English Learners: Redefining Education in America

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English Learners: Redefining Education in America

Doctor of Education Leadership (Ed.L.D.)
Capstone

Submitted by
William Y Marroquín

To the Harvard Graduate School of Education
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education Leadership.

April 2019
“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead, Anthropologist
Acknowledgments

My work is possible through the love, support, and sacrifice of family, mentors, and friends. I dedicate this capstone to…

…Carmen, my wife, life partner, and best friend. You are our family’s foundation, and your love is unconditional. You make me a better person. I love you.

…Gisela, my oldest daughter, for showing me the power of humility, patience, and a kind heart. I am proud of the person you are becoming.

…Gianna, my middle daughter, for reminding me to have the courage to advocate for others who are less fortunate. I am proud of the equity warrior you are growing up to be.

…Yovanni, my youngest son, for showing me to live in the moment and bring joy to others. I am proud of the love you share and may you continue to share this gift.

…Ester & Salvador, my parents for your bold decision to immigrate to this country, and teaching me the value of integrity and hard work. I am proud to be your son.

... Carmela & Tony, my in-laws, for modeling love through family, unity, and self-sacrifice.

...my brother, Erick & his family, sister-in-law, Aracely & her family, for being our greatest fans, and taking care of our parents during our stay in Cambridge.

...Liz City, my chair & mentor, for challenging me to think systematically and helping me see my worth as a leader at Harvard. May we continue to collaborate!

...David Cohen, my advisor & mentor, for teaching me the power of inquiry and humility to leadership. Our journey to improving education is just beginning!

...Sandra Schiber, my residency supervisor & mentor, for showing me that leadership is about serving others. I hope we continue to impact education in the Central Valley!

...my colleagues at AESD for allowing me to be a part of your team. You taught me that trust, commitment, and excellence are the pillars of educating children.

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... the underserved students in our classrooms. You inspire me to have purpose, be a lifelong learner, and have hope for the future. May you reach your dreams!
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Abstract

Schools have the responsibility to create opportunity and develop noble citizens to support the growth of our nation. Since the birth of our country, a school's primary purpose has been to provide a valuable educational program for every student who enters their system. However, as our world changes and cultures continue to interconnect, providing that valuable educational program is increasing in complexity. It also requires educators to rethink their definition of teaching and learning. English Learners (ELs) are a group who bring many assets to schools: diversity, culture, language, experience, and hope for a better life. However, ELs continue to stretch the boundaries of school systems due to their unique academic and language needs. Moreover, ELs are the fastest-growing and most diverse population in schools. The state of California leads the nation with 21% of the population classified as EL. This capstone aims to address the central question: Given limited resources and an established system, how do schools provide an exceptional educational program to ELs?

This capstone aims to address the central question through a strategic project conducted in a rural school district, kindergarten through eighth grade, within California's Central Valley. The capstone considers several elements in the areas of adaptive leadership, change management, improvement science, EL state policy, and instruction. Furthermore, the capstone offers several recommendations in the aspects of leadership, the public school system, and the State Department of Education.

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Introduction

At its inception, diversity, acceptance, and an opportunity for a better life are the core values our country has been aiming to provide each citizen. The call of this promise is so strong that from the beginning, immigrants have been arriving at our shores and crossing our borders to be a part of our country’s fabric. To this point, our public school systems are responsible for educating and developing noble citizens to support the growth of our nation. However, in the ever-changing global society, the challenge of educating students continues to become more complex and multi-faceted. English Learners (ELs) are a group who continue to stretch the capacity and boundaries of schools. English Learners are the fastest-growing population in public schools, with an estimated growth of 105% from 1990 through 2001 (McKeon, 2005). Moreover, ELs are a highly diverse group, with states reporting over 400 different languages spoken across our nation. The state of California leads the nation in EL enrollment, with 21% of students classified as ELs (McKeon, 2005). By nature of their unique assets, EL students model the values of diversity, acceptance, and the pursuit of a better life. Yet, schools continue to ask: How can we provide an effective educational program for ELs with our current resources and instructional model? This capstone aims to address this central question through a strategic project conducted in a school district within California’s Central Valley.

Context

Atwater Elementary School District (AESD) is a kindergarten through eighth-grade district located in rural Merced, the second poorest county in the state of California. AESD consists of seven elementary schools and two middle schools, and has a student enrollment of 5084. Of that total population, 1425 students are ELs, translating to 29.1%
of its students (Schiber & Boyenga, 2017). The district serves a diverse student population of 70% Latino, 20% White, 4% Asian, 2% African-American, and 3% Other (Schiber & Boyenga, 2017). AESD prides itself on delivering a high quality school experience to each student in their schools. The slogan, “A Tradition of Excellence” (“Atwater Elementary School District Webpage,” n.d.) resonates through the walls of each elementary and middle school. It is with this mindset that AESD strives to address the current policies and mandates from both the United States Department of Education and the California Department of Education (CDE).

Driven by federal and state policy changes, schools in California made significant changes in instruction, assessment, and accountability. Two thousand ten marked the initiation of the Common Core Standards in English Language Arts and Math, which increased the rigor of the curriculum. By 2014, the state adopted the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) to more accurately assess the new standards. In 2013-14, the CDE implemented the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) for districts, a significant shift from the old funding model (“LCFF Frequently Asked Questions - Local Control Funding Formula (CA Dept of Education),” n.d.). Unlike the old model, where student enrollment defined funding for the district, the LCFF instead aims to distribute funding according to the district’s underrepresented subgroup enrollment of ELs, Foster Youth, and Low-Income students, and provides districts more autonomy over that funding. Under the LCFF, districts must create a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), which outlines the strategies they will implement to meet the learning needs of their students (“LCFF Frequently Asked Questions - Local
Control Funding Formula (CA Dept of Education),” n.d.). More importantly, these strategies must have measurable outcomes designed by local stakeholders.

To adhere to these mandates, AESD developed the following priorities in their LCAP (“Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) – District – Atwater Elementary SD,” n.d.):

1) Assure Early Literacy in Transitional Kindergarten through 3rd Grade
2) Increase Safety of Facilities
3) Build Human Capacity
4) Close the Achievement Gap in Grades 4th - 8th.

In order to close the achievement gap, AESD chose to work on putting a system in place to deliver good first instruction by focusing on three key components of effective teaching. As noted by Dr. Schiber in a one-on-one meeting, “when I came to this district and observed instruction, an instructional focus was needed. We had to bring everyone together and establish a direction in instruction.” Hence, the Educational Services Department convened all eight principals from the district to create the instructional focus, which the district now refers to as the “The Big Three.” This focus is based on three pedagogical approaches: classroom objectives, student engagement, and depth of knowledge. The district expects all teachers in the district to align their instruction with the Common Core State Standards and define the intended learning outcomes for each lesson through the use of classroom objectives. Next, teachers are expected to plan and use multiple strategies to engage students in attaining the objectives of the lesson. The district uses Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) matrix to define rigor. Webb’s work categorizes the rigor of classroom tasks in four levels: Level 1 - memorization and recall
of information, level 2 – application of information, level 3 - connection of concepts, and level 4 – analysis of complex ideas (n.d., p. 3). Finally, the district partnered with the consulting firm WestEd to train administrators and teachers in the “The Big Three.” WestEd training focuses on supporting principals in their monitoring and coaching of teachers in the chosen elements. The firm works with teachers on Common Core Standard implementation, engagement strategies, DOK training, and lesson plan development to address the district’s expectations of their teaching staff.

The district created a system of accountability for principals and teachers to deliver “The Big Three.” Principals are accountable for instruction through classroom walkthroughs by cabinet members, mid-year evaluations, one-on-one sessions with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and teacher coaching plans. Teacher accountability takes the form of administrative walkthroughs, academic conferencing with principals based on student performance outcomes, administrative coaching sessions, and the plan-observe-debrief (POD) process. The POD is a process whereby teachers plan together, observe each other, and then debrief on their observations and teaching practices based on the three elements.

AESD also maintains specific instructional support for ELs with “The Big Three” instructional focus. The district uses an entry process to identify students’ placement into a mainstream ELA or ELD program, as well as an exit procedure for ELs who have acquired English proficiency. To address teaching practices for ELs in all English Language Arts classrooms, AESD purchased the state-approved curriculum Wonders (K-5) and StudySync (6th – 8th), which has an embedded English Language Development (ELD) instructional program. Direct ELD instruction is a scheduled block within the
school day. Also, a total of ten Bilingual Instructional Assistants are assigned across the
district to support the language and academic development of ELs (Boyenga, 2018).
Their purpose is to assist teachers in monitoring EL students’ academic progress through
assessments, provide intensive small group language support, and translate core content
to students.

These investments resulted in an impact on overall student achievement
throughout the district. CAASPP scores increased in math by 10.84 points in the past three years, rising from 24 to 34.84 percent. AESD currently outperforms Merced County in both math and English Language Arts (ELA) scores and is on par in ELA with overall state performance (Schiber & Boyenga, 2017a). The CAASPP performance graphs below in English and math, created by the district’s Educational Services Department, display this comparison data.

<table>
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<th>CAASPP ELA: % Standard Met/Exceeded</th>
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Even though the district creates clear instructional expectations, implements a system of accountability, and provides additional services to ELs, district leadership realizes there are performance areas in need of attention. In the 2018 CAASPP results, ELs scored 37% (English) and 24% (math) below the district’s overall performance. In the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC), 70.55% of students performed below the “well developed English skills” range (“ELPAC Test Results - ELPAC Reporting (CA Dept of Education),” n.d.). An important district metric for EL achievement is reclassification, which is a designation for students who successfully acquire English Proficiency and exit the English Language Development Program. The district’s goal within their strategic planning of LCAP is to increase reclassification rates yearly; however, 2018 results show a decrease in reclassification by 4.7% (“Data Quest - English Language Learner Reclassification Results (CA Dept of Education),” n.d.).

The district focuses their resources on implementing “The Big Three” instructional initiatives to address the learning needs of all students. The next phase of
this plan is moving the work of “The Big Three” to a deeper level, where ELs become the focus of these strategies. Dr. Schiber notes, “We need to get better at driving the instructional work deeper, apply ‘The Big Three’ principles to the learning needs of ELs. How do we carry the instructional work of ELs, and continue to focus on the learning needs of all students?” (Schiber & Boyenga, 2017) Other stakeholders in the district expressed the same consideration. During my interviews with principals and teachers, one common question was: How do we increase the rigor for ELs, while continuing our expectations of all students? This tension of addressing the performance gap of EL students, while maintaining successful instructional strategies, is a dilemma for the district.

Maintaining a balance between EL and school-wide instruction is also evident in the oversight of the ELD program. The Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services and other support staff within the department, in the absence of the Director of English Language Learners, oversee the ELD program (Boyenga, 2018). The Director of English Language Learners position, responsible for coordinating the program, dissolved in 2009 due to budget restrictions. This individual’s role entailed managing the ELD program services, providing training, and coordinating the requirements of the English Learner Master Plan (ELMP) across the eight schools. Currently, school sites are responsible for maintaining the EL placement and monitoring process in addition to implementing the district-wide education program. The goal of the Educational Services Department is to maintain the essential services of the ELD program, while also leading the multiple instructional initiatives and services of the district.
In light of these factors, the district brought me into the organization to coordinate the revision of the English Learner Master Plan (ELMP), as a way to provide support to the ELD program. A committee of stakeholders last met to revise the ELMP in 2008 (Atwater Elementary School District Master Plan for English Language Learners, 2008). Since then, major changes in the educational landscape made revising the ELMP both needed and necessary. The following events had a significant impact:

- In 2010, the CDE adopted the Common Core Standards, setting rigorous expectations for instruction.
- In 2014, the CDE released the English/English Development Framework (ELA/ELD Framework), increasing the rigor of ELD instruction across the State.
- In 2016, Proposition 58 passed in California, creating new policy and affording districts the right to educate ELs in their native language, thus paving the way for Bilingual Education (Hopkinson, 2017).

This policy became the impetus for the English Language Learner Roadmap (EL Roadmap), which outlines a system of continuous improvement for ELs in public schools. In 2018, the CDE transitioned from the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) to the ELPAC, further increasing the rigor of ELD assessment across the State.

A Federal Monitoring Review (FPM) created urgency for the district to revise the ELMP and review their ELD program. Federal Law mandates that districts who receive funding for particular programs, including ELD, be monitored to ensure funding is directed to the appropriate services (“FPM Frequently Asked Questions - Compliance
Monitoring (CA Dept of Education),” n.d.). The FPM process requires components of the ELMP: student placement and exit from ELD, the educational program, engagement of parents, and stakeholder accountability, be aligned to district policy, Federal regulations and California Education Code (“2018-19 Federal Program Monitoring Instruments - Compliance Monitoring (CA Dept of Education),” n.d.). If a lack of due diligence to follow appropriate guidelines and policy results in “findings” by FPM auditors, districts must revise their procedures and submit paperwork to the State showing corrective action for items out of compliance. AESD is under FPM review and by May 1st of 2019, must submit a revised ELMP to the State of California.

