

# California Playbook for Accelerating Learning

Supporting diverse learner profiles across our state through high expectations and grade-level content

Outline

- A. Intro (Emily) **ACCELERATE** ✓
- B. Acceleration in Action (All) **INSPIRE** ✓
- C. Getting Started (Daniel) **PLAN** ✓
- D. Focusing on Key Content **PRIORITIZE** ✓
  - a. Math
  - b. ELA
  - c. Foundational Reading
  - d. Assessment
  - e. Meaningful engagement
- E. Systemic Supports for Diverse Learners (Emily) **SUPPORT** ✓
  - a. Universal Design
  - b. Culturally sustaining pedagogy
  - c. Considerations for English Learners
  - d. Considerations for Students with Disabilities
- F. Iteration and Support (Emily) **ITERATE** ✓
- G. Leveraging Technology **TECH**
- H. [Implementation section deleted]
- I. Engaging Family and Community (Daniel) **ENGAGE** ✓
  - a. Partnering with CBOs
  - b. Engaging Families

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
Making A Shift	5
Shifting Perspective: Acceleration vs. Remediation	7
So, How Will CA Schools Accelerate Learning?	7
FEATURED RESOURCES:	9
ACCELERATION IN ACTION	9

Curated Tips	10
Blended Model	10
Resources	11
Real-World Examples:	11
Tutoring	12
Burst of Time	13
Real-World Examples	13
Student Agency / Independent Learning	14
Real-World Examples	15
Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)	15
Real-World Examples	16
Engaging Families in Learning Acceleration	16
Resources LEAs Can Use with Families	16
Real-World Examples	17
<b>Getting Started:</b>	<b>18</b>
Plan & Engage; Scope and Sequence	18
Why	18
Key Takeaways	18
Curated Tips	19
FEATURED RESOURCES:	22
<b>Emily: TIPS FOR MATH</b>	<b>23</b>
Curated Tips	23
Start with the Big Ideas in Mathematics	23
Plan for Meaningful Work	24
Let Assessment Drive Instruction	25
Use Tech to Support Targeted Teaching and Learning	25
FEATURED RESOURCES:	26
Additional Resources	26
Curated Tips for LEAs	28
Steps for Teachers: Using Assessments to Accelerate Learning	28
FEATURED RESOURCES:	29
Additional Resources	29
<b>Emily: TIPS FOR ELA</b>	<b>31</b>
Curated Tips	31
Start with the Big Ideas in ELA	31
Plan for Meaningful Work	32
Let Assessment Drive Instruction	33
Use Tech to Support Targeted Teaching and Learning	33
FEATURED RESOURCES:	34
Additional Resources	34

<b>Emily: TIPS FOR FOUNDATIONAL READING</b>	<b>35</b>
Why	35
Key Takeaways	35
Curated Tips for Teachers: Curriculum and Instruction	36
Curated Tips for Teachers: Choosing Materials	36
Curated Tips: Assessment	37
FEATURED RESOURCES:	37
Additional reading acceleration tools and tips from Student Achievement Partners	38
Diverse Learners Cooperative tips for learners with reading disabilities	38
<b>UNIQUE LEARNING PROFILES</b>	<b>39</b>
Why	39
Key Takeaways	39
Curated Tips	39
Meeting the needs of English Learners:	40
Curriculum	40
Assessment	40
Professional Learning	41
Meeting the needs of students with disabilities:	41
Curriculum	41
Assessment	42
Professional Learning	42
Culturally sustaining teaching	43
<b>REFINE AND SUPPORT</b>	<b>45</b>
Why	45
Key Takeaways	45
Curated Tips	46
ITERATION:	46
CONTINUOUS SUPPORT:	46
FEATURED RESOURCES:	47
Additional Resources	48
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>48</b>
Why	48
Key Takeaways	48
Curated Tips: Classroom Practices for Teachers	49
FEATURED RESOURCES:	51
Additional Resources:	51
WHY	51
Key Takeaways	52
Curated Tips for LEAs	52
Curated Tips for Effective Classroom Implementation:	53
Curated Tips for Online Safety	54

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION	55
<b>Beyond the School Day</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>LEVERAGING CBOs</b>	<b>56</b>
Why	56
Key Takeaways	56
Curated Tips	57
Additional Resources	58
FEATURED RESOURCES:	59
<b>ENGAGING FAMILIES</b>	<b>60</b>
Why	60
Key Takeaways	60
Curated Tips	60
Additional Resources	62
FEATURED RESOURCES:	62
APPENDIX	63
<b>WORK PLAN FOR THE PLAYBOOK FOR ACCELERATING LEARNING</b>	<b>63</b>

# INTRODUCTION



Driving Question: What is progress acceleration?  
Why is it important?

*"In the aftermath of this crisis, schools will have an opportunity to provide students, especially marginalized students, with far better academic experiences than they did before. It starts with a commitment to accelerating learning instead of ratcheting it ever downward." - David Steiner*

Educators have always stepped up to the challenge of tailoring instruction to achieve the best possible outcomes for students. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed growing disparities, and we must redouble our collective efforts to ensure that all students, regardless of background or current learning level, can thrive. The Playbook for Accelerating Learning (PAL) was created as a roadmap to the successful future we envision and deem possible for all our students. Especially in a state as diverse as California, it is critical to create a plan for student learning that is rooted in best practices for all students, including our English learners, students with disabilities, and other historically marginalized students.

In the following sections, the PAL will:

- review current research on how best to improve student outcomes;
- lay out [models](#) that practitioners can use to accelerate learning in their systems;
- propose ways in which they can [plan with their teams](#) in the pursuit of such goals;
- envision how their efforts may take place [during](#) and [beyond](#) the school day;
- offer [system-wide suggestions for supporting all learners](#), with a specific lens on English learners, students with disabilities, and those historically underserved;
- provide content-specific suggestions to support acceleration in Math and ELA that take into consideration California's focus on digital learning and our deep work to support all learners;
- discuss leveraging California's investment and focus on [technology](#) infrastructure to support students; and
- suggest ways in which LEAs can leverage [community-based organizations](#) and [engage families](#) as partners in this work.

By making these resources available in a concise and actionable format, the CCEE hopes to help instructional leaders in California shorten their preparation period for accelerating learning and promoting the outcomes all students deserve.

## Making A Shift

**After more than a year of interrupted learning imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, more students than ever are experiencing learning gaps.** Remote and hybrid learning have increased the demands placed on educators, families, and students. And while educators, families, students, and other supporters have really stepped up to the task, there is still a tremendous need to accelerate progress for many students. [One study by McKinsey](#) estimates that, in the 2020-21 school year, students experienced 4.5 months of learning loss on average, compared to a typical year of in-class learning.

**Students of color and low-income students are significantly more affected.** When compared with expected learning gains from full-time, in-person learning, the [McKinsey study](#) estimates that white students experienced the equivalent of 3 to 4 months of missing learning on average, Latinx and Black students experienced the equivalent of 5 to 6 months' loss. For students with low-income backgrounds, the picture is even grimmer: the McKinsey study estimates students missed 6 to 7 months' worth of learning from the year schools were doing distance learning.

**By the end of the 2020–21 school year, students were on average five months behind in math and four months behind in reading.**

Cumulative months of unfinished learning due to the pandemic by type of school, grades 1 through 6

Learning gap	By race Schools that are majority ...		By income Household average, per school		By location School site	
<b>Math</b> 5 months behind <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Black	<div><div></div></div> 6	<\$25K	<div><div></div></div> 7	City	<div><div></div></div> 5
	Hispanic	<div><div></div></div> 6	\$25K–\$75K	<div><div></div></div> 5	Suburb <sup>1</sup>	<div><div></div></div> 5
	White	<div><div></div></div> 4	>\$75K	<div><div></div></div> 4	Rural	<div><div></div></div> 4
<b>Reading</b> 4 months behind <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Black	<div><div></div></div> 6	<\$25K	<div><div></div></div> 6	City	<div><div></div></div> 4
	Hispanic	<div><div></div></div> 5	\$25K–\$75K	<div><div></div></div> 4	Suburb <sup>1</sup>	<div><div></div></div> 4
	White	<div><div></div></div> 3	>\$75K	<div><div></div></div> 3	Rural	<div><div></div></div> 3

<sup>1</sup>Town or suburb.  
Source: Curriculum Associates i-Ready assessment data

McKinsey  
& Company

**Even before the pandemic, many students were not receiving grade-level instruction and assignments.** [According to Bellwether Education](#), as many as 3 out of 5 students in the U.S. enter school each year below grade level, and that students who start a grade below grade level rarely catch up (see slide 11). [Research by TNTP](#) revealed that students spent more than 500 hours each school year on assignments that weren't appropriate for their grade level and experienced instruction that didn't ask enough of them—the equivalent of 6 months of lost class time in each core subject. Further, the study tells us that, while more than 80% of

teachers surveyed supported standards for college readiness in theory, less than half had the expectation that their students could reach that bar.

