



THE CHANGE

Education Policy Briefs for Legislative Action



SPRING POLICY ACTION NETWORK
2026



California Wants Multilingualism... What Are We Going to Do About It?

THE CASE FOR CHANGE IN BUILDING A ROBUST AND SUSTAINABLE TEACHER PIPELINE



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Why Does CA Want Multilingualism?

This question puts a spotlight on California's evolving educational priorities. The passage of policies such as Proposition 58, the State Seal of Biliteracy, the English Learner Roadmap, and the expansion of dual language programs clearly signals that multilingualism is no longer peripheral. As Conor Williams of The Century Foundation argues, these shifts reflect a broader commitment to equity, opportunity, and social mobility. Multilingualism is now positioned as a core educational priority tied to diversity, inclusion, and economic vitality. Yet policy aspirations alone are insufficient without the classroom capacity to enact them.

Currently, the demand for bilingual and multilingual educators far outpaces supply, leaving schools in linguistically diverse communities struggling to sustain programs and relying on temporary solutions rather than addressing systemic gaps. Without a well-supported teacher pipeline, California's multilingual vision risks remaining symbolic rather than transformative. This challenge is not merely a workforce issue but a policy problem that requires intentional action. The state must invest in policies that build sustainable pipelines for recruiting, preparing, credentialing, and retaining educators who reflect the linguistic assets of the communities they serve. Such efforts require coordinated collaboration among universities, districts, and policymakers to fully realize California's multilingual promise.

What's the "Multi" in Multilingualism?

Multilingualism is not simply a numerical count of languages, nor is it a matter of stacking one language on top of another; rather, languages flow through people, relationships, and movement, resisting confinement to compartmentalized boxes. To be multilingual is to live in the spaces between languages, where meanings shift, identities evolve, and knowledge deepens over time. The term multi carries dignity,

recognizing the many linguistic resources individuals draw upon to make sense of their lives. These practices are not deficits to be remedied but assets shaped by history, migration, schooling, and survival.

Multilingualism challenges the notion of a single superior or "pure" language and instead embraces linguistic repertoires as dynamic, partial, and ever-evolving. It is



inherently expansive, rejecting the dominance of any one language in determining whose voices matter or which stories are told. From everyday economic exchanges to university classrooms, such as programs like the Asian Languages Bilingual Teacher Education Program (ALBTEP), multilingual spaces invite people from diverse backgrounds to listen to one another and co-construct knowledge. Multilingualism signifies abundance rather than lack; when many languages meet, communication becomes more meaningful, more alive, and more inclusive. It is time to move beyond bilingualism and fully embrace multilingualism.

An Overdue Structural Issue We Must Act Upon

California faces a critical bilingual teacher shortage that threatens to undermine the state's ambitious multilingual education goals. Despite the passage of supportive policies including Proposition 58, the State Seal of Biliteracy, and the English Learner Roadmap, the demand for bilingual and multilingual educators far surpasses supply. This crisis extends beyond a simple workforce problem: it

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represents a fundamental policy failure requiring urgent systemic intervention. Schools in diverse communities struggle to sustain dual language programs, relying on temporary fixes rather than addressing structural gaps in teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention. The shortage manifests dramatically in retention challenges, with some schools losing entire cohorts of middle school bilingual teachers in a single year (Muñoz-Muñoz & Briceño, 2021).

Bilingual specialists in content areas like art, physical education, and music are so rare they're described as “unicorns” (Babino & Stewart, 2018). Teachers who remain face inequitable workloads compared to their monolingual counterparts, preparing multiple courses daily while managing additional bilingual responsibilities (Amanti, 2019). Without well-established, highly-supported teacher pipelines that strategically recruit, prepare, credential, and retain educators who mirror the linguistic assets of their communities, California's multilingual aspirations amid its “bilingual renaissance” (García & Kleyn, 2016) will remain symbolic rather than transformative.