The historical performance gap of ELs, new instructional priorities, current budget restrictions, recent state policy changes, and the upcoming state program review has created urgency in the district to address the support systems and academic needs of ELs. Through these lenses, Atwater Elementary School District defined a problem of practice and a research question for the strategic project:

**Problem of Practice**

Atwater Elementary School District increased overall student achievement by training principals and teachers in the Common Core Standards, student engagement, classroom objectives, and Depth of Knowledge, yet the district struggles with the low percentages of English Language Learners meeting or exceeding the CAASPP standards in math (11.43%) and English (11.05%), producing a continual achievement gap for the subgroup.
Research Question:

With the current education system and resources, how does Atwater Elementary School District initiate a change process to address the performance gap of ELs?

Review of Knowledge for Action

The average performance data of English Language Learners in California indicates that the achievement gap between this subgroup and others is a significant trend across the state. AESD follows this trend and acknowledges that addressing the achievement gap of English Language Learners is a challenge in their system (Schiber & Boyenga, 2017). The historical performance trend in the district begs the question: What new approach should the district take to address the achievement gap?

Properly addressing this question requires the consideration of a new approach. Heifetz et al. (2009, p. 14) proposes that moving people in their beliefs and supporting them in reforming their priorities requires Adaptive Leadership, which addresses challenges that persist in an organization. This is important to consider, as AESD’s priority for the past several years focuses on “The Big Three” instructional model, which supports all students. Furthermore, AESD experienced success with this model. Therefore, a realignment of priorities of the model and adjusting the beliefs of what is best for the district will require an adaptive approach to acquire different and desired results for ELs, and more importantly to sustain the resulting change. In order for the solution to have impact and sustainability, he notes that people with adaptive challenges must go through a process in which they become people with the solution, rather than people with the problem (Heifetz & Linsky, 2017, p. 127). The research on adaptive
leadership begs another question: How does a resident, an outsider, help the organization go through a process to change their priorities, habits, and loyalties within a limited time frame and with limited resources? One approach is through developing trust with stakeholders in the organization. Author and business owner Stephen Covey describes trust as based on two elements: character and competence (2008, p. 30). He explains that others trust you because of the integrity you bring, your intent of actions, your capacity, and the results you accomplish in an organization (Covey & Merrill, 2008, p. 54). Covey also notes that when trust is created, productivity increases and implementation time decreases (2008, p. 13).

How does trust impact academic performance in schools? In a three-year study conducted by Bryk and Schneider, they found that schools with high “relational trust” are three times more likely to improve academically in math and reading than schools who have a weak trust culture (2004, p. 111). Furthermore, the authors propose that trust fosters beliefs, priorities, and practices in schools that are levers for supporting student engagement and academic achievement (2004, p. 115). These levers tend to lessen the anxiety and fear associated with new reforms, promote problem-solving within school staff, and develop commitment and belonging to the organization (A. Bryk & Schneider, 2004, p. 117). Trust between the resident and the organization promotes conditions for an initiative to thrive, in particular one with an organization that has adaptive challenges. In essence, developing trust with and among educators is important when moving a system through a change process that aims to impact instruction.

What process does a new leader use to develop trust as they enter an organization? Jentz & Wofford suggest the following, “Leaders can use an Entry Plan to
protect themselves against their tendencies, and those of the organization to expect an instant and brilliant answer to complex issues before they build trust, gain reliable knowledge, and produce the collective new thinking required to make decisions that bring about lasting organizational change” (2012, p. 9). Furthermore, they note that an Entry Plan can help a new leader from jumping into solutions or misdiagnosing the problem, which can create failure in the initiative leading to mistrust, noted as “Jump-Reflex Problem Solving” (Jentz & Wofford, 2012, p. 10).

To avoid “Jump-Reflex Problem Solving” and form an effective Entry Plan, a new leader must explain the following to the organization’s key stakeholders: the purpose for onboarding, the intent of the plan, and their timeline for the plan (Jentz & Wofford, 2012, p. 14). Jentz & Wofford propose, “In designing and making public an Entry Plan that is transparent about the sequence of collaborative inquiry…will result in a blueprint for change” (Jentz & Wofford, 2012, p. 14). The first step is to acquire data systematically. This step helps generate trust, respect, and credibility in the new organization (Jentz & Wofford, 2012, p. 14). Next, analyze and establish trends from the gathered data with the goal to generate new thinking and consensus amongst stakeholders. Lastly, form an action plan with the end goal of reshaping the organization.

My goals as a resident are to develop trust, shape a strategic project, test new thinking, and redefine a new purpose for the organization. However, as Dr. Mark Moore suggests in his strategic triangle work, it is worthwhile to consider whether an initiative’s “purpose is publicly valuable, whether it will be politically and legally supported, and whether it is administratively and operationally feasible” (1995, p. 22). He describes these elements, as tests a manager must conduct in order to analyze the potential success
of an initiative. Moore believes “…the strategy must be substantively valuable in that the organization produces things of value to overseers… at low cost regarding money and authority” (Moore, 1995, p. 71). He further outlines that understanding the authorizing environment is a crucial factor when entering an organization and that understanding should be analyzed frequently through the process of a strategic project. The lack of comprehension of local political forces and what people in the organization find valuable or support will ultimately lead for the strategic project to fail (Moore, 1995, p. 72).

Moore asserts that to garner support for the strategic initiative, “leaders should interact with the political system not simply through the medium of their mandated purposes but instead through more continuous and interactive dialogue” (1995, p. 75). Cohen and Mehta (2017, p. 3) propose that school reforms succeed and sustain around the following principles: finding solutions to problems people find valuable, strong constituency pressure, providing support to educators, aligning reforms to the values of the educational community.

The recently developed EL Roadmap Policy developed by CDE is a current ELD reform, and offers public school systems a vision and mission based on research, system improvement practices, and coherence principles. According to Dr. Laurie Olsen, co-chair of the EL Roadmap, the purpose of this policy is, “… for more aspirational, inspirational vision and policy, that needs to move the ‘needle’ in EL programs and services, provides guidance and direction for continuous improvement, a comprehensive approach to English Learners, and guidance aligning other documents and legal frameworks with the LCAP” (Olsen, 2018). Furthermore, the mission that supports this visionary approach notes, “California schools affirm, welcome, and respond to a diverse
range of English learner (EL) strengths, needs, and identities” (“English Learner Roadmap - English Learners (CA Dept of Education),” n.d.), which impacts the delivery of the EL Master Plan in the district.

Four principles drive the vision and mission of the EL Roadmap Policy:

1. “Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools
2. Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access
3. System Conditions that Support Effectiveness
4. Alignment and Articulation Within and Across the Systems” (“Roadmap Policy - English Learner Roadmap (CA Dept of Education),” n.d.)

Moreover, each principle goes a step further to define supporting elements.

Principle two, Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access, outlines instruction for ELs in seven instructional elements:

- Integrated and Designated English Language Development (ELD)
- Intellectually Rich, Standards-based Curriculum
- High Expectations
- Access to the Full Curriculum
- Use of Students' Home Languages
- Rigorous Instructional Material
- Programmatic Choice (“ELR Principle Two - English Learner Roadmap (CA Dept of Education),” n.d.).

While these instructional elements provide an outline for a model program, they do not offer clarity on classroom instruction. Therefore, a concrete explanation for the instructional model is needed. First, it is important to consider how to improve
instruction. Researchers explain that the only way to improve instruction at scale is to address the “instructional core” (Cohen, Raudenbush, & Ball-Loewenberg, 2003, pp. 119–142), which increases teacher knowledge around instruction, increases the complexity of the content, and changes the role of the student in their learning (City, Elmore, Fiarmen, Teitel, & Lachman, 2009, p. 24). Cohen et al. further defines the “instructional core” as the role between the teacher and student, the capacity of the teacher to deliver the curriculum, and the engagement of the student with the curriculum. These three items combined outline the classroom instructional task. Hence, at the heart of an effective instructional model for ELs is a rigorous instructional task. How does one move the stakeholders in a district to offer this type of rigorous instruction?

A change process that supports stakeholders to implement the EL Roadmap Policy, and creates conditions for learning and improving, is worthwhile to ponder. Kotter et al. offers an eight-step process to follow when initiating a change process in an organization: “The flow is this: push urgency up, put together a guiding team, create the vision and strategies, effectively communicate the vision and strategies, remove barriers to action, accomplish short-term wins, keep pushing for wave after wave of change until the work is done, and, finally, create new culture to make new behavior stick” (2012, p. 2). Furthermore, it is useful to discuss the processes a committee\(^2\) should consider in driving change within an organization and acquiring the outcomes of the initiative. Components such as collective inquiry, action-oriented experimentation, continuous improvement, and results orientation can create a learning environment for a committee and keep them on task to deliver on the goals of the initiative (Dufour & Eaker, 1998, pp.

\(^2\) For the purpose of this capstone, committee will be used interchangebly with Kotter’s guiding team term, as the change management process can be applied to different roles.
Furthermore, Bryk et al. proposes that change in a committee occurs if the approach is a low-risk, experimental, learning cycle of improvement, rather than a high stakes punitive approach (2015, p. 114). Kotter and Bryk’s work raises an important question: How do committees drive change and experimentation in a public school organization in a long-established system, and one in which risk-taking is not the norm? The answer may lie in committee members taking short bursts of inquiry cycles with low organizational and personal costs (A. S. Bryk et al., 2015, p. 120). Bryk et al. proposes the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) improvement cycle, where each part of the cycle offers inquiry-based questions that allow change-driven committees to hypothesize, put a plan in place, execute the plan, learn from the implementation, modify the plan, and retry their process again. The chart below offers further details on the cycle of experimentation (A. S. Bryk et al., 2015, p. 122).

![PDSA cycle diagram]

This approach has the potential to help a committee organize themselves around a common process, which provides a lot of leverage around gaining new learning, testing
beliefs, lowering anxiety, and creating a risk-free environment, which can support the change process a committee, is aiming to produce.

The research and resources offered in the RKA have set the stage for the **Theory of Action** that aims to address AESD’s problem of practice and research question.

**IF I:**

- Use an **entry plan process** to build trust, understand the organization’s context, and communicate the academic needs of ELs,
- build the **capacity** of stakeholders to understand the EL Roadmap Policy and improvement cycles,
- garner support to coordinate a **committee** to revise the ELMP,

**THEN AESD will have:**

- An **updated ELMP** that provides direction on effective principles for an EL program,
- stakeholders **engaged** with the principles and restructured priorities,
- a committee that can **impact** EL instruction and **sustain** the processes of the plan, addressing the achievement gap of ELs.

In the following section, I describe the application of the Theory of Action through the implementation of the strategic project in the district.

**Strategic Project Development**

The Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services communicated the need to address the academic performance of ELs during our first meeting in December of 2017. At that time, it was unclear how the strategic project would address these academic needs; however, AESD committed itself to address this
performance gap. In the spring of 2018, we identified the need to update the district’s English Learner Master Plan. Its last revision was in 2008, and the district needed an updated, current ELMP to submit to the state as part of the FPM process.

The first challenge to this project involved introducing a resident to a district with no previous experience in a residency project. To begin my entry plan, the superintendent proposed I attend her summer check-in sessions with district principals. These meetings are a process for the superintendent to develop a needs assessment for each site and begin setting expectations. I realized these sessions would be a great onboarding opportunity as a resident. The meetings proved to be an excellent introduction to key authorizers in the district. The superintendent introduced me as the intern from Harvard shadowing her and developing a strategic project on ELs for the district. I used this introduction to set up one-on-one meetings with each principal to further discuss the project. While setting up these meetings, each principal’s trust factor varied. For some, more trust existed due to our previous experience working together in another district. For others, I was a new acquaintance. In the one-on-one meeting, I strategically began by sharing my purpose as an educator through my personal story of being an EL student in the education system. I then asked them: “Who or what motivated you to follow an educational career?” Once this introduction process was complete, I asked them: “What are the assets in our district helping ELs succeed? What are the barriers getting in the way of their success?” Once they provided this information, I asked: “Do you have any questions for me?” The questions they asked ranged from “Why are you back?” To “What are you planning to do with this information?” I responded to these inquiries by sharing my purpose in the district and the
process of the entry plan. I assured them I intended to learn about the district, establish trends, and not evaluate individual or school performance. At the end of each session, principals referred me to teacher leaders at their site who had experience working with ELs and who could provide further insight into the district. I compiled principals’ responses into general trends and shared them with the superintendent through a memo: “Strategic Project Update & Timeline.” I continued this process of meeting with stakeholders, sharing my story, asking the three questions, and obtaining input about people. In total, I met with twenty-five stakeholders, cabinet members, site administration, teachers, and parents. I again synthesized the notes from my meetings, developed general trends, and shared this information through a memo with the twenty-five chosen individuals. Furthermore, through a survey, I obtained their feedback on the emergent problem of practice.

Moreover, in my meetings with teachers, I asked permission to visit their classroom and shadow EL students. I wanted to observe ELs in class, the tasks they engaged in, and see the support services they received outside of class. I shadowed four EL students with diverse demographic and performance ranges. These students were in grades three, four, six and eight, and attended four different schools in the district. Their English Language Level ranged from emerging to advanced. Three students were in regular education, and one was receiving special education services. These observations provided insight into the supports teachers provided in class such as lesson objectives, rigor, and engagement through computer-generated programs or activities such as pair share. One teacher I observed was using the Boston Museum of Science curriculum and had students working on a circuit board, which if set up appropriately, turns on a bulb. I
also observed the ELD support services students received using a pullout model. In this model, students attended a required ELD block led by a staff member. In that particular ELD lesson, the staff member asked students to read a passage from their book on volcanoes and discuss what makes them erupt. This classroom visit provided insight and showed me how the district organizes their ELD program and how they provide additional support to students. I synthesized what I heard from stakeholders in my classroom observations of EL students, developed an emergent problem of practice, and created a memo that I shared with participants.