**We need to focus on how people effectively learn.** To address the discrepancies in student learning and achievement that have been exacerbated by the past year and a half, we must capitalize on the evidence-based information we have on how people learn. [According to the Learning Policy Institute](#), key factors that promote learning are:

- positive relationships and attachments—feeling safe, affirmed, and deeply engaged within a supportive community of learners;
- Creating connections between what children already know and what they are learning;
- physical activity, joy, and opportunities for self-expression; and
- students' perceptions of their own ability. All children are motivated to learn the next set of skills for which they are ready; few are motivated by labels that rank them against others or communicate stigma.

(These important factors are addressed in CCEE's [Field Guide for Learning, Equity and Well-Being](#). This Playbook for Accelerating Learning will focus on instructional strategies to accelerate learning for all students.)

**To provide better academic experiences than we did before, we must shift our efforts from remediation to acceleration.** This [study by Bellwether](#) (slide 11) shows students who start a grade below grade level rarely catch up. If we focus only on “learning loss” and remove students from grade-level content, we will perpetuate repetitive, ineffective structures that promote the inequality they are intended to address. A focus on remediation may result in teachers not instructing on content students need to master in the current year and could put students further behind, exacerbating opportunity and achievement gaps. (Consider [this article](#) for more background information.)

Additionally, the [New Teacher Project's research](#) suggests that, even when students are behind, grade-level content is one of the clearest paths to success and strong outcomes. Thus, finding ways to scaffold student learning while maintaining access to grade-level content may be the key to accelerating learning. This playbook is designed to offer LEAs insights into how to make the shift from “learning loss” to an emphasis on “big idea-focused grade-level content” to support student academic growth.

## Shifting Perspective: Acceleration vs. Remediation

The terms “acceleration” and “remediation” are sometimes inadvertently used interchangeably. To avoid confusion and maximize outcomes, it is important to clearly differentiate between them.

In **remediation**, the primary focus is mastering concepts that students should have learned in previous years, which often means returning to prior years’ grade-level content. This may result in teachers not instructing on content students need to master in the current year and

could put students further behind, exacerbating opportunity and achievement gaps. (Consider [this article](#) for PD for more background information).

**Acceleration**, on the other hand, is an approach that strategically prepares students who have experienced learning loss for success in the present—this week, on this content. Rather than concentrating on a litany of items that students have failed to master, acceleration focuses on readying students for new learning.

**In essence, accelerating learning is about building bridges rather than filling holes.** Acceleration gives students access to current grade-level content, rather than returning them to past content. Teachers strategically focus on content-area big ideas and weave background knowledge into current lessons using regularly gathered formative data to make instructional decisions. It is a different way of thinking about how to meet the needs of students and unfinished learning that has the potential to provide clearer direction and lighten the load for teachers who are already taxed by current demands.

To be clear, **special consideration must continue to be made for students with IEPs** as well as for English learners. Focusing on grade-level content, particularly in mathematics and English/language arts, does not preclude teachers' individualizing the work for students with unique learning profiles. There will be more information about this in the [Systemic Supports for Diverse Learners](#) section.

## Making the Shift: How Will California Schools Accelerate Learning?

Accelerating learning is not a program to be purchased, but rather a change in approach to supporting students who have experienced learning gaps (which, given the COVID-19 pandemic, is close to all students in California). Learning acceleration should be embedded in all instructional decisions for students: it should be aligned to your vision, linked to your LCAP, and integrated as part of your Tier 1 and 2 MTSS efforts.

The challenge of accelerating progress in California is compounded by the size, diversity, and social conditions of California's student population. There are more than a thousand school districts in California, serving unique communities with their own needs and challenges, from large urban districts to very small rural schools. California's challenges reflect not only the state's size but also its ethnic, cultural, and geographical diversity.

However, California has made some critical decisions to help with the challenge. For example, a barrage of state funding that targeted to helping schools and students recover from the side effects of the pandemic, including funding and support for special populations that were uniquely affected. Additionally, California has made significant investments in technology and infrastructure to support students (see more on this [here](#)). This not only helped with online and hybrid learning but also will continue to pave the way for accelerated progress. Technology can help assess and target learning to help students meet the standards. Learn more about using technology to accelerate progress [here](#).

Because learning acceleration is a philosophical approach to tackling individual student progress, each LEA in the state must develop its own strategy for accelerating learning because, to some extent, how we support unfinished learning “depends on what we are trying to teach” ([Instruction Partners](#)). As you read through this playbook, use the companion workbook to create your own individualized work plan.

Here are some key factors to consider as you craft your learning acceleration plan:

1. **There are different ways of accelerating learning—and you can use more than one.**  
Different models can be implemented together.
2. **Collaboration matters.** Whichever paths you take, make sure they align with your existing vision and that your whole team is on board. Make time and space for teachers to team up, learn, and collaborate to make this vision a reality.
3. **High expectations and grade-level content are key.** The most important aspects of any learning acceleration model are high expectations and grade-level content. The majority of instruction and assignments should be aimed at grade-level content, with additional supports to help students access this material.
4. **Prioritizing standards does not mean lowering the bar.** Priority standards are not the only things that will be taught. Prioritizing has everything to do with a focus on understanding which standards have the most impact on student learning. To accomplish this, you will need to adjust your scope, sequence, and pacing to focus on big ideas and themes.
5. **Quality curriculum is key—especially when vertically aligned.** Make the most of your high-quality curriculum by prioritizing and aligning it vertically. It is also more impactful when educators know what big ideas and key concepts students must learn and how these align vertically. Foundational reading skills will require special attention.
6. **Assessments should bring students into grade-level content, not keep them from it.**  
Assessments should be ongoing, formative, and content-embedded and should reveal what students already understand and what further connections might be necessary for them to fully access grade-level content. Assessments should not result in the labeling and sorting of children that often lead to inequitable segregation and marginalization. Instead, they should provide teachers with standards-aligned data that can be used to determine how to intentionally and flexibly organize instruction to best meet the needs of each learner around the current content.
7. **Support should be built in from the beginning.** Even before knowing students individually, it is still possible to anticipate what students might need to succeed—in terms of classroom environment, social emotional learning, and academic instruction—and build those into the architecture of instruction from the beginning. Use the principles of [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#) to structure learning that will intentionally support all students.
8. **The social-emotional environment matters.** Students and adults need to feel connected, capable, and seen. After a year or more away from school buildings, students and teachers need to spend time relearning how to work together. Both students and adults need to feel capable, included, and connected if they are expected to work hard to catch up. Focusing on building positive learning communities, developing social-emotional competencies, and employing culturally responsive practices will ensure they are ready and willing to do the hard work we ask of them.
9. **Professional development should be continuous and based on data about what teachers need.** Learning to teach in this way may require a significant adjustment for teachers, teams,

and systems. Just as student interventions are targeted for students, so should professional learning be targeted for teachers. Think of just-in-time, embedded learning opportunities and harnessing existing systems of coaching and mentoring to tailor supports for teachers rather than blanket, one-size-fits-all PD programming.

10. **Think of families and support networks as part of the acceleration team.** [Research](#) shows a connection between family involvement and academic achievement, particularly in mathematics and English/language arts. Encouraging family engagement is more than common courtesy; it's one of the best ways to create a positive learning environment for every student and support student success. Conversations with families and community-based organizations should be centered on learning and not just supervision.

## FEATURED RESOURCES:

- **Work Plan Companion for this Playbook for Accelerating Learning**
- [Closing the Digital Divide](#) – CDE resources to bridge the digital divide
- [Report on critical components of learning acceleration](#) by TNTP



# ACCELERATION IN ACTION

Driving Question: What models can be used to accelerate learning?

