



Advancing the Identification and Support of Dual Language Learners and Multilingual Learners in California: Where We Are and Where We're Headed

Background

California's [Master Plan for Early Learning and Care](#) (Master Plan), released in 2020, is a 10-year plan for improving the state's Early Learning and Care system. The Master Plan builds on the state's asset-based policies supporting multilingualism, including Proposition 58 and the California [English Learner Roadmap](#), which affirm the value of bilingualism in promoting learning, identity, and opportunity.

Early Edge California and partners took important steps in implementing the recommendations from the Master Plan by co-sponsoring a series of bills, [AB 1363](#), [AB 393](#), and [AB 2268](#), which are advancing standard identification, support, and equity for DLLs and Multilingual Learners (MLs).

AB 1363, Identifying and Supporting DLLs in California's State Preschool Program (CSPP)

[AB 1363](#), which established the first-in-the-nation asset-based standard process for identifying and collecting data related to DLLs in CSPP, began implementation on January 1, 2023. To support implementation, Early Edge California worked with partners to:

- Support the California Department of Education (CDE) in their launch of a [DLL support page](#) with technical assistance and resources on identification, reporting, and family engagement.
- Develop the [DLL Identification Guide](#) for CSPP providers to support the identification of DLL children and strong relationships with DLL families.
- Release a [blog series](#) created from educator listening sessions hosted in collaboration with [partners](#) to share promising practices and resources, as well as remaining needs to better support DLLs.

AB 393, Identifying DLLs in General Child Care Programs (CCTR) and the Migrant Child Care Program (CMIG)

Building on AB 1363, Governor Newsom signed [AB 393](#) in 2023, expanding asset-based identification of DLLs to CCTR and CMIG programs. Early Edge California, in collaboration with co-sponsors, has played a key role in the bill's implementation through the following efforts:

- Ensuring strong cross-agency collaboration with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and CDE, and providing input throughout the process of developing the Child Care Bulletin (CCB) [CCB No. 25-13](#), which was released in May 2025.
- To promote equitable access, Early Edge California and its partners helped secure funding to translate the bulletin into the top 10 languages spoken in California.

CDSS also launched a series of professional learning opportunities, incorporating insights from Early Edge California, to strengthen implementation, including the "[Identification of DLLs in Child Care and Development Programs](#)" webinar in July 2025, followed by "Strategies for Supporting DLLs in Child Care and Development Programs" in September 2025.



AB 2268, Developmentally Appropriate English Language Proficiency Assessments for Transitional Kindergarten (TK)

With the expansion of TK to include younger four-year-olds, Early Edge California sponsored [AB 2268](#), enacted in June 2024, exempting TK students from taking the English Language Proficiency Assessments of California (ELPAC), recognizing it as developmentally inappropriate for four-year-olds.

To support implementation and next steps, Early Edge California and partners supported the following:

- CDE released [interim guidance](#), developed with input from Early Edge, to support contractors and educators on immediate implementation.
- Developed resources to support TK [administrators](#), [teachers](#), and [families](#) in meeting the needs of young MLs.
- Early Edge California also participated in a CDE [webinar](#) to help educators understand and apply the new guidance.
- Early Edge California contributed to a national [scan](#) of state practices in English Learner identification developed by partners to help inform California's next steps.
- Early Edge California successfully advocated for the inclusion of \$10 million in the 2025-26 State Budget for the identification and adoption of a developmentally appropriate ML screener for TK.

Looking Ahead

Together, these policies reflect California's leadership in creating a coherent, asset-based approach to multilingual learning from preschool through TK. The next phase requires alignment, sustained investment, and continued collaboration between educators, families, and policymakers.

To ensure this, Early Edge California will continue to:

Monitor and Support implementation of AB 1363 and 393:

Coordinate with state agency partners to support implementation and data integration and alignment between AB 1363 and AB 393.

Engage Practitioners and Families:

We also continue to actively engage [practitioners and families](#) across the state to gather insights on successes, challenges, and opportunities to strengthen implementation across programs and inform resource development needs.

Support Training and Resources for the Field:

Collaborate with state agency partners to support the development of trainings and resources to assist practitioners and families in implementation.

Support the ML screener for TK:

Early Edge will continue to work closely with CDE and State Board of Education (SBE) partners to support the selection and adoption, and rollout of a new developmentally appropriate ML screener for TK and ensure that the new screener is used to provide additional funding for school districts to support their TK MLs.



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