What's the Role of Bilingual Authorization Programs in all this?

Bilingual teacher preparation programs serve as the linchpin for addressing California's teacher shortage by going far beyond basic authorization requirements to develop educators with transformative consciousness (busby & Muñoz-Muñoz, 2025). These programs prepare bilingual teachers who understand their role as “de facto agentic policymakers” (Palmer et al., 2019, p. 23), capable of navigating ideological tensions in schools, challenging deficit perspectives about multilingual students, and actively transforming educational spaces to better serve emergent bilingual communities (Valdez et al., 2016). Effective preparation programs must develop critical language awareness, advocacy dispositions, and the capacity to navigate workplace micropolitics while maintaining commitment to linguistic equity. However, these programs require strategic collaboration among universities, districts, and policymakers to build sustainable pipelines through intentional recruitment, preparation, credentialing, and retention of teachers who mirror the linguistic assets of the communities they serve.

Innovative models such as “grow your own” teacher pipelines in collaboration with local universities, teacher residency programs, and state-incentivized initiatives like California's Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program (BTPDP) demonstrate promising pathways for expanding bilingual teacher capacity. Yet without adequate funding and institutional support, these critical programs cannot scale to meet the urgent demand confronting California's schools.

The Change California Deserves to Have

California's multilingual aspirations require strategic investment in bilingual teacher preparation: invest, and students will follow. The evidence is clear: without adequate funding and institutional support for bilingual teacher education programs and teacher candidates, the teacher shortage will persist and

dual language programs will continue to fail. Policymakers must move beyond aspirational language to concrete financial commitments that build sustainable pipelines through collaboration among universities, districts, and state agencies. The following policy recommendations provide a roadmap for strategic investment.

To the Point: Recommended Policy Actions

- ✗ Create state-funded stipends and scholarships specifically for bilingual teacher candidates pursuing authorization, covering tuition, credential fees, and living expenses during student teaching placements.
- ✗ Establish dedicated funding streams for university-district partnerships that support bilingual teacher preparation programs, enabling them to transcend minimal compliance standards and develop educators with transformative consciousness.
- ✗ Provide financial incentives for universities to expand bilingual authorization program capacity, including faculty positions, coursework development, and field supervision infrastructure.
- ✗ Institute loan forgiveness programs for bilingual teachers who commit to teaching in high-need dual language programs for specified periods, addressing both recruitment and retention simultaneously.

These investments are not optional. They are urgent necessities for actualizing California's multilingual promise and ensuring equitable educational opportunities for all students.

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SCAN FOR AUDIO ARTICLE

“High school students work in summer camps, teach swimming lessons, babysit, and engage in other employment that is often framed as “summer work” but could easily be reimaged as stepping stones to teaching.”



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From Every Community to Every Classroom: Aligned Pathways Open Doors to Teaching

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Historic Investments

The State of California has made historic investments in educator workforce preparation. Between 2018 and 2023, the state allocated \$1 billion for programs to recruit new talent to the teaching profession (e.g., Golden State Teacher Award, Teacher Residency Programs, etc.) as well as incentivize those in the field (e.g., National Board Certification Incentive Program, the Classified School Employee Teacher Credential Program, the Educator Workforce Investment Grant, and the Educator Effectiveness Fund) to pursue additional education, certifications, and licenses (Learning Policy Institute, 2025). Augmenting the skills and knowledge base of the existing workforce is smart and ensures opportunity for those who have already made the decision to be an educator. Now, we must invest in attracting new talent to this important career pathway.