**Emergent Problem of Practice:**

The district makes it a priority to train principals and teachers in the Common Core Standards, student engagement, classroom objectives, and Depth of Knowledge. The district is struggling to meet the academic needs of English Language Learners and rigor of the Common Core and English Language Development standards.

The memo contained a survey, which solicited participants to offer their feedback on the emergent problem of practice. Below are several responses from the survey:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response 1</th>
<th>Response 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“There have not been concerted efforts or training to help teachers understand designated and especially integrated ELD. A solid understanding of integrated ELD would help support ELs and all learners.”</td>
<td>“If we are training all staff in Instructional strategies (engagement, objectives/standards, DOK), why are we not getting results with our EL students? There has been limited professional development on understanding the”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The responses revealed root causes for the emergent problem of practice. First, increasing stakeholder’s knowledge on the latest research of English Development and Integrated/Designated ELD was a need for the district. Second, staff wanted to see the link between the Common Core and ELD standards. Finally, staff requested a focused approach to EL instruction, as noted by a participant, “can we get the most ‘bang’ for our time.”

I gained further insight and support for the EL program through weekly classroom visits with the Superintendent. The Superintendent developed a weekly classroom visit system where she observes classroom implementation of the “The Big Three” with a principal. After the visit, she debriefs with the principal on noted trends and approaches that support the school’s implementation of the instructional model. I was fortunate to be a part of these visits and to meet with principals. These visits were valuable, as I was learning how the superintendent, principals, and teachers were defining classroom objectives, engagement, and rigor in their own practice. In debriefs with principals, they shared professional development and coaching session strategies on the “The Big Three.” These sessions created an opening for the Superintendent to provide feedback and coordinate support, if needed. When I saw an opportunity, I would ask principals: “How
do you envision ‘The Big Three’ connecting to EL instruction?” My intend was for principals to begin considering EL instruction in their integration of the “Big Three” and for teachers to focus on the academic needs of this subgroup.

These visits also set the stage for a future discussion of the districts’ EL program. In one particular class visit, the Superintendent, the Principal and I entered a classroom where all newcomers, students new to the country who do not speak English, spend the entire day in the classroom together. We noticed students conducting conversations primarily in Spanish. Furthermore, in speaking with the Principal, students stayed in the same class the entire day without communicating with English speaking peers. I then made a comment to the Superintendent and the Principal: “This program reminds me of my English Language experience in middle school. All I wanted was to learn English, meet other people, and be part of the regular schedule.” This visit and comment subsequently led to future conversations and adjustments to the program, which I will elaborate further in the next section.

Leading trainings was also a key factor in the process of moving EL instruction to the forefront for district stakeholders. Every year, AESD holds a two-day summer institute where district and site leadership review data, set priorities, and begin the process of planning professional development for the year. These sessions were an opportune time to begin a conversation with key stakeholders in the district regarding the EL performance gap. The Director of Special Programs and I coordinated a presentation for site leadership teams that included principals, associate principals, and learning directors, with the purpose of reviewing district and site performance data, including underserved populations. School site teams then determined trends, identified barriers
causing performance gaps, and developed a plan to address those barriers. The training allotted time for site leadership teams to discuss these elements, create a draft site action plan for the year, present their plans to other participants, obtain feedback, and develop a second version. The Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services directed the group to continue to revise their plans for a follow up meeting in the fall.

In mid-fall of 2018, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and I met with principals to discuss the implementation of their site action plans. Principals made another set of revisions, implemented strategies outlined in their plan, and tested actions at their school site. The principals’ plans identified EL’s academic performance as an action item. A sense of focus and urgency for ELs emerged. As one principal noted in a meeting, “our ELs are performing at the same level of our special education population. That is not acceptable!” Another principal shared that she reviewed EL performance data with her staff through a gallery walk activity, a process she learned in the two-day summer institute. She further explained that her teachers came to the realization that EL performance had to increase in the district.

With this sense of urgency, I realized that all stakeholders needed the skillset to address this performance gap. From my previous experience working in a district office and being a part of Cabinet, I knew Cabinet members, the district’s leadership team who authorize initiatives, resources, and human capital, were the first group of stakeholders to engage in the EL Roadmap Policy. In late October, I led a presentation with all Cabinet members present: the Superintendent, the three Assistant Superintendents of Education, Human Resources, and Business Services, as well as the Director of Special Programs. The objectives of the meeting included:
• Learning about the purpose of the new state policy & EL Roadmap through a presentation and discussion.

• Learning about the four EL Roadmap principles and elements through reading and discussion.

• Using a crosswalk activity to analyze the connection between the EL Roadmap and our district’s LCAP goals.

• Reflecting through writing & discussion on how the EL Roadmap impacts each department.

The presentation had several key discussion points: 1) The State was heading in a new direction following Proposition 58, revamping the ELD program and making Bilingual Education the new vision for ELs. 2) The EL Roadmap Policy requires an approach based on building assets of students, implementing rigorous instruction, building leadership capacity, and creating coherent systems across the district. 3) The ELMP must align to the EL Roadmap Policy elements and LCAP goals. 4) The success of the district’s ELD program and new direction requires engagement and coherence from each department. My intent was to provide an overview and begin the discussion of changing the district’s priorities and processes to meet the new policy. Due to time constraints, the group did not engage with the instructional elements of the policy. The group’s main conversation was centered on implementing a bilingual education program in the district. The EL Roadmap Policy authorizes schools to educate ELs in both their native language and English. Cabinet members were envisioning how this educational program proposal would play out in the community. At the end of the meeting, members posed the question: “Is the Atwater community ready for a change in how we educate ELs?”
This conversation provided important information regarding building support through a committee of stakeholders to pivot the district in a new direction. The committee would revise the ELMP, and in the process experience change management, improvement science, system development, and learn about research-based instructional programs for ELs. In my entry plan interviews, I identified individuals to serve on a committee to revise the EL Master Plan. I shared my list with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Education Services, who provided insight to candidates. In an administrative meeting we asked site principals to provide their insight and offer new recommendations to the list. Through the process of creating the list with key leadership stakeholders, my goal was to communicate the revision goals for the plan, recruit district and site leadership to the group, and obtain their input on potential teachers and support staff for the group. Through this entry process, I identified several potential candidates to lead an EL initiative. I also learned that sites have hectic schedules and their main focus is serving students. Thus, more meetings and the EL committee membership would entail more time away from their school’s responsibilities. I decided an email invitation to be the most suitable way to communicate the opportunity to serve on the committee. I sent an email to candidates providing background on the initiative to revise the ELMP and establishing urgency by listing the following reasons:

1. The EL achievement gap continues to increase.
2. The EL population continues to grow in our district.
3. The rigor of the CAASPP and ELPAC requires we change our approach to English Language Learners.
4. Two thousand and eight marked the last update of the ELMP.
5. Our district will be undergoing a Federal Program Monitoring process, which requires an updated plan.

The memo requested that prospective members complete the survey, enter their interest in attending an informational session after school, state what they hoped to accomplish from the committee, and list norms they found useful in working with other committees. In total, twenty four candidates, including principals, teachers, support staff, and one parent, attended the first training. From my previous experience leading committees, I realized we were about to embark on a change process that would require people to reconsider their priorities, beliefs, and practices as professionals. Engaging in adaptive work requires an environment with a clear purpose, and a place where people feel safe to be authentic, disagree, and handle different points of view. The process also requires a community of learners. Hence, I provided a timeline for the development of the strategic project, which also contained its purpose and expectations. Through a consensus protocol, the candidates viewed the purpose and norms from the survey, made revisions and amendments, and voted on adopting the following purpose and norms for their committee as a way to make themselves responsible for work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Norms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Our purpose is to develop a plan that will monitor and support the instructional needs of English Language Learners. Through collaboration and learning, we aim to increase the rigor of instruction and align our resources so that we can close the achievement gap. | • Respect other’s Opinion, Voice, & Time  
• Stay Focused on Agenda & Purpose  
• Equity of Voice  
• Be actively engaged |
The second session focused on gathering data and analyzing trends. In the first activity, committee members shadowed EL students across the district and collected information on the four language domains: reading, speaking, writing, and listening. The committee analyzed their observations and produced trends such as: “We noticed our student complied by following directions, copying from the board, responding chorally. We observed the student listening to the teacher talking. We noticed our students was successfully able to achieve and access to all domains…. He followed all tasks in English, but not fully engaged.” Furthermore, the committee reviewed the district’s EL performance data and generated several observations such as: “The EL population is functioning very close to our SpEd population. Students seem to be stuck (Long-Term ELs). We are not engaging ELs on providing rigorous learning opportunities. This is resulting in a huge gap in regards to EL achievement. Our plan needs to address not only ELD but access to rigorous instruction in the core.”

During session three, committee members trained in the EL Roadmap Policy and latest ELD research. They reviewed the 2008 ELMP and designed a presentation to address the following questions: “What components of the ELMP align to the data, the EL shadowing experience, the EL Roadmap, the LCAP, or your current practice? What components do not align?” The committee recorded the misalignments. This activity helped participants realize that several chapters in the plan needed substantial revisions. With this information, the committee began working on devising a vision/mission statement for the ELMP.
My intent in developing the vision/mission statement was to enter into a PDSA cycle so the committee could experience this process and reflect on their learnings. The committee created a draft vision and mission statement towards the end of the third meeting. I sent an email to district staff requesting feedback on the vision and mission statements. Furthermore, I share the statements with the District Advisory Committee and District English Learner Advisory Committee (DAC/DDELAC), and requested their input through the survey. The ELMP revision committee administered the survey to their classroom students. District leadership reviewed the vision and mission statements in Cabinet, where members provided additional insight. In total, 172 participants provided their feedback on the vision and mission statements of the ELMP.

During meeting four, a trend clearly emerged: the vision and mission statements needed to be clearer in language. The committee recommended to not use educational acronyms, and instead allow the language to be accessible to all stakeholders, including students. Through an affinity protocol, the committee revised the mission/visions statement of the plan. See chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Statements</th>
<th>Revised Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision</strong> - Empowering a community of ELs to become leaders in a global society.</td>
<td><strong>Vision</strong> - Guide a community of English Learners to become successful and productive members of society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mission</strong> - Use a systemic and coherent plan of continuous improvement based on equity for all ELs.</td>
<td><strong>Mission</strong> – Building relationships, while developing English Proficiency through rigorous instruction and continuous improvement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At the conclusion, committee members of the PDSA cycle commented on the value of planning, testing your ideas, reflecting on learning, and then planning again.

With this second version of the statements, the focus of the meeting switched to the ELA/ELD Framework, Integrated/Designated ELD, and ELPAC test. I trained the committee on the essential components of the framework, and the connection between the ELD standards and the Common Core Standards. Also, I provided an outline of the essential components of Integrated/Designated ELD. The Director of Special Programs led a training on the ELPAC test, defining the new levels of assessments and engaging the committee in working through several tasks of the exam. At the end of the day debrief session, the main take away from the committee was: The rigor of instruction for EL students needs to increase to meet new demands. To better serve ELs, everyone in the district must be a part of this valuable training.

The last part of session four aimed, in some respects, to address this question. I led the committee through a root-cause analysis protocol on each chapter and addressed the following question: Why is there a misalignment between our current practices in the chapter and the EL Roadmap Policy? Teams took on this process for each chapter and developed root-cause statements. These statements were the impetus in developing the SMART (Strategic, Measurable, Achievable, Results, and Time-Bound) goals for the plan and initiating another PDSA cycle. During the review of the 2008 plan, the committee noticed the role of the Director of EL as the individual overseeing the program. The committee discussed the importance of the role for the program to provide monitoring, support, and coordination at each site. A SMART goal was recommend by
the committee to add this role in the district, due to its vacancy that dated back several years.

District leadership reviewed the draft SMART goals during a Cabinet meeting. Cabinet members generated questions such as: “What resources are needed to meet these goals? What procedures needs to change to deliver the outlined SMART goals? Where will we acquire the additional funding needed to meet these goals, such as the Director of EL? Cabinet members provided several key pieces of information, which provided parameters for the committee to consider in the development of the SMART goals. The goals should provide direction and be flexible to provide the district with multiple options when implementing the goals; the timeline of each goal needs adjustment, as the district was already working on several ELD initiatives to implement. In sum, the SMART goals created a discussion and a higher level of engagement around resources.

I generated a handout to share the feedback with the committee. I framed the feedback in the following way:

- Goals should provide a direction and allow for flexibility.
- The district is working on several initiatives, therefore, some of the goals can be more aggressive.
- The committee’s main role is to offer recommendations for implementation that the district will review when employing the components of the ELMP.

The committee supported these parameters and, after some discussion, understood their role in the process. They created a second version of the SMART goals. Again, committee members observed the power of obtaining feedback in the PDSA cycle, and
experienced making adjustments according to this information. With a revised mission and vision statement and updated SMART goals, the committee revised the ELMP.