## Key Takeaways

- **There are different ways of accelerating learning, and you can pursue more than one.** There are multiple ways to accelerate learning. Different models can be implemented together if they fit in your learning acceleration vision.
- **High expectations and grade-level content are key.** The most important aspects of any learning acceleration model are high expectations and grade-level content. More specifically, 75% of instruction should be at grade level (25% remedial, if you need to build a bridge), and 100% of what you assign and assess should be at grade level.
- **Align your vision to how you allocate your time.** Alignment is necessary for any model to work. Your model should align with your values and must be integrated into your strategic plan, school vision, and particularly schedule. For example, do you have a structured intervention block?

## Curated Tips

- **Ensure that your school's systems match your strategy.** Your strategy will only work as well as your systems. Do you have a vertical alignment meeting structure set up for your teachers? Do you have a system for reporting and monitoring student performance on the standards you've prioritized? Your schools will need these systems and more to ensure that students master grade-level standards this year.
- **Remember that all acceleration starts with strong classroom instruction.** Sometimes this will occur in smaller flexible targeted groups through blended learning and sometimes in whole-class grade-level instruction. Flexibility and just-in-time assessments will be key. Additional supports can be helpful as students work to grow their academic skills. It is crucial not to make assumptions about where students are. Instead, use data to make strategic decisions about individual students' needs. Depending on what schools have been using for intervention, you may need to retool the content of your intervention block to be more aligned to specific learning gaps and content from the previous grade.

- **Pursue tutoring, rather than tracking.** Establish systems for additional time and [high-quality tutoring](#) rather than tracking. Intensive tutoring during and after school has been found to be [highly effective](#), creating strong relationships and customizing teaching directly to student readiness and needs.
- **Consider staffing availability and volunteers.** Consider staffing a during-school [tutoring program](#) with paraprofessionals, retired teachers, and substitute teachers.
- **Remember training is essential.** In many cases, paraprofessionals and even volunteers can be better leveraged by creating clear training and expectations on how to support students in practicing concepts, talking through challenges, facilitating study groups, and supervising whole-group instruction while teachers work with a small group.
- **External partners will require extra prepping.** Using external folks will take intentional training and time for ongoing check-ins. Regardless of how you leverage outside partners and families, providing them insights about [what students should know](#) and explaining your approach to accelerating learning is always wise.
- **External partners won't be the silver bullet.** Don't bank on external partners being able to do it all, but do leverage your partners for additional support. Acceleration is directly tied to grade-level content. If partners are not aware of or aligned to grade-level instruction and assignments, they will not help you accelerate learning.



## Potential Models for Accelerating Learning

### Blended Learning

Blended learning is an approach to learning that combines online curriculum and opportunities for interaction online with traditional place-based classroom methods. It requires the presence of both teacher and student, with some elements of student control over time, path, or place.

There are several models of blended learning: . For learning acceleration, station rotations and individual playlists are some of the most effective practices. They both provide time to use small-group or individual intervention and time to personalize instruction to students' needs. [Here](#) is a sample rotation from Blended Learning Universe, and [here](#) is a sample playlist.

### Real-World Examples

- **Flipped learning:** The [Byron School District in Minnesota](#) embraced a flipped-learning model (in which students watch a video lesson to learn the material at home, then come to school

and have class time to work on problems where the teacher and fellow students are available to answer questions) for high school that also included study groups. This addresses the typical math classroom problem: students passively listen to the lecture, begin the homework (only getting to the easy ones), go home, and get stuck. Instead, students are able to tackle the "difficult" part of the learning—the problems—in the classroom, where there is immediate help available from the teacher and peers. As a result, the district has seen student engagement and success increase significantly compared to traditional learning. Its math department offers tools and supports from teachers for teachers [here](#).

- **Playlists:**
  - [Valor Collegiate](#) in Tennessee individualizes math practice through self-directed and [self-paced online playlists](#) housed in Google Docs. Each playlist is focused on a grade-level math standard, allowing students to self-select a targeted playlist based on their individual needs.
  - [Cisco Independent School District](#) district uses an individualized assignment chart that students work through at their own pace. You can read more about this type of playlist [here](#).
- **District-wide blended model:** Lindsay High School, which serves all grade 9-12 students in [Lindsay Unified Public Schools](#), implemented blended learning in a diverse rural district school with a large population of free and reduced lunch students. The model focuses on high school English and English language learner classes. Core strategies include the implementation of a performance-based system, the ability for students to work across grade levels, customized playlists for learners, learner choice throughout their day/week/year, individual personalized learning time, and a focus on lifelong learning standards (noncognitive skills). You can read more about this work [here](#).

## Resources for Choosing and Implementing a Blended Learning Program

- Blended Learning Universe as a [tool to design your blended program](#)
- The Learning Accelerator's [collection of nearly 100 strategies for implementing student-centered instructional approaches](#) for each student based on specific strengths, needs, interests, and goals
- The Aurora Institute's guide to [Getting Started with Personalized Learning](#) (resources for education leaders, teachers, and policymakers looking to redesign K-12 education around student learning with personalized learning and competency education)
- LEAP Innovations' [personalized learning tools and resources](#)
- The Learning Accelerator's resources on subject-based [playlists](#) to [enable self-paced subject learning](#), including [customized versions](#) and [playlist data trackers](#)
- ASCD's [resource on flipped learning](#). In flipped learning, students watch a video lesson to learn the material at home, then come to school and have class time to work on problems where the teacher and fellow students are available to answer questions.
- [Sample blended rotation](#) by Blended Learning Universe
- [Sample playlist](#)
- Thrive Public Schools' [Blended Learning Rubric](#) maps out not only their approach to blended learning but the key pieces needed to be successful within their blended model. It also allows

an educator to map out their personal level of mastery and application by assessing themselves within each strand.

- Featured Resource: A [conversation about hybrid learning](#) with Catlin Tucker and Tom Armelino

## Tutoring

Tutoring is a form of teaching, one-on-one or in a small group, toward a specific goal. Tutoring sessions can happen as part of the school day or outside of school hours. By responding to students' individual needs, complementing existing curriculum, and supplementing students' classroom experiences, high-impact tutoring leads to substantial learning gains for students.

According to research and an article from [LPI](#), effective tutoring includes:

1. Providing at least 3 sessions per week for at least 30 minutes, as part of the regular school day, in groups of 5 or fewer students;
2. personalizing the experience to students' needs as well as current grade-level and class work;
3. employing current or former classroom teachers when available, or using other paid staff such as paraprofessionals, teacher candidates enrolled in preparation programs, or well-trained tutors who earn a stipend, such as AmeriCorps members;
4. offering tutors access to high-quality curriculum and clear implementation guidance;
5. investing in staff capacity building by providing high-quality training (10 hours, in the best programs, on content and facilitation skills) and ongoing support; and
6. building relationships among students, tutors, and teachers through structured time that is well-aligned with regular classroom curriculum, to create positive social connections that promote engagement with educational content and increased motivation.

## Real-World Examples

- **Teachers as tutors:** The Los Angeles Unified School District is paying teachers to serve as outside-of-school tutors providing individualized support to students. In first grade, this work is part of Primary Promise, a program aimed at closing early literacy gaps. Students receive intensive support in small groups during or after school, for a minimum of 10 weeks. You can read more [here](#).
- **Students as tutors:** [The Tennessee Tutoring Corps](#) is using tutoring to help accelerate learning during Covid-19. The goal is to recruit at least 1,000 qualified college student tutors eager to give back to their communities and help prevent summer learning loss among the most vulnerable students.

## Resources

- Video primer on [implementing a high impact tutoring program](#) by National Student Support Accelerator in partnership with CCEE
- More research can be found in [this article](#) by LPI about why we should aim for reinvention.

- Considerations for funding and extensive tips and tools are in this [tutoring playbook](#) from FutureEd at Georgetown.
- A guide to designing an evidence-based tutoring program from [JPAL](#)
- EdSearch's [framework for using high-dosage tutoring to accelerate learning](#) includes examples of effective tutoring models.