Change the Message

According to the Linked Learning Alliance (Linked Learning, March 2025), there are over 600 educational career pathways operating in 250 schools across the state. These pathways blend UC/CSU eligible coursework with work-based learning opportunities to give students access to college and career simultaneously. Yet in 2025, there were only 20 pathways focused on education, child development and family services, constituting just 3% of the Linked Learning pathways statewide. Put another way, the odds of being at a high school with a pathway focused on careers in education are lower than the odds of completing that high school and being admitted to Stanford University (4%) or UCLA (9%). Recent studies alert us to uneven enrollments in teacher preparation programs, continued disproportionate emergency credentials issued for under-prepared teachers, and persistence concerns among in-service educators struggling with class size, salary, and other issues (Carver-Thomas, Leung-Gagne, & Jeannite, 2024). With such constrained opportunities to pursue an education pathway in our high schools, it is highly unlikely that high school students will experience the appropriate exposure to careers in education needed to address the state’s ongoing teacher shortage or to support the many and significant policy initiatives launched in recent years (e.g., universal Transitional Kindergarten, Ethnic Studies graduation requirement, etc.). Compounding the problem, high school students interested in careers in education will find few clear roadmaps to this career. But given the complex educational milestones needed to earn a teaching credential, it is precisely in high school that students’ interest in serving their community as educators must be comprehensively mapped out.

Reward Future Educators

Students in career pathways (for any profession) indicate they feel motivated to learn, appreciate the opportunity to try new activities and discover their passions, and rate their

experience in high school as very valuable (Linked Learning, August 2025). Since high school is such a pivotal time for young people to explore identity, strengths, and preferences, the significance of these pathways cannot be overstated. Many high school students pursue paid activities that involve mentoring young children and other youth. High school students work in summer camps, teach swimming lessons, babysit, and engage in other employment that is often framed as “summer work” but could easily be reimaged as stepping stones to teaching, part of a lattice of activities that allow future teachers to gain experience with various age groups, enhance cultural competence, hone teaching-adjacent skills, and develop confidence in leading groups of youngsters. High school is the appropriate time to introduce young adults to the impact they could have if they pursued a career as an educator. But the pathway to that future teaching position is complex and costly to navigate if they do it alone. The list of costs, including opportunity costs, is daunting: financing a bachelor’s degree, financing the credential program, paying for required exams and licensure, and forgoing employment during the clinical experience. The state needs to:

- Incentivize school districts to create education career pathways. There should be at least one high school education pathway per region, especially since every school district in the region will benefit from this pathway. The state should renew the career pathways grant program (Career Pathways Trust) and incentivize (e.g., competitive advantage) regions without an education pathway to submit proposals.
- Collaborate with school districts to recruit eligible high school students to staff their youth development programs – from lifeguarding to tutoring to after-school activities to child care activities. An energetic campaign combined with wrap-around infrastructure to help high school students take on these jobs will pay off in the medium and long runs. In this case, both a public campaign and a clear set of activities aligned to education careers (e.g., appropriate bachelor’s degrees, co-curricular activities, relevant part-time work) and licensure goals must be put into place.
- Bring together counselors at the high school and the 2-year and 4-year colleges to map out a viable pathway from high school to teaching credential that includes appropriate coursework and relevant professional experience. Learn from the work of the Regional K-16 Collaborative projects, designed to map these pathways. Provide technical support and funding for the segments to strengthen articulation agreements, early credit options, and shared advising protocols.
- Fund more grow-your-own partnerships that bring educational employers and 3- and 4-year colleges together to create 4-6 year plans that will attract high school students to careers in teaching. Studies of “grow-your-own” programs indicate early signs of promise for these community-based programs (Partnership for the future of learning, 2021), particularly in relation to attracting and retaining culturally and racially diverse future teachers.

Prepare for the Future

The TK-eligible population in California is projected to grow between 27% and 31% in the next two years (Melnick, Garcia, & Leung-Gagne, 2022). The successful implementation of Universal PreK and TK initiatives rests on a robust and on-going supply of well-prepared, well-supported, and community-oriented young people rewarded and recognized for their investment of intellect, time, and funds in preparing to be educators. This preparation begins with a robust and strategic menu of preparatory work activities and courses they can opt to pursue as high school students and continues as they move through college and credential programs. California can make a deep impact on the effectiveness of its future educators if it cultivates students while they are in high school and supports them all the way until they secure their first teaching position. The state must act now to incentivize the educator preparation ecosystem – districts, high schools, 2-year and 4-year universities, recreation programs, after school programs, and so on – to design and implement career pathways that make becoming an educator the profession of choice for young adults!

