the Early Education Administrator's Academy that will utilize a training of trainers model to build the capacity of school district leaders to support DLL/MLs.

PROMISING PRACTICES



Alaska: In 2023, [Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc. \(RurAL CAP\)](#) launched the Teacher Apprenticeship Program, an effort to train and support new early childhood educators in attaining required certifications. The goal of the program is to respond to the workforce challenges facing ECE providers in Alaska and improve the retention of staff. The program, which is hosted at RurAL CAP's Child Development Center (CDC), provides an opportunity for teachers to earn their associate degree in Early Childhood Education through the University of Alaska with support from CDC teachers and mentors.



Idaho: [IdahoSTARS](#) provides a number of academic scholarships to current ECE providers interested in furthering their education whether that be through a single college course, an AA degree or an MA. This statewide program also provides the Future Educator Scholarship to graduating Idaho high school seniors entering an early childhood education degree pathway at an accredited Idaho college or university.



California: In 2024, EDvance College launched a fully online Bachelor of Arts degree in Early Childhood Studies delivered entirely in Spanish—an affordable, inclusive, and dynamic remote program designed to accelerate degree attainment for full-time early childhood educators. The program offers credit for on-the-job experience and provides comprehensive student support, creating a flexible and accessible pathway for both center-based and family child care providers to advance their careers while continuing to serve young children and families.

Creating Coherent Early Education Pathways for Career Advancement

In partnership with the California Department of Education, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, California Community College Early Childhood Educators, the California Child Development Consortium/Curriculum Alignment Project, California's State Educator Workforce

Collaborative, PEACH, and the array of mixed delivery system stakeholders, there is an opportunity to conduct a statewide scan of multilingual early childhood education career pathways and streamline efforts to support early childhood educators to become multilingual-ready professionals.

Central Valley

In Kern County, their EL-WIN partnership has focused on creating and strengthening multiple pathways across the mixed delivery system in ways that explicitly center young multilingual learners, including a new program aimed at recruiting and retaining emancipated foster youth in early education careers. Many of these teacher candidates are bilingual, and the pathway program encourages them to treat their bilingualism as a marketable asset—rather than a barrier—to joining the early education workforce. Further, Kern's EL-WIN partnership including multiple community colleges led leaders to realize that one college had a waiting list for ECE credit courses taught by Spanish-speaking faculty members and another had slots; they are currently working together to share waitlists and get Spanish-speaking early educator candidates the training they need as efficiently as possible.

Merced County's EL-WIN partnership facilitated area IHEs, CTE programs, and the county office to develop a local initiative coordinated by the county office that has developed a pathway for students interested in PK-3 careers that is funding paid internships in preschool classrooms.

PROMISING PRACTICES



Oregon: The [Oregon Bilingual Teacher Pathways Program](#) is a collaboration between Portland State University and local school districts, supported by the Oregon Department of Education. It offers flexible, part-time certification routes specifically for bilingual individuals, particularly those already working as instructional assistants, to earn teaching licenses with an ESOL or dual-language endorsement. The program addresses the shortage of bilingual teachers in Oregon, especially in rural areas, by providing financial support and accessible coursework.

State Systems



Image credit: iStock.com/kali9.

Improving Access to Timely and Comprehensive Data

Integrated data systems and resource alignment are fundamental to workforce development. Collecting and analyzing workforce data across programs such as Transitional Kindergarten, state preschool, Head Start, and through the California Early Care and Education Workforce Registry, will enable stakeholders to identify gaps and make informed decisions about investments. [Expanding and aligning data collection in California State Preschool Programs](#), Head Start Programs and all UPK and Transitional Kindergarten programs can provide rich data to support decisionmakers in developing targeted strategies to better serve multilingual children, their families, and those who care for them.

Central Valley

The mission of the Community Initiatives for [Collective Impact \(Ci4Ci\)](#) is to join diverse communities, ideas, and resources to address social justice concerns in California's San Joaquin Valley. As a partner in EL-WIN Central Valley, Ci4Ci provides data-focused technical assistance to support the development of PreK–3 educator needs assessments and asset mapping, guiding partnership efforts across the region. In its five participating counties, Ci4Ci strengthens the capacity of county office of education leads by helping them leverage data to inform and advance ongoing initiatives. To date, this is the only known effort to estimate regional UPK workforce needs.