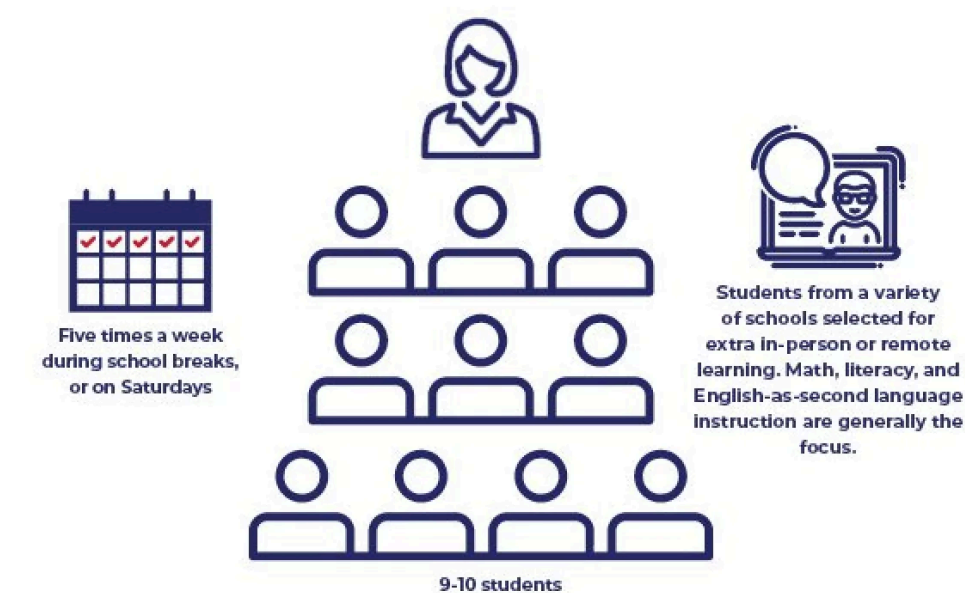
## Burst of Time

The burst of time model aims to provide extra learning time in smaller groups without taking away from core instruction during the school day. Often, this instruction takes place during breaks and on weekends with qualified teachers using targeted instruction.

## Real-World Examples

- **Instruction during breaks:** [Acceleration Academies](#) used this approach during winter and spring break weeks in Lawrence, Massachusetts. In these academies, teachers work with students in small groups on hands-on learning that brings them back to school with strong skills and confidence. You can read more about this program [here](#).
- **Dedicated period:** Cajon Valley Union School District created [Power Hour](#), a schoolwide reading intervention and support program that included 30 minutes of schoolwide reading and 30 minutes of home-based reading. This accountability-based, personalized learning and reading approach ensures all students have time and support for reading learning-level and grade-level texts.

# Acceleration Academy



Icons: Getty  
SOURCE: Education Week reporting

## Student Agency / Independent Learning

This model can only be successful when supported and front-loaded by strong intentional educators. Learning independently can be challenging, even for the brightest and most motivated students. However, it has never been more important to develop this ability than today. The ability to be a self-directed learner has been a major differentiator of success in distance learning, highlighting the need to develop skills like goal-setting, researching, progress monitoring, self-management, and communication, to name a few. Read [this report by the Learning Accelerator](#) and look in [CCEE's Field Guide](#) for more information about developing [student agency](#).

### To successfully encourage student agency:

1. **Have clear expectations and learning goals.** Design expectations and goals with the team and communicate them clearly to students and parents. Here are some [strategies](#) to help.
2. **Explicitly teach systems and norms.** Learners need to be explicitly taught self-direction and how to [navigate their own learning](#), especially once they finish a task and are ready for the next.
3. **Design the day for self-directed work.** For example, create maker spaces, "genius hours" when students can have access to experts, or independent study courses to encourage students' self-direction. Particularly during remote learning scenarios, learners need [tools, routines, and resources](#) to be independent learners.

#### 4. Design guardrails.

- a. For students: create organization wide guides, supports, and cues to help remind students of goals, procedure, priorities, logistics, and choices.
- b. For families and CBOs: Create school wide policies and structures for study groups or office hours so that parents, CBOs, and others can point students consistently to structures that can support them.

5. **Simplify routines.** Reduce cognitive load for navigating tools. Simplifying what needs to be done and making it less overwhelming goes a long way to helping increase comprehension and performance.

6. **Combine with blended learning.** Couple this with blended learning to allow students some ability to co-create path, pace, and place. Blended learning can be extremely effective when done well, creating more opportunities for [targeted instruction](#) and practice of skills, concepts, or ideas that students can work on independently.

#### Real-World Examples

- **Choosing work partners:** Students at Cisco Junior High School can [choose from a variety of different options](#) for working with other students. For the most part, students have autonomy in choosing whether they want to work independently, with a partner, or in a group. This autonomy extends to choosing their partners and group members as well. Sometimes teachers intervene, however, when students are not making good choices of partner or group.
- **Office hours and study groups:** The [Da Vinci Connect High School](#) uses both to accelerate learning.
  - Office hours are intended to engage students in a small-group or one-on-one student-teacher ratio. This allows students to participate more freely and openly with the teacher. It is also an opportunity for students and teachers to get to know each other.
  - Study groups are based on [research from Jo Boalar](#), consist of 3-4 students, and help expose students to different perspectives on any given subject. Students are able to learn by seeing different ways of approaching a problem. Study groups can be organized in the classroom with an assigned classroom task. Often these groups will organize to meet outside of school to complete a project or to study for an exam. [Here](#) is a resource on study groups.

#### Partnering with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)

The concept of a community-based model is to identify ways to partner with community-based organizations (CBOs) and leverage assets in the community to support student learning. Community-based support for learning acceleration exists in various forms, ranging from [community school models](#) to learning hubs (e.g., [community hubs in San Francisco](#)) and leveraging after-school partners. Community schools tend to receive funding and resources to operate a model that fully integrates with CBOs, but it's okay if you don't have the capacity to execute a community school model. There are still other ways to leverage partnerships with CBOs to support learning acceleration.

The most critical thing in partnering with CBOs is to create academic alignment and offer training to ensure that students are getting not just supervision, but high-quality aligned academic support. Ensure that you and your CBO partner are aligned on vision and learning outcomes and are communicating regularly to best support student learning. You can see more about how to engage [CBOs here](#).

### Real-World Examples

- [San Francisco Community Hub Initiative](#) is a citywide, neighborhood-based strategy to support children, youth, and families during the school year. Community hubs provide support for students in grades K-12 who are utilizing SFUSD's distance learning curriculum, prioritizing children and youth with high levels of need.

## Engaging Families in Learning Acceleration

Encouraging family engagement in learning is more than common courtesy. In addition to building student agency, families can also play a critical role in supporting learning acceleration when they are informed of what children should know and be able to do. Families became an integral part of the learning day during the pandemic, and LEAs can leverage these relationships to further accelerate student learning while at home; it's one of the best ways to support student success.

Given the technology and curriculum investments many schools have recently made, there are opportunities for students to work at their learning level and grade level effectively at home through the use of technology. See the [family engagement section](#) for more tips, but some schools have used their blended learning work (especially strategies such as [flipped homework](#) and [personalized playlists](#)) to leverage the work that students are doing at home.

**This work starts with ensuring that 100% of teachers connect with families, that communication with guardians spells out what children should know and be able to do, and that guardians are offered training and resources.**

### Real-World Examples

- Humboldt Elementary is [sharing data with parents](#) and helping them understand it. Understanding academic data can be a powerful way to engage and leverage families to accelerate learning.

### Resources LEAs Can Use with Families

- For more information, visit the "[Engaging Families](#)" section of this playbook.

- Consider these [family-friendly grade-level learning overviews](#) from Seek Common Ground and [roadmap](#) to common core for parents from the Council of the Great City Schools (also available in [Spanish](#)).
- Sites like [Be A Learning Hero](#) offer activities and tools for families; [Clave al Éxito](#) (Key to Success) helps Spanish-speaking parents engage in their children's education.
- Schools and families should encourage study groups as a great way to share learning. College Raptor offers tips on [how to create an effective study group](#).
- Asking [questions](#) is a great tool for families to engage their kids. Here are some sample [questions parents can ask their children about a book they are reading](#) from MetaMetrics.



## GETTING STARTED: Plan and Engage; Scope and Sequence

Driving Question: How will you adapt and reframe your plans for the year to accelerate progress?