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Strengthen the Foundation for Change by Investing in Mentor Teachers

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I have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

California's teacher shortage is often framed as a pipeline problem: too few individuals entering preparation programs to meet workforce demand. Yet research and practice suggest a deeper issue: Teachers are leaving because the systems meant to prepare and support them are underdeveloped and unevenly resourced. At the center of this challenge are P–12 site-based mentor teachers whose labor is essential to preparing, socializing, and retaining the next generation of educators, particularly in high-poverty urban and rural communities. This policy brief argues that investing in mentor teachers is a fundamental policy lever for addressing the state's teacher shortages, advancing educational equity, and strengthening educator preparation across California. While California requires that new teachers be assigned a mentor as part of the credentialing and induction process, the quality, preparation, and compensation of mentor teachers vary widely across districts. Too often, mentoring is treated as a compliance requirement rather than as skilled instructional leadership. The state should adopt a shared investment and shared responsibility model that ensures mentor teachers are prepared, compensated, and supported as professional teacher educators—not simply assigned as a procedural obligation.

Mentor Teachers Are the Missing Infrastructure

Mentor teachers are experienced classroom educators who guide, coach, and evaluate aspiring and newly credentialed teachers during clinical placements and induction. They observe instruction, provide feedback, model effective practice, and help new teachers navigate curriculum, school systems, and community context. Decades of research demonstrate that high-quality mentoring improves novice teacher effectiveness, job satisfaction, and retention, especially during the first three years of teaching (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Yet in California, mentor teachers are frequently selected based on availability rather than preparation, provided little or no training, and compensated inconsistently, if at all. This inconsistent approach undervalues mentor teachers' expertise and weakens the clinical preparation of aspiring teachers, who often experience fragmented guidance disconnected from coursework, district priorities, or culturally and linguistically responsive practice. When mentoring is under-resourced, the burden falls hardest on candidates placed in high-need schools, which are settings that most require stability, coherence, and instructional support.

Training Mentors to “Train to Retain”

Effective mentoring of aspiring teachers is not intuitive and not the same as teaching PK-12 youth; it is a form of adult education that requires deliberate preparation and support. Research shows that mentors who are trained to engage candidates in reflective dialogue, instructional coaching, and context-responsive problem solving are far more effective than those relying solely on advice-giving or modeling (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). This consideration is especially critical for multilingual teachers and teachers of color, who disproportionately serve high-poverty rural and urban communities yet face higher attrition due to isolation, deficit-based expectations, and limited access to culturally affirming support (Gándara & Santibañez, 2016). Mentors prepared to recognize and counter



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“Too often, mentoring is treated as a compliance requirement rather than as skilled instructional leadership.”

these dynamics can help candidates build professional belonging, instructional confidence, and long-term commitment to the profession. A “train to retain” approach will position mentoring not merely as supervision, but as a strategic investment in workforce sustainability. Without stronger and more sustainable mentoring, California continues to invest in recruitment of new teachers only to see them exit within three years or less.

Shared Responsibility Across Systems

California already requires mentor assignment in induction and has recently invested in student teacher stipends. Expanding and formalizing mentor teacher investment builds on this existing infrastructure rather than creating a new program. By strengthening the mentor side of the equation, the state ensures that current investments in candidate stipends and preparation yield long-term retention gains. But no single institution can build a robust mentoring system alone. Sustainable mentor teacher infrastructure requires coordinated, shared investment across: the *California Department of Education* to establish statewide expectations, funding streams, and accountability mechanisms; *County Offices of Education* to provide regional coordination, professional learning, and technical assistance; *local school districts* to identify, compensate, and retain accomplished mentor teachers; and *university-based educator preparation programs* to coordinate coursework, clinical supervision, and mentor training. When these systems operate in isolation, mentor teachers receive mixed messages and uneven support. When they coordinate shared investments and responsibility, mentoring becomes a coherent, practice-based bridge between legislative statute and teacher retention.