For example, the [Hlub Hmong Center \(HHC\)](#), founded in 2010 to ensure the survival, well-being, and prosperity of the Hmong people and their rich cultural heritage through education, research, advocacy, and entrepreneurialism, has a strong focus on education inclusive of ECE. As part of this work, the HHC works with schools to make student academic data available by Hmong ethnicity, not just a broad Asian category to better understand Hmong student achievement. The HHC has also used workforce data to develop strategies to increase the number of Hmong teachers in the community.

PROMISING PRACTICES



In **Louisiana**, early childhood advocates found that an absence of systemwide data made it difficult to target resources wisely, and nearly impossible to assess whether large public investments in ECE and quality improvements were paying off. [Geaux Far Louisiana](#), a coalition of state early childhood advocates, supported HCR 43, [Improving Data Systems at the Louisiana Department of Education](#). This amendment required the Louisiana Department of Education to update its early childhood care and education data management systems. The early childhood team at the Louisiana Department of Education has highlighted how investments in careful, systemwide quality measurement can support quality improvement.

Streamlining and Coordinating Resources Across Funding Streams

By intentionally utilizing a number of resources, including the recent [Title I preschool funding guidance from the US Department of Education](#), the [US Department of Health](#)

[and Human Services' Head Start rulemaking](#), [toolkit on blending and braiding of funds](#), and the [UPK Teacher Pipeline Resource Compendium](#), there is an opportunity to better align and integrate resources from various funding streams to support the development of and maintain a multilingual early childhood education workforce.

Central Valley

[Stanislaus County of Education Child and Family Service \(CFS\) Division](#) is a leader in providing seamless, multifaceted programming for children and families throughout the Central Valley and beyond. In partnership with more than 15 organizations and school districts, CFS oversees 25 early childhood education programs in eight counties by strategically blending and layering funds to ensure families receive the most appropriate services possible.

PROMISING PRACTICES



Kentucky: [Thrive by Five Louisville](#) is a local non-profit organization implementing Universal Pre-K in Jefferson County, Kentucky. State, federal, local, and philanthropic dollars are managed by Thrive by Five to invest in a coordinated effort to strengthen existing preschools, child care centers, and family child care homes with solutions to address workforce and facilities needs. They also support centers by providing financial assistance so all children can attend quality preschool.

State Policy Recommendations

California's Universal Pre-Kindergarten system is uniquely positioned to address the systemic barriers identified in this report while leveraging the insights and foundational work of the English Learners Workforce Investment initiative. By building on opportunities within California to enhance compensation, strengthen workforce development, expand data integration, and build educator capacity, California can create a sustainable and equitable pipeline of multilingual-ready educators.

The recommendations detailed below were developed through conversations with stakeholders, input from EL-WIN leadership, thought partnership with a working group composed of representatives from each Central Valley county and a robust literature and data review. Additionally, state leaders were engaged through a State Policy Convening in September 2024. We are thankful for the Emerging Bilingual Collaborative for their continued support of EL-WIN and toward the development and dissemination of these recommendations.

Policy Recommendation 1: State Agency Collaboration

Convene an inter-agency statewide early childhood education / UPK multilingual education workgroup

Building on the California's State Educator Workforce Collaborative and the DLL Master Plan Advocates and integrating with current statewide early childhood education workforce development efforts, convene representatives from California Department of Education, California Department of Social Services, California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, First 5 California, California Child Development Training Consortium, California Community College Early Childhood Educators, California Early Childhood Workforce Registry, California Head Start Association, California Family Child Care Association, California Resource and Referral Network, Tribal Child Care Association and other statewide organizations, to collectively develop a strategic plan in support of the EL Roadmap Policy and multilingual-ready UPK workforce efforts.

Policy Recommendation 2: Local Agency Collaboration

Support local inter-agency collaboration focused on multilingual prepared UPK workforce

In coordination with county offices of education, First 5 chapters, Local Child Care Planning Councils or other county serving organizations, fund and support interagency multilingual UPK-focused convenings and regional collaboration based on the EL-WIN model. Fund designated staff (Program Lead) to coordinate consortia efforts, evaluate county multilingual-prepared UPK workforce development efforts, and develop countywide multilingual plans. Local representatives to join the statewide workgroup referenced above.