### Why

- Accelerating learning is a comprehensive approach. [According to the Brookings Institute](#), when the components of a system are misaligned, changes in one component (e.g., curriculum reform) may yield few improvements in student learning if the other parts of the system (such as assessment and pedagogy) are not similarly adjusted. Accelerating progress will change the way in which teaching is done, and changes will not be successful if the full team is not committed to leaving business as usual behind. It is not just a fad or program, and it is also more than “common sense teaching” or “good first instruction.” It is intentionally thinking beyond just “remediating” and, as such, requires understanding and buy-in across the organization.
- Including powerful tools like scope, sequence, and pacing in the planning stages supports educators in accelerating learning with more ease and leaders in creating the systems, calendars, and schedules that support the work. If leaders create a district plan for these tools, staff can look ahead to see where development is going and intentionally scaffold learning.

### Key Takeaways

- **Alignment requires deep commitment.** If you think of learning acceleration as just a “program” for some kids during a moment in time, then the results of these efforts will also only be temporary—and they will fail to create the impact and equitable opportunities that learning acceleration can offer.
- **Ensuring team buy-in is critical when shifting to something new.** Staff, who will co-create and execute programs, need to be on-board for learning acceleration efforts to flourish.
- **Make the plan specific and comprehensive.** Ensure your plan has action steps that are clearly delineated by time and by role. Clarity will help adoption and reduce friction and confusion. Invest the time now to make sure the plan maps out the full year. The best time to plan the calendar is before school starts.
- **Check on needed resources.** Ensure that all your schools have the resources, materials, and professional development opportunities needed to do this work.
- **Create school systems to support your strategy.** Your strategy will only work as well as your systems. Do you have a structured intervention block? Do you have a vertical alignment

meeting structure set up for your teachers? Do you have a system for reporting and monitoring student performance on the standards you've prioritized? Your schools will need these systems and more to ensure that students master grade-level standards this year.

- **Create a comprehensive plan that takes into consideration the unique demographics of your community.** Given time and resource constraints for some LEAs, the included tips may provide a starting point for leadership teams as they roll out a full reevaluation of their scope and sequence. For a deeper dive on prioritizing standards, see these [CDE's resources](#).



*Roadmap for Equitable School Systems by the Pennsylvania Department of Education*

## Curated Tips: Plan and Engage

When creating change in school systems, the [analogy of the rider and the elephant](#) is a helpful one. When we want to lead change, [we must appeal to both the rational side \(or “rider”\) and the emotional side \(or “elephant”\)](#). The rational side requires an understanding of where we are going and how to get there, but we cannot bring someone on this journey of change without also motivating them emotionally. No matter how skilled the rider, the elephant and rider will not move forward if the elephant has decided to dig in its heels. Change will not happen if you only lay out a great plan but fail to acknowledge and address emotional responses to it. ([Episode 7](#) of CCEE's [Leading Forward Podcast](#) discusses this topic.)

Change is hard, so here are some ways to ensure success as your team embraces a new way to support students:

- **"Direct the rider" (set the direction):** Include your team from the very beginning, when envisioning the end result and setting goals. This [work plan](#) will walk you through the following steps (briefly summarized below) for you and your team to work through together.
  - **Get clear on what accelerating learning is and isn't.** As a team, review [the Core Beliefs overview](#) and TNTP's report "[The Opportunity Myth](#)."
  - **Identify your ideal future state (North Star).** The [work plan](#) contains an exercise you and your team can use to brainstorm, identify, and synthesize a succinct statement about your desired future state that frames it as a SMART goal (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound). Whether you take language and the infographic from this playbook or create your own, make sure you can clearly and succinctly

articulate what you want to see for your students, what your philosophy is, and how it will improve outcomes. And say it often.

- **Unpack your assumptions about the future state.** As a group, work together to describe the environment, in every sense, that is required for the successful creation of the future state. For each of the supporting conditions and structures in this playbook, list what must be true in order to reach your desired state.
- **Define your current state.** Describe the current state of each of these components. To the extent possible, rely on data and observable measures. Audit your existing intervention programs. Look through your MTSS framework, pull a list of all remediation and intervention programs, and look at intervention trainings for staff. Where are you filling gaps and where are you building bridges? Is your system adequately designed to eliminate the need for remediation by giving students access to grade-level content?
- **Map the future state. Check for alignment and dissonance.** Where do your ideal future state and your current state align and where are they out of sync? Make sure to check existing intervention programs, policies, handbooks, your communication with families, policies, programs, curriculum, and training. For each of the enabling conditions and support structures, compare the current state to the future state. Together, make a list of where you see alignment (and celebrate it with your team) and where you see dissonance. Where there is dissonance, identify which areas need the most work to reach the desired outcome and which are the most important.
- **Identify needed resources.** As a group, brainstorm what your functional, human, and organizational needs are to reach the desired state. Take into account how you will [structure the school day and instructional time](#), how you will use and leverage [community-based organizations](#), how [families can contribute](#) to learning acceleration, and how you will engage in [continuous improvement](#). In terms of financial resources, FutureEd offers a whole [playbook with tips on how to use relief funds](#).
- **"Find the motivation" (unpack emotions and create buy-in):** This is an ongoing part of the change management process; make space for and acknowledge emotions at every stage.
  - **Address your team's emotional shifts at different stages of change.** Change is something that happens to people, even if they don't agree with it. Transition, on the other hand, is internal: it's what happens in people's minds as they go through change. Change can happen very quickly, while transition usually occurs more slowly. This [resource on Bridges' transition model](#) can help you identify what emotions usually surface during different parts of the transition process and plan how to address them in effective and thoughtful ways.
  - **Engage in continuous dialogue.** Keep the communication flowing at every stage.
  - **Build motivation** by discussing questions like these with your team:
    - What is at stake if we don't do this work?
    - What will have the biggest impact on achieving our collective vision?
    - What could an ideal future look like if this is successful?
    - How can we celebrate small victories along the way?
- **Design and share the process**
  - **Make it as simple as it can be.** Share clear and easy-to-follow steps to make it manageable.

- **Make it core.** Resist the urge to make learning acceleration an add-on. Accelerating learning is the philosophy of how we view teaching and learning. Instead of merely finding a spot to plug in tutoring or blended learning, take a moment to embrace the philosophy of no longer “re-teaching for mastery” for students who have gaps. Instead, strategize based on the belief that, given the right support, students will access grade-level content and that this is the way to break the cycle of perpetual remediation.
- **Leverage your federal and state funding.** FutureEd offers a whole [playbook with tips on how to use relief funds](#).
- **Align your existing work to the philosophy of accelerating learning.** Check your LCAP, tech plan, and MTSS vision and make sure you update your LCAP, policies, and MTSS language over the next year to match.
- **Communicate succinctly.** Share these priorities and how your team will strive to meet them with your larger community (staff, families, partners, etc.). Here is [sample communication](#) you can use.
- **Commit to continuous improvement.** Signal to folks early that this will be an interactive, iterative process that will be linked to real-time data from progress with kids. See more on this topic in [this section](#).

## Curated Tips: Scope & Sequence

- **When redesigning scope, sequence, and pacing, plan comprehensively.**
  - **Consider to what extent this work is already in place.** There may already be a scope and sequence or pacing document created with priority content in mind. If not, the Collaborative for Student Success offers [some adapted scope and sequence plans](#) from some reputable curriculum providers.
  - **Do not plan to address unfinished learning through “nine weeks of remediation” or another extended period of remedial content for students.** It’s tempting to assume that students will need you to deliver the entire scope of content that they missed; however, we know that students spending significant time in below-grade-level content does not lead to grade-level learning. Instead, use the prioritized approach to support your teachers in identifying which unfinished learning they should focus on.
  - **Set the expectation that teachers use curricular materials you provide.** Encourage your teachers to use the curricular materials you provide, and ground your professional learning in supporting them to use those materials well. Teachers often spend a tremendous amount of personal time developing their own lessons even though [evidence suggests that teacher-created materials are not as strong as those pulled from high-quality curricular resources](#).
  - **Use curriculum with fidelity.** If you are using a district-adopted curriculum, use the curriculum with fidelity. This allows time to plan for scaffolds and extensions that help the learning go deeper. If your school does not have an adopted curriculum, use Student Achievement Partners EQiP [Math](#) and [ELA](#) rubric guidance to evaluate teacher-created resources and make sure they are rigorous and aligned to big ideas and key concepts.
  - **Adjust the calendar as needed.** Compare prioritized content to the instructional calendar. Modify the calendars needed to help students reach the demands of

accelerated learning. Keep in mind intervention needs, ELD supports, and other scheduling constraints. When there is less to cover, you can adjust your pacing around your instructional calendar.