Compensation Is a Matter of Equity

Some may argue that districts can use existing discretionary funds to compensate mentor teachers. However, without designated funding and statewide expectations, support for mentoring becomes uneven, unstable, and vulnerable to competing budget pressures. Workforce stability should not depend on local budget variability. A modest, protected statewide investment ensures equity and consistency across regions. Mentoring is skilled labor. Treating it as uncompensated service reinforces inequities and limits who can serve as mentors, often excluding teachers in high-need schools who already shoulder disproportionate responsibilities. Research on teacher residencies and clinically rich preparation models indicates that paid, well-supported mentoring contributes to higher retention and stronger instructional outcomes, particularly in underserved communities (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Compensation, release time, and career advancement pathways signal that mentoring is valued, professional work, not charity.

From Add-On to Foundation

California has made significant investments in recruitment initiatives, residencies, and financial incentives. These efforts will fall short, however, if mentor teachers remain the least structured and least supported component of the system.

Strengthening mentor teacher infrastructure transforms preparation from a short-term pipeline solution into a long-term workforce strategy. By treating mentor teachers as a statewide asset—trained, compensated, and sustained through cross-sector collaboration—California can stabilize its educator workforce and ensure that those teaching the state’s most vulnerable students are more adequately supported to stay in the classroom.

Legislative Request for 2026 Session

To strengthen California’s educator workforce, the Legislature should:

- ✗ Fund a statewide Mentor Teacher Investment Program prioritizing high-poverty urban and rural districts.
- ✗ Require a minimum annual stipend and/or release time for credentialed mentor teachers.
- ✗ Establish statewide criteria for mentor eligibility (e.g., demonstrated instructional effectiveness, professional experience, and completion of state-approved mentor preparation).
- ✗ Define what counts as mentor training, including preparation in adult learning, coaching, and culturally sustaining pedagogy.
- ✗ Require annual reporting on:
 - Mentor participation and completion of training
 - Candidate completion and job placement
 - Years 1–3 retention rates
 - Retention in high-need schools
 - Equity indicators (e.g., multilingual teachers, teachers of color)

To the Point: Recommended Policy Actions

1. Establish statewide standards for mentor teacher preparation aligned to adult learning, instructional coaching, and culturally sustaining pedagogy.
2. Create dedicated funding streams to compensate mentor teachers across districts and regions, with priority for high-poverty urban and rural schools.
3. Incentivize cross-system partnerships among state agencies, county offices, districts, and preparation programs to co-design mentoring systems.
4. Develop career pathways that recognize mentoring as professional advancement, not supplemental service.
5. Center equity by prioritizing mentor preparation that supports multilingual teachers and teachers of color in high-need contexts.

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“While ethnic studies provide students of color with a ‘mirror’ so they can see themselves in a curriculum, it also offers opportunities to learn about their communities’ history and contributions to our great state.”