Policy Recommendation 3: Workforce Preparation

Expand and build capacity of workforce preparation efforts in developing an ML-ready UPK workforce

In alignment with the *Vision 2030: Roadmap for Community Colleges* to decrease faculty shortages in key sectors, such as early childhood education, and building on state and local efforts to enhance the role of community colleges and four-year universities in increasing capacity to better prepare the UPK workforce, provide funding to support and coordinate workforce preparation programs to support multilingual-ready UPK workforce.

Recommended strategies include but are not limited to:

- Align and develop multilingual and dual language focused ECE coursework statewide
- Develop bilingual ECE community college certificate
- Develop multilingual-prepared community college ECE certificate
- Coordinate with state faculty groups to support EL Roadmap Policy integration
- Support development and recruitment of bilingual college faculty
- Offer language specific ECE courses
- Develop and recruit for dual enrollment ECE programs for bilingual high school students on path to the State Seal of Biliteracy
- Coordinate with community college, BA and PreK-3rd Specialist Credential programs to ensure smooth transfer path
- Ensure forthcoming bilingual/multilingual child development permit specialization is aligned to best practices
- Require a minimum dual language learner specific ECE course as part of Child Development Permit matrix and Pre-3 Specialist Credential regardless of specialization status
- Require state funded workforce development efforts to include and engage with multilingual language development efforts

Policy Recommendation 4: Educator, Administrator, and Faculty Capacity

Provide funding to expand professional learning opportunities on and integration of the English Learner Roadmap and Policy to UPK teachers and administrators, community college and 4-year university faculty, resource and referral agencies, and other professional development organizations

Include EL Roadmap implementation in early childhood education as part of the statewide plan and goals to be developed by CDE per AB 2074, in the next iteration of the Educator Workforce Investment Grant, and in other current and future statewide professional development programs including California Early Childhood Online. Engage with quality rating and improvement system state and county administrators and include EL Roadmap in Early Childhood Education in quality improvement programs such as coaching and professional development. Ensure alignment between the EL Roadmap in Early Childhood Education and the Preschool and Transitional Kindergarten Learning Standards Foundations (PTKLF).

Policy Recommendation 5: Recognition of Experience and Education

Establish standards to recognize prior multilingual education, experience, and equivalency within child development permit and credentialing programs

Review standards for UPK teacher preparation programs, including but not limited to AA, BA permit and PK-3 credential programs, and make recommendations for determining credit for a candidate's prior learning and experience in multilingual and early childhood education.

Policy Recommendation 6: UPK Funding and Wage Stabilization

Establish a statewide stabilization fund to ensure minimum funding and guaranteed wages for mixed-delivery UPK providers with emphasis on multilingual prepared educators

Building upon existing funding structures such as Title I, Title III and other relative funding streams, identify opportunities to direct funds to appropriate UPK program and workforce wage enhancement efforts. This funding stability would allow school districts, preschool providers, and childcare providers to make staffing and salary decisions with more certainty. The state should also incorporate strong recognition and compensation incentives for the recruitment and retention of ML-prepared educators.

These incentives connect to efforts underway by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing to offer a bilingual/multilingual specialization. As pay is addressed, the state must establish goals for eventual pay parity within preschool and TK educators, along with a funding mechanism that would allow counties and school districts to achieve this.

Policy Recommendation 7: UPK Workforce and Enrollment Data

Utilizing and expanding monolingual and multilingual UPK workforce and enrollment data for informed decision-making.

Convene work group to identify critical UPK workforce and enrollment data necessary to make appropriate decisions in meeting the needs of multilingual UPK enrolled children through a multilingual-prepared UPK workforce. Build upon current data collection requirements for the mixed-delivery system and forthcoming Transitional Kindergarten dual language screener and ensure multilingual workforce and UPK enrollment data elements are included UPK reporting requirements and publish data annually.

Conclusion

By enhancing compensation, strengthening workforce development, expanding data integration, and building educator capacity, California can establish a robust and equitable pipeline of multilingual-ready educators. Leveraging the work of the English Learners Workforce Investment initiative (EL-WIN) and other initiatives, the state has a unique opportunity to address local and statewide challenges through sustainable policy solutions that ensure every young multilingual learner has the support they need to thrive and succeed.

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