## FEATURED RESOURCES:

- **Work Plan:** [Plan, Engage and Align](#) & [Adapt Scope, Sequence and Pacing](#)
- **Video:** [Scope and Sequence Lesson](#) from CCEE & TNTP

### Additional Resources

- [The New Model of Change Leadership](#) video by the CCEE and Dr. Douglas Reeves
- Video: [Developing and implementing a Learning Acceleration Plan](#) video by CCEE/TNTP (21 minutes)
- [Community Presentation](#) from the Louisiana Department of Education for accelerating learning
- Instruction Partners [Guidance for Accelerating Student Learning](#)
- [Helping All Kids Grapple with Grade-Level Content](#) by Achieve The Core
- Pennsylvania Department of Education's [Accelerated Learning guide](#).
- [Collaborative for Student Success Crosswalks](#) for adapted scope, sequence, and pacing guides by some curriculum providers.



## FOCUSING ON KEY CONTENT

Driving Question: How can we effectively support all students to accelerate their mathematics, language, and foundational reading knowledge and skills?

### Why

- Teachers' success increases when concepts are linked and build on big ideas. Success in math and ELA starts with understanding how standards are organized and what concepts build on each other. Many educators experience extra stress and disorientation when they don't have a strong understanding of how concepts build on each other.
- The majority of students in California are not meeting grade-level standards. The data look even grimmer for historically marginalized students.
- Reading substantially impacts every aspect of our lives, and for our students, every aspect of their academic achievement. The data point to a relationship between the command of foundational skills and [success in other important aspects of learning](#) and life.
- Interrupted schooling has particularly dire and lasting consequences for young children because reading is such an important foundational reading skill which is often seen as a gatekeeper to other success and requires special consideration and instruction since the science of reading calls for sequential targeted teaching.

### Key Takeaways

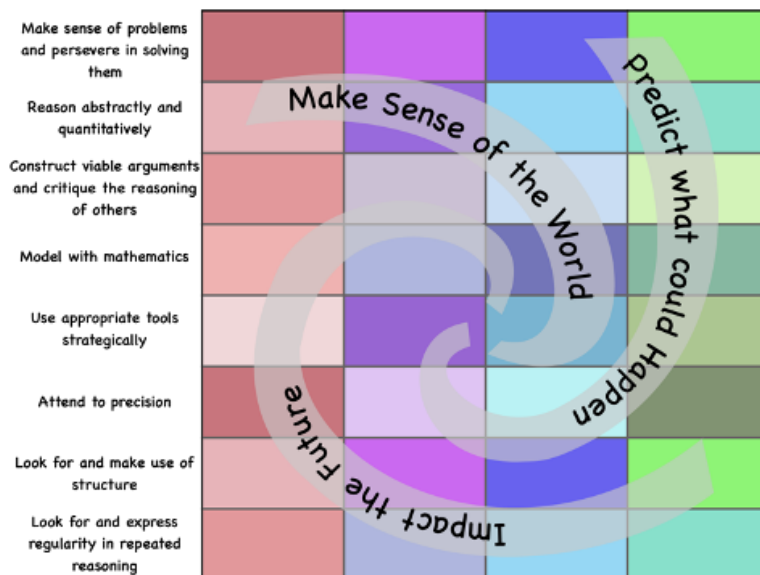
- **Focus on the big ideas and content connections.** This will help create clarity, coherence, and rigor that is grade-level appropriate. (See Curated Tips below for more details)
- **Strong core materials and teacher support are key.** Supporting unfinished learning requires a strong core curriculum and intensive planning support for teachers for each unit of study. Visit the [CCFE Fieldguide for Learning, Equity and Well-Being](#) to find more information on creating a learning culture, or the [Iteration and Support](#) section of this playbook for more information. [LINK]
- **Plan meaningful and grade-appropriate work.** It's not always useful to go back and reteach units students may have missed. Instead, focus on what students should know this year. Use

big ideas--those concepts that often cross grade levels--to help move students from where they are to where they need to be.

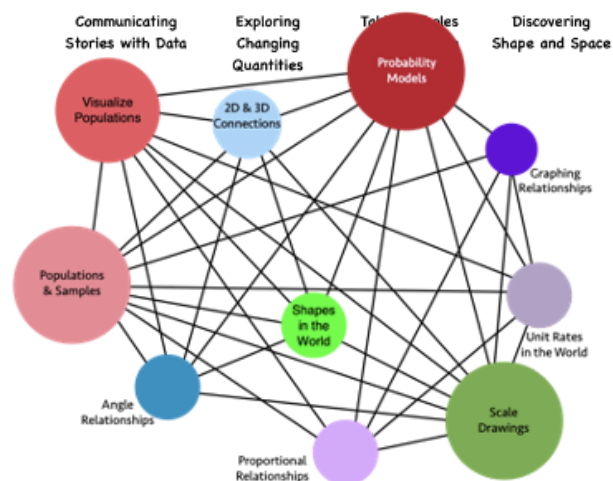
- **Employ culturally responsive instructional strategies to create equitable and meaningful instruction.**
- **Use frequent standards-aligned formative assessments to drive instructional decisions.**
- **Invest in reading.** Provide students regular and intentional opportunities to grow their literacy skills in all subject areas.
- **Pay special attention to foundational reading skills.** Supporting unfinished learning in foundational reading skills is quite different from supporting unfinished learning in math and science. Acceleration in reading requires clarity about the systematic progression of learning; precise diagnostics about whether students are behind and where they are in the progression of learning; and small-group structures that target the particular next step each child needs.
- **Limit pull-out time to foundational reading.** Use pull-outs for foundational reading instruction but not for learning acceleration in core content areas, as it is not effective there.

## Curated Tips For Mathematics

1. **Focus on the big ideas.** A “big idea” approach has been shown to engage students and increase achievement because it feels more coherent, connected, and meaningful. Organize your work around the four content connections (shown on the X-axis of the graphic), the 8 big ideas (shown on the Y-axis of the graphic), and the three cross-cutting themes (shown in the swirls) that represent the major work of mathematics instruction in the [California Mathematics Framework](#).



2. **You don't have to do it all.** Quality math instruction isn't a mile wide and an inch deep. Instead, it follows the big idea approach by selecting high-leverage standards in each grade to focus on content that students need to know. The [California Digital Learning Integration and Standards Guidance: Section B— Standards Guidance for Mathematics](#) has identified a set of these standards. By focusing on these standards, you will also address other interrelated and



overlapping standards (see [Grade 7 constellation map as an example](#)).

3. **Focus on meaning-making.** Give students many opportunities to understand how mathematics works and why. Create regular experiences for students to explore mathematical concepts on their own and with each other, explain their thinking, and develop their stamina as sense-makers. A focus on meaning-making helps the ideas stick and allows them to persevere through more challenging endeavors.
4. **Provide multiple ways to interact with and represent mathematical concepts.** Use manipulatives (physical and digital), videos, pictures, simulations, and graphic organizers to support students in making sense of concepts and showing what they know about how mathematics works. This works well for all students but is particularly important for English learners and students with special needs.
5. **Create a shared understanding.** Ensure all students can interact with, learn from, and contribute to a shared mathematical understanding within their classroom community. By engaging in authentic problem-solving, doing meaningful tasks, and collaborating with peers, students can see themselves as mathematicians and persevere through rigorous tasks. To learn more, visit [Equitable Math Instruction](#).