DAC/DDELAC once again reviewed the draft ELMP. They reviewed each chapter and provided their input. Parents in this process shared the concern that the Home Language Survey, which begins the process of designating new students in the EL program, is unclear and does not provide explanation as to the purpose of the survey. Furthermore, they shared that enrollment of new students is ambiguous. One parent noted in Spanish (translated here to English), “We arrive at school, and get a packet of registration and are told fill these out and bring them back. We do not get an explanation of the survey and the impact it has on my child.” The overall consensus of the committee was for more parent engagement in the process and outreach in understanding the requirements of the plan. Furthermore, for more school staff training in the registration process, especially as it pertains to identifying ELs and more explanation to parents regarding the Home Language form and how it might impact their child’s education.

DAC/DDELAC also reviewed the mission and vision statement a second time and provided another set of feedback to the committee.

During the sixth and final session, the committee reviewed the second round of vision and mission statement feedback and made final revisions. The committee adopted the following statements into the plan:

**Vision** - Guide a community of English Learners to become successful and productive members of society.

**Mission** – We develop English Proficiency through rigorous instruction, student engagement, and relationship building.
The committee reviewed the feedback on each chapter from the DAC/DELAC and made modifications. At the debrief session, the committee discussed the feedback from DAC/DELAC parents regarding the lack of awareness of EL students placement into the ELD program. They agreed this is an area of growth in the district, and language should be in the plan to specify training to staff on EL student placement and communication with parents.

In the final stages of revising the ELMP, the district hosted a conference call with the WestEd consultancy group. The purpose of the call was to discuss the following training for the 2019 - 2020 school year. The objectives of the meeting were to provide:

1. Support around the ELA/ELD framework, understanding the philosophy, and how the framework is used to support leaders, teachers and students
2. Understanding the relationship between integrated and designated ELA/ELD practices and how they can be supported by leaders and used by teachers
3. Understanding and support around text structures including vocabulary, sentence, paragraph and various text genres
4. Understanding and support using the Teaching and Learning Cycle in writing joint construction of text
5. Understanding and support around planning and classroom implementation of Academic Conversations
6. Understand and support observing, analyzing and coaching all of the above ELA/ELD instructional practices

The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, three WestEd consultants and I discussed the work conducted on the ELMP thus far, including the need for alignment
between their trainings and the items in the plan. WestEd agreed on the alignment and the plan was shared with them. In the future, WestEd will provide two summer trainings for principals and teachers on the items listed above. Beyond that, the district will confer with WestEd again to discuss the next set of trainings.

At the March 12th meeting, I presented to the AESD Board the updated ELMP and made a recommendation for its approval. My intent was to share with them why the plan needed to change, the processes the committee used to revise the plan, and to provide recognition to this group of educators. The images below provide an overview of the presentation:

![Why update the EL Master Plan?](image-url)
At the end of the presentation, I shared the following with the Board and audience,

“As an English Learner, I want to thank you for your work and dedication in supporting students who are learning the language. I would not be standing in front of you tonight without the support of educators in my life that saw my potential. Thank you again.”

The Board approved the revision of the ELMP by a unanimous 5 - 0 vote.

**Evidence to Date**

My strategic project at AESD had several components: 1) to engage and train stakeholders on the latest research on support systems for ELs, instructional program, change management, and improvement cycles, 2) to set the foundation for addressing the academic performance gap of ELs by creating a knowledgeable committee who would learn the latest EL research, revise the ELMP, and lead the instructional efforts for ELs within the district.
The following section outlines the evidence of the strategic project. One element was to update the district’s ELMP. This endeavor was important for the district due to the adoption of the ELD/ELA framework, approval of Proposition 58, and the transition to CAASPP and ELPAC testing. Also, the district is undergoing an audit from the state, FPM, which requires an updated ELMP aligned to these changes. The district must provide an updated process to identify students into the EL program based on the most recent state assessments (CAASPP, ELPAC), teacher recommendations, and district based assessments. As you can see from Appendix A, the identification of students into the ELD program is updated and reflects new ELPAC cut scores. Another component FPM will review is an outline of the district’s instructional program and alignment to the EL Roadmap Policy. In the previous plan, specific structural components of the district’s Structured English Immersion Language program were missing. Moreover, the plan did not contain the EL Roadmap components. With this revision, the program utilizes Integrated/Designated ELD, shows the interconnection of both programs, and aligns to the ELA/ELD Framework. Appendix B provides a graphic included in the plan. The updated plan goes one step further and defines Integrated ELD by making a connection between the core subjects and the ELD standards, as shown in Appendix C. The plan’s process for exiting students (reclassification) from the ELD program using CELDT no longer applied to the current California assessment structure. The revised ELMP reclassification process also incorporates the current state assessment, CAASPP, to reclassify students (see Appendix D). With this revision and inclusion of these components, the new plan now meets FPM requirements.
The revision of the ELMP was an opportunity to engage multiple stakeholders from across the district and build capacity on research based EL systems and instructional programs. Cabinet members received training on the EL Roadmap Policy principles and analyzed how the policy aligns to the district’s LCAP goals. My goal was to engage cabinet with the EL Roadmap Policy, have them see its value, and receive feedback on how to improve the presentation, as I was going to share with the committee. I conducted a plus/delta process to gain their insight and learn what worked from the presentation (plus) and what needed to be revised (delta). Please see chart below to view a few comments from participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plus</th>
<th>Delta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Enjoyed time with cabinet and learning about the EL Roadmap. This new policy will have an impact on my department, and I appreciate the knowledge to begin planning”</td>
<td>“I did not see the connection between the EL Roadmap Policy elements and the LCAP goals. The activity should make a better connection.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In reviewing this information, I noticed Cabinet members found the information, the direction, and application of the EL Roadmap Policy to be valuable to their department. Furthermore, I also learned I had to make a better connection for participants between the EL Roadmap Policy and the LCAP goals. This set of data led me to revise my presentation to the committee.

I scheduled six sessions for committee members to update the EL Master Plan and develop their capacity in the EL Roadmap Policy, ELD/ELA Framework,
Integrated/Designated EL Program, and ELPAC tasks. See Appendix E for an outline of meetings and milestones. At the conclusion of each session, I conducted a plus/delta process to attain their input on the meetings. See the chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plus</th>
<th>Delta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• “Like the collaboration in creating purpose and norms”</td>
<td>• “Want to see more in depth data on #s of EL’s, … and performance”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “Great conversations about data, evidence, and student experience. “</td>
<td>• “Get to the (SMART) goals and save the tweaking of vision/mission until after the goals are complete.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “Getting feedback from others about vision and mission.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The feedback from participants indicates that several components of the strategic project worked. First, the group found engagement with the purpose of the project. Second, the group appreciated having norms, and saw the norms as setting the foundation of how individuals would work together on the project. Third, the committee appreciated reviewing the performance data of ELs, and wanted to dig deeper into the analysis of this information. Fourth, the group appreciated the feedback from stakeholders on the vision and mission statements. They found this helpful. However, they also found the process ambiguous, and wanted clarity by creating SMART goals and then revisiting the vision and mission statements. This information helped me craft subsequent meetings by providing more information to the committee and by continuing to focus on the norms. In each meeting we selected a norm reporter who provided evidence at the end of each meeting regarding the way the group modeled the norms. When the SMART goals were
complete, we went back to the vision and mission statement and made further revisions.

At the end of the project, I sent out a final survey that asked two questions of the committee. Below are the questions and several responses from committee members:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you foresee the EL Master Plan impacting the education program and services students receive in our district?</th>
<th>How has the process of updating the EL Master Plan changed your leadership or teaching practice in English Language Development?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Response 1:**
I hope the EL Master Plan creates more unity, communication, and support for our students, parent/families, teachers and staff. This plan has been updated and organized in a way to be aligned with current practices and goals for future expectations for our EL's. Students should feel empowered and embrace being bilingual and seek to become biliterate. | **Response 1:**
I am really being more focused on the needs of our English Learners. For example, when observing in classrooms, I have now made sure to use the lens of what is happening for English Learners. When coaching teachers, I will frequently choose ideas that can have an impact on English learners, such as using sentence frames and requiring students to use vocabulary when talking with their partners. |
| **Response 2:**
I believe the EL Master Plan will have great impact on instruction for all students in our district. As we navigate learning to differentiate for our EL population, our | **Response 2:**
Knowledge! I loved being informed on how and why changes happen. I am able to |
differentiation for all of our students will strengthen. Our second language kiddos have been put on a back burner for far too long, but now we have a plan to guide our instruction, not just our intentions.

explain to my peers the expectations of what should be occurring on campus in regards to EL students.

Response 3:
This has given me the opportunity to see the inner workings of an EL program, from classification to instruction and reclassification. As a former English Learner at AESD, I feel empowered to bring a system of high-quality and high expectation of ELs into the classroom.

Their responses note several aspects of the strategic project. First, this committee is engaged with the latest research on ELs. Second, this knowledge created confidence for committee members, and they are now equipped to have conversations with colleagues on effective ELD development. Moreover, committee members feel empowered to deploy a high-quality system of instruction into their classrooms. Finally, the academic needs of ELs are at the forefront of the district, and members see the ELMP as a roadmap to address these needs.

In a district with over 300 staff members and 5073 students, I realized sending a 100-page ELMP for district-wide stakeholders to review and provide feedback would not be a feasible or valuable use of their time. My strategy was for stakeholders to provide
feedback on the vision and mission statements, which would set direction for the plan and ELD program. The goal in this phase of the plan development was for district-wide stakeholders to have input and knowledge on the plan’s direction. In December, I put together a memo providing an update on development of the ELMP. I created a survey embedded in the memo requesting feedback on the vision and mission statement. This memo went out to district staff, DAC/DELAC parents, and 5th-8th grade students. Below are a few summaries from staff and parents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision</th>
<th>Mission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• More specificity on desired outcomes for ELs.</td>
<td>• It really doesn't make sense the way it is worded. Perhaps, &quot;Using a systemic and coherent plan, focusing on continuous improvement equitable for all ELs.&quot; I also don't like the EL used as an acronym in the mission or vision statements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Statement shows that there is room for growth within our ELs.</td>
<td>• Although it is still in the drafting process, it should be stated in a clear manner to be easily understood by the community and students that is the main target.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Spell out ELL. Keep it Simple!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below are two graphs and comments from the student survey:

**Vision**

- You can improve this sentence…by making it more understandable.
- You can improve this by adding in

**Mission**

- You can improve by making it more detailed, and maybe some shorter words for most of us to understand.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>more detail into what the writer is trying to say.</th>
<th>better.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• You can improve this statement by giving…more feeling and more information for the reader to be convinced that people…care and we feel important.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You can put that kids should be loved and cared for.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The committee reviewed this information provided by stakeholders and came to some realizations regarding the original vision and mission statements: First, both the vision and mission statements were not accessible, clear, and aspirational due to the complex terms and acronyms, which stakeholders did not understand. Second, the teachers in the committee who administered the survey in their class noted that students found a way to circumvent responding to the survey by voting yes to the first question. Therefore, both graphs are a representation of students not wanting to answer the question, rather than their true impressions of the original vision and mission statement. The committee’s feedback to me was that it would have been helpful for them to construct and review the survey before I sent it out to the district. However, the committee agreed the survey did engage the district stakeholders in the vision and mission development. Moreover, we did acquire helpful data, which helped the committee refine the vision and mission statement. Due to a lack of time, the revised versions of the vision and mission statements were not shared with the entire district;
however, Cabinet members and DAC/DELAC provided feedback on the second version.

This process revealed to me that the committee trusted me and felt comfortable in providing feedback to my leadership approach. I realized both my leadership and the committees’ leadership evolved through this process.

The project was aiming to impact academic performance of ELs. What would this look like? What would be the measures? Due to the time frame of the strategic project, it was not possible to gather CAASPP student achievement data to analyze whether there was or was not EL performance growth in the district. Nevertheless, several elements point to the district being poised to see academic growth with these students.

The Board adopted the ELMP at the March meeting with a 5-0 vote. One of the board members asked, “What do you foresee as the vision of this plan?” I responded, “I expect to see an increase in student achievement, and for EL instruction to be integrated across all subject areas in the district.” The board member responded, “Great answer, and we support this vision. I also want to add that we need more parents to be involved.” This led me to consider a couple of items. The vision, mission, expectations of the ELMP, and instructional approach of ELs is on the radar of key authorizers in the district and they see its value, which garners support for system adjustments and resource allocation to meet the plan’s expectations. Second, the board member’s question on vision notes there is support for the plan to be effectively implemented across the district. Third, the board member’s response to parent involvement echoes that of the DAC/DELAC parents and the recommendations of the committee who revised the ELMP, leading to engagement amongst key stakeholders. Furthermore, the Board has set
the expectations and adopted policy for EL academic performance to increase, which can lead to a domino effect that will impact instruction.

Cabinet is also partnering with WestEd next year to conduct several trainings with principals, assistant principals, learning directors, and teachers. This is occurring for several reasons: 1) WestEd has proven effectiveness by delivering cohesive trainings to the district on the “Big Three” initiatives, which show an infrastructure of success for all groups and 2) the training and instructional model of the “Big Three” is familiar to district leaders and teachers, which will provide an easier implementation of the EL instructional model. On a February 2019 conference with the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and WestEd consultants, a plan was drafted to train administrators and teachers in the ELA/ELD Framework, Integrated/Designated ELD, and instructional practices (See Appendix F WestEd email to district staff on training plan). Moreover, principals would receive coaching on how to integrate these components into their school’s pedagogical practices. I suggested to the group that WestEd obtain a copy of a final ELMP, review the contents, and align their professional development to the components of the plan. The group agreed to this proposal. This coordination with WestEd signifies the district is entering into a phase where key authorizers will train on the instructional program outlined in the plan, and implement a monitoring system at the classroom level.

