



Strengths, Beliefs, and Leadership

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In community schools, leadership exists at all levels, in formal and informal ways. Every leader has to develop strategies to become more aware of what is and isn't working for multilanguage learners, grow and develop in their professional practice, engage in reflection and dialogue with each other, and be able to work together productively. On issues related to equity, opportunity gaps, underachievement, matters of diversity and language, those strategies have to address what it means to support adults to make changes in the context of very deeply entrenched practices and systems. Clarifying your own beliefs and assumptions about the change process will help you design and select a set of strategies that are aligned with each other and that build a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

These tools were adapted from pages 39-40, **Volume I EL Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators** in partnership with Californians Together and Community Schools Learning Exchange.

Why and How we do School

Multilingual learners and newcomer students benefit from partnerships that support their intersectional identities. In addition to partnerships between schools, community-based organizations, and families, strategic partnerships with legal services, immigration resource centers, and cultural groups can create a culture of welcome and belonging. These partnerships are the basis of transformational equity in community schools. Community schools are more than a program: they operate on different assumptions and beliefs than traditional approaches to schooling. Being clear about one's own beliefs and assumptions about how change occurs enables leaders to design and select strategies that are coherent, aligned, and mutually reinforcing, and that build toward equitable education practices.

When you think of your district, your community, your school—which aspects of leadership seem most important and relevant? How might this sense of “role” inform your next steps? What would leadership look like when leveraging change for multilingual learners?

Strengths

All of the following are elements that leadership is called upon to employ in equity-centered change processes in schools. Which of the following are strengths in your individual, school, and district leadership? Which are areas you seek more strategies to be able to accomplish?

Leadership Task	A Strength (Please indicate: Individual? School? District?)	Need More Strategies
Responsive to Various Typologies of MLs		
Conveying and developing a sense of direction and purpose for my staff.		
Motivating people to make changes and improvement plans .		
Helping people believe change is possible.		
Modeling being an advocate for equity —breaking the silences, naming exclusion.		
Helping people see their roles in creating inequities and potential roles in making equity-focused changes.		
Conveying high expectations that we can make positive changes .		
Encouraging and supporting dialogue and multiple perspectives.		
Enhancing adult learning and growth regularly , and bringing new people up to speed on our approach to school.		
Providing multiple paths for adult learning , changing and acting—and helping people find their path.		
Keeping a people-centered approach to system change .		
Keeping the focus on whole child student success —social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development.		



After completing this chart and indicating where your strengths are, and what are areas of strategy development, take a few minutes to reflect on the following, individually, or in a team:

What are the kinds of barriers or resistance people may have to seeing, understanding, and acting upon the inequities and barriers facing multilingual learners?

What are some beliefs and assumptions I have about what might motivate and engage people in seeing, understanding, and acting upon these issues?

What are some beliefs and assumptions I hold about how people change and the kind of conditions that have to be created to support them in making those changes?