## Additional Resources

- Updated [Mathematics Framework for California Public Schools](#): K-12
- [Grades K-8 'Where to Focus' documents](#) on mathematics also by Achieve the Core
- [Coherence map](#) (mathematics)
- [Priority Instructional Content](#) by Student Achievement Partners (ELA and math)
- Instruction Partners' [guide for pacing](#)
- [California Digital Learning Integration and Standards Guidance Excerpt: Section B—Standards Guidance for Mathematics \(pages 101–212\)](#)
- [CCEE Field Guide resources for Accelerating Learning](#) (ELA, math, science)
- [Math fluency inventories](#) by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- Dos and don't notes by [grade-level from Instruction Partners](#)

## Curated Tips for ELA

- **Focus on the big ideas.** A “big idea” approach has been shown to engage students and increase achievement because it feels more coherent, connected, and meaningful. Organize your work around the five big ideas or themes that represent the major work of ELA/literacy instruction in the [California Common Core State Standards for English](#): making meaning, language development, effective expression, content knowledge, and foundational skills (see graphic to right).
- **You don't have to do it all.** Use the key standards indicated in each grade and the related standards to focus



on content that students need to know. These standards have already been identified in the [California Digital Learning Integration and Standards Guidance: Section C— Standards Guidance for English Language Arts, Literacy, and English Language Development \(pages 212–486\)](#). By focusing on these standards, you will also address other interrelated and overlapping standards (see chart below for an example).

### ***Critical Areas of Instructional Focus: At a Glance***

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Key Standards</b>	<b>Related Standards</b>
<b>Meaning Making</b>	RL/RI.2.1,10; RF.2.4; W.2.1-3; SL.2.1,3,4 ELD.PI.2.1,5,6,9,10.Ex	RL/RI.2.2,3,5,7,9; L.2.4,5 ELD.PI.2.7,8.Ex; PII.2.1.Ex
<b>Language Development</b>	RL/RI.2.4,10; RF.2.4; SL.2.1,4; L.2.6 ELD.PI.2.1,3,6,12b.Ex; PII.2.3-5	RF.2.3a,b; SL.2.3; L.2.4,5 ELD.PI.2.7,8.Ex
<b>Effective Expression</b>	RL/RI.2.10; RF.2.4; W.2.1-3,4,5; SL.1.1,4 ELD.PI.2.1,4,7-10.Ex	RL.2.4-7; RI.2.8; W.2.4,6; SL.2.3,5; L.2.1-3,6 ELD.PI.2.2,11.Ex; PII.2.1-7.Ex
<b>Content Knowledge</b>	RL/RI.2.1,10; RI.2.4; W.2.2,7; SL.2.1,3; L.2.4,5 ELD.PI.2.1,5,6,10,12b.Ex	RI.2.5,7-9; RF.2.3,4 ELD.PI.2.7.Ex; PII.2.1.Ex
<b>Foundational Skills</b>	RF.2.3a,b,c,d,e,f,4; L.2.2b,d; W.2.1-3 ELD.PI.2.10.Ex	RL/RI.2.10; SL.2.5

- **Remember that literacy happens in other content areas, too.** Collaborate across content areas such as history/social studies, technical subjects, and science to help students continue to grow their literacy skills in content-embedded ways.
- **Offer students opportunities to access grade-level text.** Evidence indicates that having struggling readers read texts below grade day after day does not help them “catch up” ([Steiner & Weisberg](#)). While students need explicit instruction in foundational reading skills (K-2), once they have developed basic decoding skills, teachers should use more guided reading time, working in grade-level text with appropriate scaffolding and knowledge-building to help students be successful.
- **Create learning that is equitable and culturally relevant.** Ensure that the texts and topics you use reflect and positively affirm the lives, languages, perspectives, and histories of all students, including historically marginalized populations. Use [positively affirmed texts](#) to ensure students see themselves and their experiences in text. You can [audit your classroom library](#) to ensure that texts and topics represent many [diverse perspectives and identities](#) and that [curriculum is culturally relevant](#). Consider these additional [ways to bring more equity to literacy instruction](#).

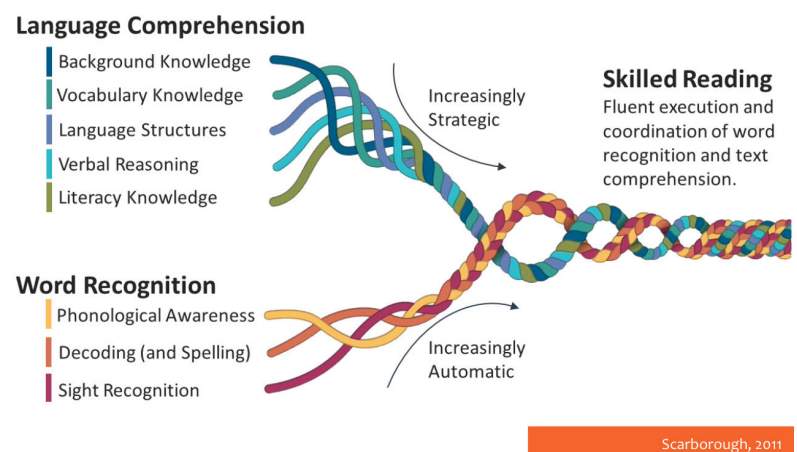
## Additional Resources

- California Digital Learning Integration and Standards Guidance [Excerpt: Section C—Standards Guidance for English Language Arts, Literacy, and English Language Development \(pages 212–486\)](#)
- Video for [ELA/ELD Standards Guidance](#)
  - Download [ELA/ELD Standards Guidance](#) webinar slides
- [Specific strategies for grades and subjects](#) in CCEE's Field Guide
- [CCEE Field Guide resources for Equity, Learning](#) and Well-Being (ELA, math, science)
- [Priority Instructional Content](#) by Student Achievement Partners (ELA and math)
- Instruction Partners' [guide for pacing](#)
- Achieve the Core offers a [full library of resources related to text complexity](#)
- Student Achievement Partners [Literary Text Qualitative Measures Rubric](#)
- Dos and don't notes by [grade-level from Instruction Partners](#)

## Curated Tips for Teachers:

### Curriculum and Instruction in Foundational Reading

- **Scope and sequence matter.** Early reading skills are meant to be taught sequentially.
- **In foundational reading, it's okay to go back and remediate.** If students missed parts of [reading foundations](#), it is appropriate to go back and teach the skills (including print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics, and fluency) beginning where they left off.
- **Plan for brief screeners.** Administer a brief screener at the beginning of the year and at periodic checkpoints throughout the school year. Prioritize letter inventory, phonological awareness, and grade-level appropriate sound and spelling patterns for each student.
- **Ensure daily, systematic phonics instruction.** Ensure at least 45 minutes a day of foundational skills work through direct instruction and related practice opportunities, and additional support for students who need more.
- **Support decoding and fluency development.** Support students' decoding and fluency development through additional small-group or individual support; through opportunities to amplify or embed practice with needed skills within existing instruction or practice opportunities; and through modified student practice or scaffolds.
- **Make language connections for English language learners.** Make connections between English and your students' home language(s) so that you can leverage each child's existing knowledge and skills. Here are additional tips to address the needs of [English Language Learners](#)



- **Tailor instruction for students with disabilities.** [Here](#) is a resource on reading for students with disabilities, and [here](#) is one for students with reading disabilities.
- **Keep the text at the center of your planning.** Plan standards-aligned questions, tasks, and activities that help students unpack the ideas of assigned texts while drawing on their own funds of knowledge and many skills, strategies, and modes of co-constructing meaning. Here's a resource: [Placing Text at the Center of a Standards-Aligned ELA Classroom](#).
- **Use complex books for read-aloud.** Select books for read-aloud that are far more complex than students can read on their own (1–3 years above what most students can read independently). For guidance in choosing books, consider the following:
  - K-2 [Text Analysis Template](#)
  - [Lesson Planning Quick Sheet](#)
  - [Read Aloud Lessons for K-2](#)
- **Offer choice and variety.** Use choice-based, topical book baskets for independent reading and use small-group time to secure foundational skills or grow knowledge and vocabulary with topically connected, on-level text sets. For more, consult the following:
  - [How to Create Book Baskets](#)
  - [The Power of Text Sets](#)

## Additional Resources

- [Dos and don'ts by grade-level](#) from Instruction Partners.
- [Specific strategies for grades and subjects](#) in CCEE's Field Guide.
- [Unique considerations](#) that buck the trend for early foundational reading (k-2) from Instruction Partners.
- [Additional reading acceleration tools and tips](#) from Student Achievement Partners.
- Achieve the Core offers a [full library of resources related to text complexity](#)
- Student Achievement Partners [Literary Text Qualitative Measures Rubric](#)
- Instruction Partners' [Leadership tools for developing strong readers](#)

## Curated Tips to Plan for Meaningful Work

- **Remember to build on prior knowledge.** A crucial aspect of acceleration is building on prior knowledge so students can connect new information. "Students learn faster and comprehend at a higher level when they have prior knowledge of a given concept" ([Marzano, 2004](#)).
- **Teach background knowledge and vocabulary.** Students' [comprehension of relevant background knowledge and vocabulary is key](#) to understanding what they read. By using text sets, a variety of resources to focus on the topic (including multimedia resources, photographs, recordings, infographics, and other texts), [teachers can build this understanding](#).
- **Prioritize active learning over teacher talk time.** Give students more opportunities to engage. Moving away from long lectures is one of the best ways to get students to learn and to allow teachers to understand the gaps that need to be filled.