Protect, Commit, and Fund DEI & Ethnic Studies: California is Depending on You

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Introduction

As the national landscape changes, questions and fear grip California’s teachers as they contemplate how to teach students relevant content. Preservice educators in California have stood firm in their commitment to support the development of future teachers because we are bound by California’s education codes, standards, and, most importantly, its values. As federal support for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives erodes and the lack of state funding threatens ethnic studies, we urge the state legislature to reaffirm its long-standing commitment to protect the rights of its teachers and students. California’s established academic standards of excellence on DEI and Ethnic Studies continue to shape educational and curricular policies at both the state and national levels. As a national leader in DEI and ethnic studies, we call on our state leaders to demonstrate bold leadership to support students, teachers, and the faculty who prepare the next generation of teachers.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In the wake of *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* (2023), the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights released the now infamous “Dear Colleague” letter in February 2025 that frames certain race-conscious institutional practices as potential Title VI violations for federally funded preschool through postsecondary institutions (U.S. Department of Education, 2025). This stance aligns with the federal government’s executive actions narrowing DEI infrastructure and related initiatives, including Executive Order 14151 (federal agency DEI program termination) and Executive Order 14190 (K-12-focused directives tied to federal funding and “equity ideology”) (Executive Order No. 14151, 2025; Executive Order No. 14190, 2025). This has crippled the autonomy of institutes of higher education (IHEs) and created confusion among faculty about the direction of programs as they prepare the next generation of teachers. Furthermore, student teachers in clinical practice have shared more frequently that their collaborating teachers are foregoing well-established multicultural experiences that are standing traditions in our schools.

Pushing the national narrative that DEI policies are discriminatory practices has effectively undermined the ideological intentions of DEI efforts. This co-opting of DEI’s foundational meaning undermines the equitable measures it seeks to provide. Moreover, conversations surrounding DEI have created tense environments that tow the line between compassion and conservatism. Within the state of California, a state known for its diverse demographics across many metrics and analytics, issues focusing on the implementation of DEI efforts remain a point of contention. The prevailing narrative in DEI discourse fights to distort and conflate issues concerning racial diversity, socio-linguistics, cultural linguistics, ethnicity, and culture as issues to be eradicated instead of assets to be celebrated. Although these aspects are central to the zeitgeist of DEI in an American context, these false narratives do not accurately represent DEI measures or their academic and instructional implications.

The current dialogue within legislative matters on DEI focuses solely on matters of racial discrimination e.g. *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978), *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003), *Fisher v. University of Texas* (2013 & 2016), and *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* (2023), this is not the full extent of educational matters centered on DEI. Within educational learning theory and instructional practice, DEI positively influences pedagogical practice, instructional acumen, and classroom management by intentionally and methodologically meeting the needs of all learners within a respective learning environment (Chapman, 2024; Hill et al., 2025; Randel et al., 2018). Instructional practices and pedagogies for crafting meaningful and purposeful learning opportunities for diverse learners draw on methodologies central to the tenets of DEI. Contemporary research on effective educational learning theory points to methodologies curated directly from studying diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning populations to improve educator quality and student learning outcomes (Chhabra, et al., 2024; Gay, 2010, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2014, 2021).

Ethnic Studies Now!

As California has been a leader for DEI initiatives, it has also been at the forefront of ensuring all its students have access to a high-quality ethnic studies curriculum. Indeed, the ethnic studies discipline founded at San Francisco State in 1969 propelled California as a pioneer in the field (Beach, 2021). Since then, K-12 public schools have explored how to provide their students with access to ethnic studies. Although several districts across the state offered ethnic studies courses in secondary settings, El Rancho Unified was the first district to require ethnic studies for graduation in 2014 (Ceasar, 2014). These efforts were followed by stronger legislative support for establishing a systematic curricular experience for students, culminating in Assembly Bill No. 2016, chapter 327, by Assembly member Luis Alejo, which mandated the development of the model curriculum in ethnic studies for all public school students (CA Dept of Ed, 2021). Thus, the following three sections provide further rationale for funding ethnic studies and ensuring continued success.



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Compliance

When Governor Newsom signed AB 101 in 2021, legislation that requires a one-semester ethnic studies course for high school students to be eligible for graduation, beginning in 2030, it set a national precedent that other states have emulated (Márquez Rosales & Thornton, 2025). The approval of the new high school requirement was not the beginning of ethnic studies for California students, because the struggle to bring a high-quality ethnic studies curriculum to public school students had been underway since the establishment of the College of Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State in 1969 (Beach et al., 2021).