Finally, the district’s newcomer classes, located on three different campuses, are being revised. Currently, students who are ELs and recent immigrants to this country attend a full day, self-contained class for the purpose of English immersion and acquisition. Through the ELMP process and analysis of performance data, the district
realized these students are not exposed to the rigor of the Common Core Standards, nor are they developing their language skills effectively. Furthermore, students are not reclassifying as Fluent English Proficient in an appropriate amount of time, causing a further gap in their education. In addition, the program does not align to the EL Roadmap principles or the current ELMP. The Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services brought a proposal to Cabinet to restructure these classes and meet the EL Roadmap Principles and ELMP requirements. Cabinet approved the proposal and the district is moving forward with scheduling students who are new to the country into regular classes, with additional support, and providing the language support through a designated time within the school day.

While there is no concrete data at the moment that the ideas of the ELMP will be in full implementation three, five or ten years from now, several items are in place that signifies there is potential for the work to continue. Key stakeholders, including the Board, Cabinet, principals, and the committee support and believe in the district’s new direction for English Language Development. In conversations with the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, a high priority for the district next year is the improvement of EL performance. A plan to create a district-wide awareness of ELs and instructional practices is in development. In the mid-year planning sessions with principals, several also noted ELs are a top priority in their school for next year, and they, along with teachers, want to gain understanding of the ELA/ELD Framework and the Integrated/Designated ELD programs. The executive summary and appendix of the plan contain the vision, mission, and SMART goals developed by the committee (see Appendix G for Executive Summary). Appendix H has detailed
information on short, mid, and long-term SMART goals. Future staff that oversees the implementation of the plan has an excellent resource for setting an instructional course and measuring its long-term success. In a SMART goal, the committee recommended the following: “By June 2019, AESD will build capacity in the learning director (TK-6th grade) and Assistant Principal positions (7-8) to coordinate EL monitoring systems at their school.” This goal led Cabinet to consider a monitoring system where site administration oversees the implementation of the ELMP. The stakeholders, through the PDSA training, now realize implementing the ELMP principles is a continual process of improvement and modification. One SMART goal they proposed was, “By June 2021, the EL committee along with district leadership will review and revise the EL Master Plan (7 goals) using surveys (students/parent/staff), assessments, and the California School of Accountability Dashboard data to determine progress and modify the plan as needed.” To meet this goal, the Superintendent will continue to coordinate the committee who revised the ELMP to obtain further feedback on the plan and to reflect on implementation of “The Big Three” EL instructional focus. Also, the Superintendent plans to use this information to make modifications on training, resources, and the overall system for ELs.

In sum, the evidence suggests that the project met several key outcomes: creation of an updated ELMP, stakeholder engagement in the revision process, impact on the ELD program, and the creation of a district set of expectations to sustain the work of ELs.

**Analysis of Strategic Project**

My goals with the strategic project were to build trust, develop capacity, engage key stakeholders, and impact instruction with the ultimate goal to begin addressing the
EL achievement gap. The following section analyzes elements that were successful, unsuccessful, and in need of further development.

Building trust and empathy with stakeholders is important in a change process. I strategically used Professor Ganz’s public narrative framework to share my narrative as a new EL entering a California school system. This process provided participants insight into my values as a person and my investment in the project. I asked them to share their experience as a student in the school system. This question generated much emotion for some participants and, in some cases, tears. They shared their own struggles with school and the mentors in their lives who supported them. I also asked participants to identify the struggles of ELs in their system. This question created a connection between their student experience and that of their EL students. As Heifetz suggests in his adaptive leadership framework, people were experiencing an emotion that was reshaping their beliefs and priorities. The interesting aspect in this work is that the individual supporting an organization and tackling the adaptive challenges also goes through a reshaping of their beliefs and priorities. As I walked into the organization, I saw the project as increasing performance for students through a strategic approach. In meeting with stakeholders and shadowing students, I found myself becoming emotionally engaged with the problem, owning this work, and reforming my beliefs about the challenges of ELs. In reading through the work of Heifetz, I did not realize that a leader involved in an organization’s change process could also reform their beliefs and values. Without intending to, I became a part of the change process.

As I began communicating with stakeholders, sharing data and trends of ELs, and providing training, my identity and narrative in the district began to evolve. People saw
my investment in the performance of ELs not only because of my identity as an EL, but because I was willing to be open and share my own educational struggles. I was careful in sharing my narrative; I did not want to create a victim mentality. My strategy was to impact stakeholders, create awareness, and show them their agency in the performance of ELs. For example, when I noted in the walkthrough with the superintendent and principal that the newcomer class resembled my middle school experience as an EL, sharing this experience initiated a conversation, which ultimately led to a change in the program. As this occurred, more individuals became open about sharing their struggles in the school system. This sharing of experiences created an open and safe environment for individuals to think and to work. People were not afraid to hide their identity or their insecurities, and an environment was created to take risks and be open to learning. This was evident as more staff members in one-on-one meetings or large trainings shared their identity as ELs and their educational narrative. They also shared their thoughts regarding their own areas of improvement. For example, when the committee noticed that teachers were doing all the talking, and EL students most of the listening, I learned that modeling vulnerability, with the purpose of learning and sharing the value of agency, is an important approach in engaging and mobilizing others towards a common cause.

Collecting data by focusing on a lever for change had a positive impact on the project. During meetings with intense debate on the EL achievement gap in the district, I noticed my tendency as a leader was to rush into forming solutions. In my meetings with stakeholders on EL performance, I heard about curriculum gaps, a lack of training, a gap in understanding the ELD program, and minimal staff support. The feedback submitted by participants on the emergent problem of practice also had multi-pronged problems.
While all of these are worthwhile items to address, I realized I was in a state of “Jump-Reflex Problem Solving” that Jentz & Wofford caution individuals to avoid when looking at complex problems. What is the most urgent matter for the district regarding ELs? Why do people see there is lack of training? This led me to realize that the FPM review of the ELMP was an urgent matter for the district. Second, having a plan that outlines the district’s EL program and training would provide a focus for the district. Third, I was also considering my 10-month residency. Taking on too much, such as creating the plan, training, and revising curriculum, would not be realistic in my tenure at AESD. Hence, I concentrated on putting together the committee to initiate a change process and to address multi-pronged problems by updating the ELMP.

Kotter notes that establishing a guiding team (committee, which is how it is referred to in the capstone) to create a vision, mission, and a plan is important in a change process initiative. As I met with people, I asked them if they would like to be part of the committee to revise the plan. Some individuals gladly committed, while others did not express interest. Furthermore, as I met with principals in my entry plan, I requested names of teachers who had a passion for ELs, who had leadership within the school, and who demonstrated a commitment to teaching and learning. The committee started with twenty-four participants, and as each meeting progressed, individuals filtered out of the sessions. At the last meeting, twelve individuals formed the core group of the committee members. This was important for me to discover, because in dealing with change it is important to engage as many individuals as possible in the process, and to keep them engaged so momentum can be built around the initiative. I asked myself: Why did we have an attrition rate of 50%? Several individuals who left the group shared with me
through email that too many meetings were scheduled for this initiative, which would
take them out of class. Another person noted they had too many commitments and
needed to cut back. This made me ponder that schools are extremely busy, with
individuals being pulled in many directions. Hence, what are some strategies to keep
people engaged in a change process? Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, in the book *Finding
Flow – the Psychology of Engagement with Everyday Life*, notes three elements to
engagement: purpose, expectations, and feedback. For the twelve individuals, their
purpose of revising the ELMP outweighed their other commitments. Furthermore, in
their feedback, committee members noted that they learned a great deal from everyone in
the group. Moreover, there was a common interest among the group to address the
academic needs of ELs. This interest generated a commitment to each other and kept
them engaged with the process. Kotter notes that leadership, capacity and skills are
important in creating a committee and driving a change process. I will also submit that
without a common purpose that is personal to each individual and shared expectations of
how to engage in the work, people become disengaged in the change initiative.

Engaging individuals with authority and owning the work proved to be an element
that supported the strategic project. First, I worked closely with the Superintendent and
the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services. Both of them provided input in the
development of the plan and shared insight on political dynamics that can hinder the plan
process. For example, I shared with the Superintendent my approach to sharing the plan
with parents of non-EL learners during the LCAP town hall meetings. She asked: “Why
should they see the plan? What stake do they have? How will their input be helpful? This
insight shifted my thinking in that by engaging this particular set of parents, I would
encroach on their time. Heifetz argues that adaptive and technical challenges are solved by people who have authority and a stake in the work. The Superintendent was pushing my thinking to consider the stakeholders in the district who had ownership of ELs, and bring them onboard first to address the performance problem. However, I also see that eventually parents of non-ELs need to be engaged in the process to some degree for several reasons. First, ELs are a subgroup the district has identified under their LCAP process for which to provide extra services and support. Under this plan, the district has to share data with the public that these services and supports are impacting the achievement of ELs. Second, as the district continues to provide more and more services to ELs, this will cause a shifting of resources from one group to another. If parents do not understand the purpose of resource allocation and have a say in how their children can still be supported with limited resources, these parents might become an authorizing group to work against extra EL services. I learned that when moving a project through authorizers, a leader should be strategic on the purpose and when to engage different stakeholders. Introducing too soon, without a clear purpose, can create anxiety and confusion in an organization. By waiting too long, people may see it as a lack of communication, or not having input in the process, causing the initiative to stall.

The Assistant Superintendent of Business Services and Human Resources were other key authorizers in the strategic project. These individuals oversee departments in the district that coordinate district fiscal resources and that hire personnel, which are two key elements in the ELMP. The EL Roadmap Policy training in Cabinet provided a purpose and understanding of the new direction for the district. As the ELMP continued to evolve and expectations and resources became a focus of the conversation, these two
Assistant Superintendents became more aware of the impact of this plan on their departments. In one cabinet session, I shared the SMART goals the committee developed. The Assistant Superintendent of Business Services had several questions regarding how funding would be allocated to support the services of the plan. The questions the group generated were: How much will these services cost? How will we cover these additional services? The Assistant Superintendent of Education Services and I had to regroup, consider and address the questions by noting that it is a reshuffling of resources, and LCAP funding was available to support the extra costs. This conversation in cabinet mirrored the strategic triangle by Mark Moore: initiatives requiring too many resources or capacity to maintain are a challenge to support. Both of these individuals played an important role and provided insightful observation on resources and capacities available to sustain the ELMP requirements.

The strategic project also benefited from an environment that authorized the revision of the plan and a focus in the academic needs of ELs. Proposition 58 was passed by voters, which overturned policy from Proposition 227, and paved the way for the California Department of Education (CDE) to begin efforts on bilingual education and provide a new ELD framework, the EL Roadmap Policy, across the state. This new direction from the State provided a purpose for the district to revise the ELMP and their current practices. The adoption of the Common Core Standards and new rigor of state assessments created a need across the school district to review their practices, update the plan, and support the committee’s work in the process. Finally, the FPM process that the district will undergo in March, which calls for a revised ELMP, increased the urgency for
the committee to complete the revision of the plan within a particular timeline. These elements provided legitimacy and support for the execution of the project.

Sharing performance data of ELs with multiple stakeholders created urgency and backing for the project. My strategy was to start sharing data to district and site leadership to create urgency to address the academic needs of ELs. In the summer administrative retreat, we shared CAASPP performance data with site leadership. Site leadership saw their school’s EL performance, created ownership, and made it a priority to address the academic needs of ELs at their campus. In this session, we also provided a forum to analyze their data and the barriers facing the EL subgroup, and provided an opportunity for the site administrative team to develop an action plan. This approach of giving the work back to the stakeholders, with the agency to address the problem, as Heifetz et al. notes, proved to be effective with the strategic project by creating a community aimed at solving a common performance problem and by garnering support for the district to coordinate the ELMP revision. I also shared this data with the committee revising the ELMP. As the committee was reviewing the performance data, one participant noted: “EL’s performance in math is at the same level of Special Education students. How can this be?” Members were starting to understand the importance of the ELMP revision work. Classroom observation trends are another form of data the committee reviewed and analyzed through this process. From my experience of observing ELs and developing trends on student engagement and task rigor, I realized it would be beneficial for the committee to undergo the same experience and generate their own observations. As committee members were debriefing their observations, they noted one particular element in the classroom experience of ELs: the teacher was doing
most of the talking, and students were mostly listening to teacher instructions. This observation was pivotal for the committee to realize that classroom rigor had to increase to meet the new standards. At the end of the day, a teacher in the room noted: “I need to be better about understanding the changes with EL instruction, and increase rigor in my class. If not, I will continue to do all the work in my class and my students will not learn.” Committee members began to see themselves as having agency in this process of revising the ELMP. This focus and agency impacted the development of the vision and mission statements, along with the ELMP elements. I now realize that sharing data with multiple stakeholders and through different mediums allows stakeholders to develop agency in addressing a performance gap, it creates engagement, and it leads to a focus on one common purpose.