In this academic year, junior and senior high school students should be learning about the rich diversity of their state's history and the many people who called California home. However, the lack of funding for this legislation further subjects the execution of ethnic studies to the actions of bold leadership. This positions school administrators, teachers, and members of the school board to carry the burden of sustaining an effective strategic plan towards implementation of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) (CA Dept of Ed, 2025). Much work went into the development of ESMC which serves to guide districts in creating an ethnic studies course that meets their community's needs. The promised funding is needed to ensure that districts hire qualified teachers and provide professional development that supports improved students' academic success, as discussed in the next section. The state already made a commitment to this, let's give our students what we pledged.

Academic Impact

Research demonstrates that students who have taken a single course in ethnic studies have improved attendance, increased academic gains, and earned credits towards graduation (Dreilinger, 2021). These findings are all the more impressive as data indicates that the gains are with minoritized students, Black, Latinx, and Asian students in largely urban school districts (Sleeter & Zavala, 2020). While these findings alone make a case to fund ethnic studies for all students, data further shows that students who have completed an ethnic studies course are also more apt to enroll in college after high school completion than students of similar backgrounds who have not completed an ethnic studies course (Dreilinger, 2021).

To understand these impressive results, the following section bridges the relevance of the content with the experiences of students of Color who come from backgrounds where they rarely see themselves reflected in the curriculum. Representation matters!

Relevance and Social-Emotional Impact

While ethnic studies provide students of color with a 'mirror' so they can see themselves in a curriculum, it also offers opportunities to learn about their communities' history and contributions to our great state (Takaki, 1993). Additionally, students enrolled in an ethnic studies course have increased cross-



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cultural understanding of their peers, including White students (Sleeter & Zavala, 2020). Exposure to ethnic studies in a secondary context has been shown to foster empathy and cross-cultural solidarity while allowing students to develop intercultural competence, essential skills for functioning in a diverse and democratic society, such as California (Sleeter & Zavala, 2020).

Additionally, the literature is clear that an 'inclusive narrative' in which students see themselves reflected in the curriculum, as messy as it is, allows them to develop a critical consciousness that challenges their thinking and focuses on problem-solving skills for them and their communities (Jones, 2025). Local Education Agencies (LEAs) can not do this alone, they need the collaboration and support of IHEs to help train teachers that will have the foundation and skills necessary to deliver high quality content to its students in schools. Ethnic studies needs its promised funding from AB 101 now!

Policy Implications

DEI and ethnic studies are interrelated and even complementary. California has set precedents and even led the educational agenda for the nation to follow when it funded transitional kindergarten, desegregation orders, the adoption of the common core standards! Thus, we ask that you protect, commit and fund the following:

- Protect educators teaching inclusive content under the FAIR Act
 - Teachers need clear legal and curricular protections when teaching inclusive content, including Ethnic Studies curriculum.
- Commit to provide access to a high-quality ethnic studies course for all PK-12 students.
 - This experience should not be left to LEAs willingness or lack thereof to implement state requirements.
 - Ethnic Studies programs must be taught with clear support for teachers, curriculum, and students.
- Ensure students' rights to access Ethnic Studies curriculum.
 - Fund the Ethnic Studies teacher preparation buildout through IHE-LEA partnerships.
 - Promote interdisciplinary collaboration at the IHEs, and present models for LEAs.
 - Demonstrate this commitment through fiscal support for ethnic studies courses and teacher professional development.

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The California Council on Teacher Education (CCTE) is a statewide professional organization dedicated to improving teacher preparation and education in California. It brings together educators, researchers, policymakers, and institutions to promote research, collaboration, and advocacy in teacher education, with a strong focus on equity, diversity, and effective teaching practices.

The Spring Policy Action Network (SPAN) Conference is CCTE's annual spring conference focused on education policy and advocacy. Held in Sacramento, it connects teacher educators with policymakers to discuss research, share ideas, and influence state education policy, while also providing opportunities for networking and professional dialogue.

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