Before I began this project, my leadership approach was to rush into the technical aspects of the work without providing time to work on the adaptive dynamics of a group. I used the PDSA continuous improvement cycle to test my assumptions, reflect, learn, and make adjustments to future trainings. One example of this process was the creation of the group norms and purpose. I wanted to see if by having committee members create their own purpose and norms, the process would create a better learning environment for participants. Through an electronic survey I asked participants to provide norms they used and they saw as effective in their work with others. I then shared their input back with participants, and asked them to generate trends. The trends were compiled into norms for the committee to conduct their work. At the first session, I provided an overview of the project. I asked them to create a sentence that outlined the purpose of the team and then share it with a partner. Each partner had to identify key terms they heard.
All the partners shared the key terms, which created the purpose for the entire group. At
the end of the session, when I reviewed committee members’ feedback, they noted the
process of developing norms and a purpose together, and using these items as the
common values for the work, were helpful in creating a cohesive and trusting learning
environment for the group. This feedback was powerful insight to me, in that when
individuals have choice, are afforded an experience to make their own conclusions, and
given the opportunity to improve their own learning, engagement and trust are created
that have ripple effect on the outcomes of the project.

I also wanted the committee to experience continuous improvement cycles to
develop their capacity. I realized that if I was having key learnings about my leadership,
committee members should also have an opportunity to learn and grow. I knew that if
ey could have such insights, they would develop an open, risk-taking mindset in the
process and reconsider their beliefs. The vision and mission statements proved to be one
of the many examples the committee engaged in with such an improvement cycle.
Through an affinity protocol, the committee created a vision and mission statement for
the plan and shared it with stakeholders for feedback. Their goal was to learn whether
the statements were easy to understand and provided a focus, flexible, and inspired
action. When the committee reviewed the feedback, they realized the vision and mission
statements did not meet these criteria. Moreover, critical feedback was received that the
statements were hard to understand and education acronyms made the vision and mission
confusing. In order to move the work forward, the committee had to take a step back and
review the feedback with an objective perspective. Finally, one member said, “OK, we
knew these statements were not perfect, and we can improve them. At the end, it is about
people understanding the work.” This process was insightful for the committee in that feedback is useful information to further refine the work conducted in an organization. Moreover the adaptive challenge is being able to remove the emotion from feedback, and seeing the components that are beneficial to the work that need improvement.

Through this process, I also had to reframe my mindset on feedback. The committee shared that the survey I created had several flaws, which led to some inaccurate student response data. They noted that engaging the committee in the process of creating the survey might have lessened the inaccuracies. While this feedback was hard to listen to at the beginning, I realize that if the committee had to overcome barriers of obtaining criticism, then I myself also had to reconsider my thinking. I thanked the committee for the observation, and acknowledged that sharing the survey may result in a more accurate representation from students. Furthermore, I explained to them that this information would improve our thinking and the strategic project. The PDSA cycles within the development of the ELMP created rich learning for every person engaged in the revision process, leading to a well-crafted plan.

One outcome in the Theory of Action for the strategic project was for committee members to lead the work and become trainers for the district in the EL instructional elements. Toward the end of the project, the district approved consultants from WestEd to lead these trainings. In reviewing the scenario, practices, and initiatives of the district, several elements influenced the district to move in the direction of hiring consultants. First, for several years WestEd and AESD have implemented a training model based on two principles: the Big Three instructional elements “Classroom Objectives, Student Engagement, and Rigor,” and coaching administrators to monitor and oversee these
elements at their site. Through this model, the district experienced success in increasing student achievement, meeting their academic goals, and meeting the state’s accountability requirement. According to Moore, value is generated when an initiative is seen as meeting the overall goals of the organization. Therefore, WestEd generated value for the work they do with the district. Second, the training model offered by WestEd provides value to the district in terms of feasibility. The WestEd consultants provide experienced trainers, research-based resources, and expertise on policy all within a fixed cost. On the other hand, there is a high cost with teacher leaders leading training, such as missing classroom teaching to plan and train, minimal capacity on adult learner training, resources, and expertise on state policy. Understandably so, it is a challenge for the district to engage in a new training model when their current formula has proven to be successful, and when a new approach brings a higher cost and risks. Why did I miss this obvious piece for AESD? In retrospect, my assumption that people with the problem must become people working on the solution had a missing element. I intended for committee members to have enough capacity in this particular area to provide trainings for their colleagues. However, at the end of the project, while the committee had knowledge in the ELD program, further support, which required additional resources, needed to be provided to members to have enough capacity to train others.

There are some potential risks associated with bringing outside consultants to move the work forward. If teachers do not own the work of moving initiatives forward, the result may be a lack of teacher efficacy, which would impact the sustainability of the initiative. If leadership changes and sets a new direction for the district, how will teachers have the capacity to continue the work? As seen before, budgets are flexible and
change. If the district gets into a scenario where budgets need to be cut, the WestEd training might be an expense that is not supported. Building the leadership capacity of teachers will continue this work, in spite of budget shortfalls. As a leader, an important learning is that one has to consider a balance between district and teacher initiatives. District-led initiatives may cause resistance and a lack of sustainability. With teacher-led initiatives, one has to consider effective coordination, district capacity, the resources needed, and coherence of instruction. The art of leadership is striking a balance between district-wide and teacher-led initiatives, and understanding how both can play a role in the development of an initiative.

The central question of the strategic project still remains: Will the ELD instructional program outlined in the ELMP be enough to impact instruction for ELs in AESD? This is an area of future growth for the ELMP. At first I thought the plan would be able define an instruction model for the district. While the plan provides an overview on research-based instructional programs aligned to the Common Core Standards, the ELA/ELD Framework, and the Integrated/Designated ELD program, it does not specify on a granular level, instruction in the classroom, or outline an implementation process of the model for ELs. I now realize the plan provides a foundation for the EL instructional program for schools to adhere to, without locking the district into specificity. To some degree, the ELMP is beneficial to the district as it creates structured parameters that allow for flexibility. Each site is unique, with a different culture, systems, process, and resources. However, without a defined instructional model district-wide, this lack of focus might lead to instructional variance within a district. School districts that have to constantly manage limited resources will be challenged to coordinate and run efficiently,
and effectively build stakeholder capacity around an instructional model. Therefore, the ELMP has limitations in terms of providing a detailed instructional model and a process for implementation.

This leads me to consider that as a leader, at the start of an initiative aiming to impact instruction, I need to consider several questions: How will the initiative impact the role of the teacher and student in the instructional model? How will the initiative address the level of rigor for the curriculum and what does that look like in practice? Will the initiative lead to capacity building of stakeholders to deliver the curriculum? Lastly, how will the initiative focus individuals on the instructional tasks students will be required to do, leading to rigorous learning? In reconsidering these questions, I will submit that the scope of the project for this year to directly impact instruction and measure evidence was noteworthy, but ambitious.

For the purpose of this strategic project, making clear connections for all stakeholders between the ELMP, and the district’s “Big Three” instructional priorities, would have provided clarity, connection, and support in this area. It would address the questions:

- How does the ELA/ELD Framework align to classroom objectives, engagement, and rigor?
- What do classroom objectives, rigor, and engagement look like in the Integrated/Designated ELD program?
- In this new setting, what is the role of the teacher and student, and do we have the appropriate curriculum to support the new approach?
Having district leadership, school leadership, and committee members developing a visual map of the connections, in my opinion, would have provided a more detailed and clear direction on instruction for the district.

Now I see that a more realistic outcome of revising the ELMP within the 10-month scope of the strategic project was to create awareness, solicit engagement, and provide stakeholders with knowledge on research based EL instructional systems. Based on my new insight, I present an amended Theory of Action for the strategic project.

**IF I:**

- Use an entry plan to understand the organization’s context,
- develop the capacity of stakeholders on recent policy, research-based principles, and instructional program elements for ELs, and
- facilitate a committee to revise the EL Master Plan by applying change management and improvement cycle science,

**THEN AESD will have:**

- A resident who developed trust,
- a revised EL Master Plan that creates awareness around a vision and outlines a research based system for an EL instructional program,
- stakeholders who are knowledgeable and engaged, and
- a foundation for an EL instructional model,

Eventually

- resulting in improved academic performance for ELs.

The analysis of the strategic project for AESD focused on creating engagement, building capacity, revising the ELMP, and setting the stage to develop an EL instructional model
for district implementation. Next, I will discuss the implications of my analysis of self, site, and the sector.

Implications for Self

My residency experience at AESD provided a wealth of information and exposure into district office leadership. While I stepped into this residency with four years of district office and six years of site leadership experience, I now realize that I still have much more learning to do in my development as a leader. While I could write endless pages of all the experiences I had during my time at AESD, for the purpose of this capstone I will provide several items that correlate directly to the analysis of the capstone.

Engagement – Many Forms

I entered this experience with the idea that engagement is a key factor in moving initiatives forward. Looking back, I had a narrow view of engagement. I considered engagement as a one-way process of sharing and communicating information with stakeholders. Through this process I learned that engagement has many forms.

Supporting stakeholders to wrestle with problems that matter to them is a form of engagement. At one of our EL Master Plan sessions the committee reviewed input from stakeholders from the vision and mission statements. The committee had an insightful conversation while making sense of the data. As I observed them reviewing the data, discussing how to make sense of the information, and using the information to revise the vision and mission statements, I knew the committee was engaged in the process. Observation is another form of engagement. Committee members observed EL students throughout the district with the intent to capture the classroom experience from a
student’s perspective. During the debrief session of observations, one teacher said, “I learned so much by just observing a student. We are doing all the talking and students are doing all the listening.” Asking for feedback is a form of engagement. I shared the ELMP with the Assistant Superintendents and requested their feedback on the plan. The Superintendent of Human Resources shared that it was helpful to review the plan and the purpose of hiring staff. She made amendments to the plan in the applicable human resources section that needed updating. This leads me to the following insight: meaningful and multiple forms of engagements, where stakeholders see themselves as valuable and having agency in solving the problem, are pillars in moving initiatives forward, which is essential learning for my development as a leader. I need to be able to receive feedback from others on what is working and what needs to be further developed. For example, one component I am considering is implementing a survey system where I ask people who work closely to me: What should I continue to do as a leader? What should I stop doing? What should I start doing? My goal is to model for the people around me that feedback is a form of engagement leading to an environment of constant improvement within an organization.

*Perils of Focus & Urgency*

After reviewing the goals accomplished in this project, I realized that in a public school district whose sole business is education, instruction should drive the conversation of impact. AESD has had impact on student achievement due to their clear focus on classroom objectives, student engagement, and rigor. This clear focus of instructional practices carried into their leadership and priorities. District office administration, principals, and teachers know the instructional priorities in the district. During the entry
I had a conversation with a principal who noted, “I appreciate working at this district because it has a clear focus on instruction. We all know the main priorities: objectives, student engagement, and rigor.” While I realized that instruction should be at the core of a school system, where did my thinking falter in making a deliberate connection between “The Big Three” and EL instruction? The intense focus of revising the ELMP, to some degree, created a narrow view for me, which led for me not to engage stakeholders or to develop my own and their capacity in connecting these two pieces throughout the strategic project. While urgency played an essential role in creating a clear focus for the strategic project, it also hindered my strategic thinking, leading to an opportunity to make clear connections early in the project between the EL instructional program and the “Big Three.” The focus and urgency created a narrow outcome: update the ELMP, without consideration that the overall goal in a public school system is to improve instruction. Hence my learning is that as a leader, when initiating change in an organization, it is important to consider the following tensions: focus vs. flexibility, urgency vs. strategic thinking, and narrow outcomes vs. “big picture.”

A Plan - Not Enough for Change

This project aimed to put in place the ELMP to support the long-term performance of ELs. The scope of this project was able to address technical aspects of the project, create a vision/mission, develop SMART goals, and align the components of the plan to the EL Roadmap Policy. In retrospect, a plan might begin the process of change, but it will not sustain the work. I now realize that leadership, stability, longevity, and instructional capacity building will need to drive the change. In analyzing the sustainability of the district’s “Big Three” instructional model, three items stand out:
leadership stability, instruction as a priority, and capacity building. District office leadership has been in place for more than three years, with the superintendent entering her sixth year. During my entry plan interview a teacher commented, “Our district has experienced success due to the established leadership. They have been here for a while and have stayed the course with practices.” Also, district and site leadership make instruction a priority, apparent by the walkthrough system AESD has created. Furthermore, leadership and teachers are constantly developing their instructional capacity and putting it into practice. This is evident by the trainings provided by WestEd and the coaching model they created to support stakeholders with implementation of the “Big Three.” Change is a complex interconnected approach to instructional improvement, which a plan alone cannot drive. AESD’s success has been based on leadership, stability, capacity building and a relentless pursuit for improving instructional practices. These are elements I will build upon moving forward as an instructional leader.

The lessons of engagement, focus, urgency, and leadership I will hold dearly as I continue my own journey in changing the lives of students. In the following section I offer recommendations for the site.

Implications to Site

I am extremely fortunate to have been a resident in AESD. Ethics, trust, collaboration, and a passion for students drive the work. I was privy to many experiences, which validated that public school district work is challenging, complex, and fulfilling. I share these recommendations humbly, realizing that offering next steps is easy. Executing these ideas is the heart of the work.
Cultivate Leadership

The formation of a committee of teachers and administrators to revise the plan is an excellent opportunity to sustain the plan’s relevance. This group has a unique role in that they have expertise of the EL Roadmap Principles, have a vested interest in the ELMP, and are administrators or classroom leaders. I recommend continuing with this group for one year due to their current expertise with the EL Roadmap Policy. However, to engage more stakeholders and develop further capacity, I offer the suggestion to rotate individuals out of the group and bring in new individuals to gain a fresh perspective on EL achievement. I would also recommend bringing parent and student voices into the group, since this work will have a direct impact on their home and classroom experience. Parents and students can be active participants in the committee, or their input acquired through surveys or focus groups.

The capstone has outlined that capacity and engagement are essential in moving initiatives forward. To this point, the district may use the committee’s expertise in several forms. One approach is by setting the committee to be a council who offers insight into the progress of WestEd trainings. Since these individuals will be responsible to implement the instructional strategies, it would behoove the district to obtain their feedback. Questions the district might ask are: What is working well? What is not going well? What is still missing from the trainings? What should change? Furthermore, committee members can provide a rich environment to conduct small experiments and learn. For example, committee members largely supported administrating the vision and mission survey to students. This experience created a rich learning both for me, as a facilitator, and for them as part of the committee. In the long run, the committee
members’ schools can be pilot centers for the district to try an innovative EL program or initiative, learn from the experience, and scale to the entire district. For example, one current committee member is piloting a new inquiry and application curriculum for ELs based on The Boston Museum of Science\(^3\). This curriculum brings technology, engineering, and math concepts into the classroom. Students are leaders of their learning through experimentation, while the teacher is a facilitator who offers questions and feedback on their progress. This course may lead to a program that is replicated across the district for ELs. Through the continued work of the ELMP committee, the district can make strategic decisions on future staff development, support, and resource allocation.

*Dig Deeper into “The Big Three”*

Aligning the principles of the ELMP to “The Big Three” is paramount for the district to move instruction forward. First, it is important for the district to consider the message to stakeholders regarding the connection between these two instructional initiatives. A message such as, “Research-based strategies for ELs are not only excellent for students who are learning English as a second language, but for all students” could be a consideration for the district to begin explaining to their stakeholders. Next, the district should be clear on the purpose of the ELMP, which can look like, “The ELMP outlines programs, services, and an instruction model for ELs. The instructional model is based on the district’s “Big Three” instructional foci. We are going deeper with “The Big Three” to support ELs.” Who and when to train on the ELMP is another piece to consider. Principals should be at the forefront of the training, as they will be responsible to implement and oversee the EL instructional elements at their site. Teachers should be

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\(^3\)https://www.mos.org/engineering-curriculum
the next group to bring on board with training, along with Bilingual Instructional Assistants. As individuals go through the training, defining the EL instructional model based on the “The Big Three” will provide clarity on what it looks like in the classroom.

The EL Roadmap Principle 2, Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access, offers elements to define the “Big Three” EL instructional model. WestEd will be providing district training on the ELD/ELA Framework, Integrated/Designated ELD, and their alignment to classroom objectives, engagement, and rigor. After this training, it will be worthwhile for the district to identify concrete, research-based classroom strategies aligned to these two components within a district developed instructional chart. The Educational Services staff may take on this work or I would encourage the ELMP committee to engage with this task, since they have knowledge on this matter. The chart below is provided as a model for AESD to use in this process.
A process to consider is: 1) leadership teams add instructional practices and resources that fit both criteria, 2) teacher groups add additional information during PLC time, 3) both sets of information are combined to create district-wide resources of instructional practices and resources. This chart can be used as a concrete visual for principals to use in coaching teachers. Teachers can use this information to obtain and implement new strategies to support their ELs. The district may use this guide as a way to focus on future professional development, resources, and curriculum support. Messaging, training, and creating a tool that provides clarity on the “Big Three” model for ELs will be important for the district to consider when implementing the ELMP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AESD EL Roadmap Principle 2 &amp; Big Three Instructional Chart</th>
<th>The Big Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classroom Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 2 Elements</td>
<td>Language development occurs in and through content and is integrated across the curriculum, including integrated ELD and designated content-based ELD (per ELA/ELD Framework).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students are provided a rigorous, intellectually rich, standards-based curriculum with instructional scaffolding for comprehension, participation and mastery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching and learning emphasize engagement, interaction, discourse, inquiry, and critical thinking – with the same high expectations for ELs as for all.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leadership - Lead Learning

The district’s mission statement is “To Provide a Learning Environment Where Students Develop the Skills Needed for Success.” This statement sets the course for all elements in the district to focus their priorities, processes, and resources on one item: instruction. AESD’s greatest asset to deliver on this promise is their people. Cabinet is the leadership team, and with the direction of the board, set district’s purpose, priorities, processes, and resources to deliver an outstanding instructional program. For the principles of the ELMP to have impact and to sustain, Cabinet members should continue to build their instructional capacity in effective models, innovative approaches, and the latest research in teaching and learning. This capacity building does not require a lot of planning or time to coordinate. For example, the Superintendent, who coordinates the agenda for Cabinet meetings, could set aside a time block within the meeting to review articles on instruction. Members may discuss questions such as: What resonated with you from this article? What questions did it generate? What alignment do you foresee between this and our instructional initiatives? How do you see it impacting the work you do? Several websites offer short, engaging, applicable instructional articles that provide insight into the latest research and trends in this area:

- Edutopia: https://www.edutopia.org/
- Harvard’s Usable Knowledge: https://www.gse.harvard.edu/uk
- Education Week: https://www.edweek.org/ew/index.html
- Phi Delta Kappan: https://www.kappanonline.org/
- Mindshift: https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/
Another option to build instructional capacity of all cabinet members is to strategically include the Assistant Superintendent of Human Services and Business Office in instructional trainings. For example, as WestEd begins to train the district with the EL Roadmap principles, ELD/ELA Framework, and Integrated/Designated programs, these individuals can attend discussions in the area of purpose, policies, resources, capacity building, and research. This engagement will help all cabinet members have a pulse on instruction and the important roles their departments play in this area.

The district has a system in place where cabinet members conduct walkthroughs through classrooms and gather information on “The Big Three” initiatives. To further develop this system, leadership should carve time in Cabinet to debrief walkthroughs. These debrief sessions may occur once or twice a month. The importance is to schedule ahead of time so individuals can plan and bring data they are capturing from walkthroughs. Guiding questions that can be used for the discussion are: What trends are you noticing about instruction? What does this make you wonder? What adjustments do we need to consider in our priorities, processes, and resources to better support instruction? The Superintendent may coordinate the discussion or facilitation roles could rotate so every member has an opportunity to lead instructional conversations. These sessions will generate engagement, problem-solving skills, greater capacity for cabinet members, coherence within departments, and continue the district’s relentless focus on instruction.

*Bilingual Education – The Environment is Ripe*

In reviewing the EL Roadmap Policy research, language acquisition is best conducted when students are developing their native language while acquiring a second
language. AESD has a bilingual program infrastructure outlined in their board-approved ELMP. Key authorizers within the district, principals, teachers, and community members are in favor of a bilingual program. Neighboring districts in the area have long adopted bilingual programs in their district, with proven success for their students. With the passing of Proposition 58 in California, this law set the stage in the state for the Global California Initiative\(^4\) to support schools in implementing a bilingual education program. Furthermore, the State released three-year funds, the Pathways to Success Grant Program\(^5\), to add additional personnel, training, family outreach, professional learning communities, instructional coaches and classroom materials. The environment and timing is ripe for AESD to create a bilingual education program.

Planning and coordination is essential for the development of a new program. First, identifying a school that has the appropriate leadership and staff to implement an effective program is key. Second, creating a process of needs assessments where stakeholders, including community, generate a purpose for the program is important. Third, bringing stakeholders together to research, learn, and create the vision, mission, plan, and outcomes of success for the program is essential. Fourth, sharing the plan with the community to obtain further feedback will provide more details to the plan and garner support. Finally, setting the structures in place to coordinate, build capacity, and define the instructional model and support systems will be a component to consider for the bilingual program. Through a bilingual program, AESD is poised to create an enriching experiencing for both EL and English Only students.

\(^4\) https://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/documents/globalca2030report.pdf
Implications for Sector

The CDE set a vision and clear goals for EL instruction across the State through the development of the EL Roadmap Policy. While the policy is a new turn for the state and offers goals for schools to implement, there still more work to be done. I will offer several components for State Departments of Education across the nation to consider as they develop policy to impact and sustain educational practices.

Engagement is important in implementation. I will submit that this concept is the same for policy implementation. What I learned through this process is that language that is comprehensible and accessible by all stakeholders is important to secure engagement. Through the committee’s revision and feedback process, we learned that parents and students could not comprehend the vision and mission statement due to its complicated language. We had to revise the language and produce statements that everyone could interpret. The mission of the EL Roadmap has language such as, “California schools prepare graduates with the linguistic….multilingual world…thriving future…” which a community member, parent, or a high school student may have a challenge in comprehending. If the purpose is to engage all stakeholders in the system, accessibility should be considered when developing policy. The stakeholders’ level of understanding should be assessed and the policy revised according to their needs. Multiple approaches to reach and engage stakeholders should be considered in policy development. Questions that Departments of Education should consider are: Who are the stakeholders who need to access these policies? What support and resources will they need to access and comprehend this information? Moreover, providing information in stakeholders’ primary language, in particular with EL policy, is critical to engagement.
We learned this lesson through our experience of providing the vision and mission survey. The survey was in English. A piece of feedback we received from stakeholders is that having the survey in the individual’s home language would provide further clarity, leading to a deeper sense of engagement. Thinking through these scenarios and asking input from stakeholders who the policy is aimed at supporting will allow State Departments of Education to obtain greater engagement, leading to a higher rate of implementation.

As the EL population continues to grow in our country, State Departments of Education should increase their efforts in researching and supporting effective EL instructional models. The State of California has led the way with the EL Roadmap Policy and bilingual education, which can foster innovation and exemplary school districts that have proven to close the achievement gap in this area. To this point, identifying school districts that are having an impact on EL instruction and defining the elements within their systems that have been critical to their student achievement would provide great value to other districts that are aiming to mirror some of those components. Furthermore, this is an excellent opportunity to conduct research on districts receiving funding through CDE for the development of bilingual education program for ELs. Whether these programs are successful or face challenges, great learning can be generated in these districts on how bilingual education is either supporting or hindering the district’s instructional model for ELs. These districts may offer insight to the following questions: Has bilingual education changed the educational experience of ELs? How has the initiative built the capacity of teachers? Has it changed the role of the teacher and the student? Has the rigor of the curriculum increased? How have the
instructional tasks in bilingual education changed? Addressing these questions through these particular schools may offer further insight into creating EL instructional models that serve students appropriately.

**Conclusion**

AESD has made positive strides in improving instruction and services for students in their district. The changes in the public education, Common Core Standards, and new testing have increased the demands on what teachers need to teach and what students need to learn. The recent dismantling of Proposition 227 by Proposition 58, in which districts are being asked to provide new and innovative services to meet the demands of the EL Roadmap Policy, has increased the pressure not only on AESD, but all the districts in California.

This capstone made the case for several arguments in the area of adaptive leadership, change management, improvement science, and instruction. Trust is a key lever to help individuals address the adaptive challenges of priorities and beliefs. Furthermore, serious consideration should be given to the beliefs that stakeholders value, the level of capacity, and elements in the environment that will either support or be a barrier to a change initiative.

The State of California is offering an opportunity for districts to move the needle forward for ELs with the passing of Proposition 58 and the development of the EL Roadmap Policy. With this level of support, AESD is poised to create innovative programs that can radically change instruction in the district. The instructional model should look at three pieces: the role of the teacher and their expertise with the curriculum,
the role of the student an engagement with the curriculum, and the rigor of the curriculum.

This challenging work cannot be done alone. People must be brought onboard, engaged, and allowed to lead the change process. An approach that has potential to lead a low-risk, low-cost change process is the PDSA improvement cycles, which allow individuals to plan, reflect, adjust, and re-implement an initiative. Strategic consideration must be given to individuals who will lead this improvement work. Without capable leaders who have the appropriate approach, the change process might be counterproductive to the district.

Evidence suggests that the project accomplished some elements of the outcomes, and other components are in development. Key elements from the EL Roadmap Policy are now a part of AESD’s ELMP. The entry plan did produce engagement and support for the strategic project from multiple stakeholders at different levels within the district. Committee members received training in leadership, change management, improvement science, and the California EL Roadmap Policy. To some degree, we see evidence that these efforts led to the readjustment of priorities and an impact to the ELD program. The question that remains is: Will the instructional model outlined in the ELMP change instructional practices in the classroom? This is a question AESD is poised to address in the implementation phase of the ELMP.

As a leader, this experience was challenging, humbling, and rewarding in so many ways. I learned a great deal about engagement, change, improvement and aligning systems and resources towards a common purpose: instruction, which is the heart of the organization. AESD has so many items for which to celebrate and be proud. To continue
their journey of improvement, the professional development and synchronization of Cabinet leadership in instruction is instrumental. Developing a clear approach to their instructional model for ELs through “The Big Three” will bring focus, clarity, and cohesion amongst all stakeholders. As a sector, policy makers need to consider the language used in policy to engage multiple stakeholders ranging from other stakeholders to the single child in the classroom. Finally, State Departments of Education need to have further research on EL instructional models that will aim to address the central question of this capstone: How can schools with limited resources and institutionalized education systems provide an effective educational program to ELs? Every EL in our school is an asset and brings the values of diversity, acceptance, and the potential to create a bright future. It is our responsibility to create a learning environment, where EL students can reach their full potential.
Bibliography


English Learner Roadmap - English Learners (CA Dept of Education). (n.d.). Retrieved November 6, 2018, from https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/rm/


http://www.nea.org//home/13598.htm


https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/rm/elroadmappolicy.asp


http://facstaff.wcer.wisc.edu/normw/All%20content%20areas%20%20DO%20levels%2032802.pdf
Appendix A: Identification and ELD Program Placement

**Step 1** – Parent goes to school site for Registration. Complete the Home Language Survey HLS (Part of Registration Form)

**Step 2** – English Proficiency Assessment ELPAC: Results of assessment are placed in Yellow EL Folder (done by District Staff/Office)

**Step 3** – Language Classification (done at District Office)
- English Language Learner (EL)
- Assess for primary language proficiency (LALs or BILNS)

**Step 4** – Parent Notification (done at school site and/or ELD department)
- Should be in a face to face meeting when possible.
- Notify parents and explain all program options
  - Structure English Immersion Language Development
  - Newcomers Program
  - Bilingual Education if available
- Explain waiver procedures

**Step 5** – Program Placement
- Recommend appropriate program based on parents’ decision and complete Program Placement form (AESD Form EL 4)
- If alternative program is chosen, waiver must be signed at the school. Place waiver in cumulative file.
- Notify school
Appendix B: Integrated & Designated ELD

**Integrated ELD:**
All teachers with ELs in their classrooms use the CA ELD Standards *in tandem with* the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards.

**Designated ELD:** A protected time during the school day when teachers use the CA ELD Standards as the focal standards in ways that build *into and from* content instruction.
Appendix C: ELD Standards Interconnection to Core Subjects

Graphic is from the digital chalkboard presentation
Appendix D: Reclassification Process

School districts are to develop student reclassification policy and procedures based on the four criteria set forth in the reclassification guidelines approved by the State Board of Education (Education Code Section Code 313 (d)). The chart below illustrates how the four criteria is used in our district when evaluating a student’s readiness for reclassification from English Learner (EL) to Fluent English proficient (FEP).

- **Assessment of English Proficiency**
  - Review ELPAC results from annual assessment.
  - Does student score a 4 (well developed) overall and score 3s in oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) skills?
  - **YES**
  - **NO**
    - Student remains an English Learner

- **Comparison of Performance of Basic Skills**
  - Review results of latest California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress in English Language Arts (CAASPP ELA).
  - Does student score a 3 (Standard Met) on the CAASPP ELA OR show proficiency on district measures such as Lexile/DEA?
  - **YES**
  - **NO**
    - Student remains an English Learner

- **Teacher Evaluation of Student Academic Performance**
  - Review the student’s academic performance.
  - Does student meet the academic performance indicators set by the district?
  - **YES**
  - **NO**
    - Student remains an English Learner

- **Parent or Guardian Opinion and Consultation**
  - Provide notice to parents or guardians of their right to participate in the reclassification process.
  - Encourage them to participate in the reclassification process and attend a face-to-face meeting with school staff.

**Reclassification**

1. Reclassify the student to Fluent English proficient (FEP).
2. Notify the parents or guardians of reclassification.
3. Update school/school district records.
4. Monitor the student's progress for two years.
Appendix E: List of Trainings & Dates Provided to Committee

English Language Learner Master Plan Revision Timeline & Committee Expectations

EL Master Plan: The primary purpose of the English Learner Master Plan is to establish, implement, and sustain language instruction and programs of English language development for English Language Learners.¹

Purpose of Timeline: To outline milestones, meeting times, location and revision of the district’s English Language Learner Master Plan.

Committee Members Expectations: To keep a focus on improving student’s lives and academic success. To be committed to our purpose and norms. To stay engaged with the process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th><strong>Milestone</strong></th>
<th><strong>Time</strong></th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 20th</td>
<td>Introduction Meeting – Define the purpose, norms, scope, &amp; timeline of the project.</td>
<td>3:30 AM – 4:30 PM</td>
<td>Board Room</td>
<td>Agenda, &amp; Attendance Roster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 18th</td>
<td>Review current EL Master Plan, new guidelines, EL data, EL Roadmap Policy, and shadow EL students. Develop revision goals according to data &amp; research, classroom observations, and participant’s experience.</td>
<td>8:00 AM – 12:00 PM</td>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>Reflections, Trends, Goals, Agenda &amp; Attendance Roster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 8th</td>
<td>Continue to review learnings from data, research, student shadowing, and goals.</td>
<td>8:00 AM – 12:00 PM</td>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>Initial Revision to EL Master Plan, Trends of Learnings, Goals, Agenda &amp; Attendance Roster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 6th</td>
<td>Discuss ELA/ELD framework, Integrated/ Designated ELD, and ELPAC tasks.</td>
<td>8:00 AM – 3:00 PM</td>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>DRAFT EL Master Plan, Communication Plan, Agenda &amp; Attendance Roster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 18th</td>
<td>Revise current EL Master Plan. Create a plan for communication and obtaining feedback.</td>
<td>8:00 AM – 3:00 PM</td>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>DRAFT EL Master Plan, Communication Plan, Agenda &amp; Attendance Roster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 14th</td>
<td>Committee to review stakeholder input &amp; finalize EL Master Plan</td>
<td>8:00 AM – 3:00 PM</td>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>EL Master Plan, Agenda, &amp; Attendance Roster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 4th</td>
<td>Master Plan submitted to Board</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td>EL Master Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 12th</td>
<td>Board Report and Adoption of Master Plan</td>
<td>Board Meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td>Board Report Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 14th</td>
<td>Committee meeting to device next steps and recommendations for implementation of EL Master Plan</td>
<td>3:30 PM – 4:30 PM</td>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>Recommendations, Next Steps, Agenda &amp; Attendance Roster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1st</td>
<td>Master Plan uploaded to the FPM site</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td>Note notifying the Master Plan was uploaded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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Appendix F: WestEd Email to AESD on Training

Hello everyone!

First of all, thank you for taking the time to meet with the WestEd team last week regarding possible EL supports in AESD. This email is to follow up and summarize our discussion. I have cc'd all of the members of the WestEd team in order to provide everyone with additional context and information. Please feel free to reach out should you have any questions or clarifications.

1. Annette and I will work together to set up a 2-day agenda for an ELA/ELD professional learning session for AESD leadership to be held either June 13th-14th, June 17th-18th. The purpose of this training will be to jump-start the learning for the site leadership prior to opening of the school year. A primary goal will be to provide a solid grounding in the Framework.

2. The WestEd team will write up a SOW that would include some training for teachers in August (before school starts). We will get specific dates from AESD. The initial training will jump-start the ELA/ELD Framework including integrated and designated ELD. Use of the vignettes will be included as part of this training. The goal will be to set up a common understanding of the Framework throughout the district in order to set the stage for continued follow up throughout the 2019-2020 school year.

3. The team will write of a few possible options for a SOW to include follow up services that will provide connections to current AESD instructional focus areas (Objectives, DOK, Student Engagement). These trainings will encompass topics such as Academic Conversations, the Teacher and Learning Cycle, Deconstructing and reconstructing language at various levels (i.e. sentence level, paragraph level and text level). The trainings will have a primary focus on key pedagogical practices along with teaching tools such as the Genre Cheat Sheets.

4. The SOW from WestEd will include ways in which this new learning aligns and supports current district instructional practices. In addition, the SOW will include opportunities for coaching site leadership around analysis of the classroom application along with how to coach teachers to continue to move the practices forward.

5. We will also review the AESD EL master plan to ensure that our work together supports their plan and does not have any conflicting messages.

6. I will share the EL Institute information to AESD for them to consider sending a team to the ELA Summer Institutes.
Appendix G: EL Master Plan Executive Summary

Atwater Elementary School District believes in providing a learning environment where students can develop their skills and be successful. The district believes in the following core values:

- We believe that students are the focus of public education.
- We believe that each student is unique and that our staff and programs provide for multiple opportunities for success.
- We believe in developing academically competent, confident and considerate citizens.
- We believe that learning occurs best in a safe and respectful environment.
- We believe our students’ success depends upon highly qualified staff who are valued and respected for their diverse backgrounds.
- We believe that we serve students best through programs and practices that are responsive to changing needs.
- We believe that our success depends upon the development of effective leaders, staff and students who create a vision and translate that vision into reality.

Furthermore, the research principles of the English Language Learner Roadmap policy, created by the California Department of Education, are a guide for the English Language Development program in the district:

- Assets-Oriented and Needs Responsive School
- Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access
- System Conditions that Support Effectiveness
- Alignment and Articulation Within and Across Systems

The belief, core values, and policy principles are the foundation for the English Language Learner Master Plan (EL Master Plan), which describes the instructional programs and services for students. The vision and mission of the EL Master Plan to deliver such program and services are:

Vision: Guide a community of English Learners to become successful and productive members of society.

Mission: We develop English Proficiency through rigorous instruction, student engagement, and relationship building.

The committee, which revised the EL Master Plan in 2019, recommended short, medium, and long term goals to support the attainment of the vision and mission. Please see appendix on page 106 for more information. Moreover, a resource providing revisions made to the plan in 2019 is on page 108, and the chapter alignment to the Federal Program Monitoring guidelines on page 110. Finally, the district’s English Learner demographic information is on page 111.

The following plan outlines policy, systems, processes, expectations, and requirements each member of the community should follow to support the development and academic success of every English Language Learner in the district.

As the African proverb notes, “It takes a village to raise a child.” Together, as a community, we can provide an enriching and valuable educational experience to our English Language Learners. Thank you in advance for engaging with this plan.
# Appendix H: AESD EL Master Plan SMART Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Short Term</th>
<th>Medium Term</th>
<th>Long Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - Initial Identification, Assessment, &amp; Program Placement</td>
<td>By June 2019, AESD will have a fluid EL Master Plan that will address the needs of EL students and their identification through assessments such as ELPAC (placement/scores DRA, and CAASPP).</td>
<td>By April 2020, the progress and performance of EL students will be monitored with consistent and trackable data from ELPAC, reclassification rates, D.R.A., CAASPP, teacher input, Reading Inventory, and grades.</td>
<td>By 2022, a plan will be developed (similar to SST) to determine instruction of students tier level (emerging, expanding, and bridging) using data from ELPAC, D.R.A., and CAASPP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - Instructional Programs</td>
<td>By August 2019, ALL AESD teachers will have attended at least one mandatory training of EL best practices/expectations (modeling of practice protocols) using ELA/ELD Framework &amp; Designated/Integrated programs.</td>
<td>By August 2022, we will have a follow-up evaluation of EL programs using multiple data points, reclassification rates, ELPAC scores, CAASPP benchmarks, and the ELA/ELD framework language.</td>
<td>By August 2024, will have continued monitoring integrated/designated ELD programs in order to meet the needs of students at each site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - Monitoring of Student Progress &amp; Reclassification</td>
<td>By June 2019, AESD will build capacity in the learning directors positions (TK-6th grade) and Assistant Principal positions (7-8) to coordinate EL monitoring systems at their school.</td>
<td>By April 2020, check-point system (based on EL standards) to monitor the progress of ELs three times a year will be in place.</td>
<td>By April 2024, AESD will conduct a review of the EL monitoring system to ensure its effectiveness by using ELPAC, CAASPP scores and reclassification data.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H Continued: AESD EL Master Plan SMART Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Short Term</th>
<th>Medium Term</th>
<th>Long Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 - Staffing &amp; Professional Growth</td>
<td>By June 2019, a Board approved, EL Master Plan will be available to all stakeholders.</td>
<td>By 2020, all district staff supporting ELs will be trained on the principles of the EL Roadmap.</td>
<td>By 2022, all staff will be provided professional development to integrate the ELA/ELD framework in designated ELD and all core subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - Parent &amp; Community Involvement</td>
<td>By September 2019, the district will identify personnel at each site to be the lead persons for parent and community involvement.</td>
<td>By December 2020, the district will have created a communication process to involve parents and community members in English Learner procedures. Lead persons, as identified by site leadership, will work to start the communication process.</td>
<td>By June 2023, the district will have a plan for ongoing notification process to communicate with parents regarding program options.</td>
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| 6 - Evaluation & Accountability              | By June 2019 a protocol to monitor EL proficiency on the seven goals in the chapter will be developed:  
1) English Proficiency-ELPAC/Recategorization  
2) Academic Progress-CAASPP/Teacher Feedback  
3) Biliteracy Programs if available  
4) Decrease Rate of Failure and Suspension/Retentions  
5) Parent Engagement  | By April 2020, fully and consistently implement the EL Master Plan and gather data to monitor progress on the seven goals. | By June 2021, EL committee along with district leadership review and revise the EL Master Plan (7 goals) using surveys (students/parent/staff), assessments, and dashboard data to determine progress and modify the plan as needed. |
| 7 - Funding & Resources                      | By 2020, the Educational Services Department will structure all Curriculum and Instruction meetings to have an 80% focus on building individual and team capacity with three main objectives:  
- monitor the goals and actions set forth in the Site Plan for Success, and  
- progress and compliance toward the district’s EL  | By 2021, the Educational Services Department will coordinate a Professional Learning Community process with site leadership to learn, problem-solve, reflect and share research-based/data driven strategies aligned with the three main objectives. | By 2022, all actions and strategies to increase student achievement will be aligned between the LCAP, SPSA, and EL Master Plan. Effectiveness of actions will be based on site goals of CAASPP math/ELA, |