- **Leverage technology strategically.** Technology allows for enhanced personalization and engagement for students and can create more supportive and equitable learning cultures in schools and districts. Blended learning allows teachers more time to strategically accelerate learning by filling gaps and building bridges in student learning. Find out more about leveraging technology [here](#).
- **Use a vetted curriculum.** Student-facing work is highly variable when it comes from multiple sources. [Curriculum should not be made from scratch](#). There is no need to reinvent the wheel. Rather, use existing high-quality curriculum and modify and/or supplement when necessary.
- **Offer students opportunities for personalization.** The experiences of innovative school districts across the country point to increased success when learning is personalized to individual needs, interests, and goals. Creating these types of experiences requires educators to know how to [blend and personalize learning](#).
  - **Provide [playlists](#)** of ways students can practice just-right learning concepts without taking time away from grade-level instruction
  - **Use a [rotational model](#)** to work with small groups (both heterogeneous and homogeneous). Station rotation models that include teacher time and independent work time can create opportunities to address misconceptions. Small-group instruction is an effective way to remediate in real time for students who need support. “Just-in-time support” helps students feel successful and allows them to understand grade-level content.
- **Teach students to work independently.** And practice this often. Have clear [strategies in place](#) for defining expectations and success. A clear pathway will make execution easier and contribute to students’ development of self-direction skills.

## Curated Tips: Let Assessment Drive Instruction

- **Know what kids know.** Uncovering and addressing learning needs will require teachers to know what students know and can do throughout the school year. This means assessing their knowledge and skills daily or weekly, not just on unit or quarterly benchmarks or standardized assessments.
- **Assess what students need.** [Assess what students need](#) socially and emotionally as well as academically, address trauma with healing and support, and identify the next steps they are ready to take in their learning rather than labeling them. For more, you can also consult CCEE’s [Field Guide for Accelerating Learning, Equity and Well-Being](#).
- **Let assessment guide your planning.** Use the standards continuums in the [California Mathematics Framework](#) and the [California Common Core State Standards for English](#) to assess where students are on their learning journeys and to plan instruction that will take students from where they are to where they need to be. Even if students are missing knowledge or skills from a previous grade, a focus on the content connections, big ideas, and cross-cutting themes means students can continue to develop their knowledge while working on grade-appropriate standards.
- **Focus on formative assessment.** Ensure frequent formative assessments are included in daily lesson plans and drive instructional planning. Entrance and exit tickets, 1-to-1 conferences, written and oral explanations, reading fluency checks, quizzes, classwork,

homework, and digital tools (such as polling or assessments embedded in tools like PearDeck or NearPod) all can provide plenty of information for teachers to determine students' current levels of performance and make data-driven instructional decisions. Recommendations for these practices should be informed by high-quality instructional materials.

- **Be flexible.** Use assessment to determine flexible groupings for just-in-time interventions to prepare all students for daily grade-level instruction. These assessments should reveal what students already understand and what further connections might be necessary for them to fully access grade-level content. These assessments should not lead to the labeling and sorting of children, which often leads to segregation, marginalization, or privileging in ways strongly correlated with race, language, class, and ability status.
- **Be strategic with remediation.** If students need extra support, remediation should be brief and embedded within grade-level instruction as much as possible. Small-group instruction, tutoring, and other strategic and targeted supports are recommended when needed to develop appropriate background knowledge or skills. Avoid removing students from general grade-level instruction or tracking students when at all possible, as this leads to further inequity.

## Additional Resources

- CCEE: [The Components of a Balanced Assessment System](#)
- CCEE: [Assessment for Learning in Extraordinary Times](#), a three-part series intended to help participants learn how to blend different formative assessment moves to make better instructional decisions
- CCEE: [Insta-Data: Real Time Formative Assessment that Works](#)
- [Learning as We Go: Principles for Effective Assessment during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) by CRPE

## FEATURED RESOURCES:

→ → **Video:** [Digital Learning Integration and Standards Guidance for English Language Arts and English Language Development](#) (ELA/ELD) by the CDE.

# SYSTEMIC SUPPORTS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

**Driving Question: How do we systematically support all learners in order to create equitable outcomes?**

## Why

- Remote and hybrid learning further exposed and exacerbated the persistent inequities affecting education, which disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), students with visible and nonvisible disabilities, English learners, and those living in poverty or experiencing homelessness.
- Equity—ensuring that each learner has what they specifically need to succeed or gain access to resources and opportunities—cannot be ensured through reactive efforts. It will take proactive efforts to dismantle and rebuild systems that do not meet the needs of our learners.
- Intentional planning and training with an eye on diverse learners will lead to more equitable access to high-quality instruction and help accelerate progress, especially for historically marginalized groups.

In this section, you will learn about four key components of supporting diverse learners through learning acceleration: Universal Design for Learning (UDL), culturally sustaining pedagogy, as well as meeting the needs of English learners, and teaching students with special needs.

## Key Takeaways

- **Use UDL principles to increase access.** The [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\) framework](#) and guidelines were created to make learning accessible for all students by eliminating barriers to learning. Consider schoolwide training in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to support diverse learners on your campus.
- **Employ culturally sustaining pedagogy.** Built on assets-based pedagogies such as culturally responsive teaching, [there is evidence](#) that [culturally sustaining pedagogy](#) promotes academic achievement and engagement. When students see themselves in the curriculum; feel their community languages, practices, and ways of being are included, respected, and sustained; and engage in meaningful work together, good things happen. Altering instructional methods to promote equity can benefit students in multiple ways and directly contribute to accelerated learning.
- **Make curriculum and instruction accessible for all students.** General and special education teachers, English learner specialists, and others can work together to ensure curriculum and instruction are made accessible and designed for all learners in a classroom. This will ensure all students are able to accelerate their learning.

## Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

[Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#) is a research-backed framework to guide the design of learning environments such that they are accessible and challenging for all students. When environments are intentionally designed to reduce barriers, all learners can engage in rigorous and meaningful learning. Beginning with the principles of UDL allows teachers, schools, and systems to set the stage for all students to accelerate their learning. Start with [Understood's Getting Started with Universal Design for Learning](#) for an overview of the approach. The California Department of Education (CDE) includes UDL in its [Multi-Tiered System of Support \(MTSS\) Core Component 1: Differentiated Instruction](#) and considers it key to setting the stage for learning acceleration.

- **UDL is not a “special education thing.”** UDL is sometimes categorized as something that is only beneficial for students with special needs. In reality, UDL is beneficial for all learners. Architects create cutouts in the sidewalk, ramps, or elevators to ensure everyone can access a building—whether they are in a wheelchair, pushing a baby stroller, or on crutches. Similarly, UDL anticipates that all learners will need to access learning in different ways and builds that into the architecture of the class.
- **UDL is not “just good teaching.”** There is no universally accepted definition of good teaching. However, [UDL has a defined framework](#), backed by significant research and evidence from the field. UDL starts with the assumption that the barrier is not in the student but in the learning environment. Adjusting the environment and the instruction in this way requires a new way of thinking about the work of teaching and learning and the framework can help.
- **UDL is a lens, not a checklist.** Practitioners of UDL set clear, rigorous goals for all students and then, based on their knowledge of the goals, identify potential barriers for students and design options and supports that will eliminate barriers and increase access, ownership, and learning. There is no one right way or checklist to follow to meet the UDL framework components. Rather, the UDL Guidelines provide a lens on our work and allows us to improve the learning environment so that students are able and ready to accelerate their learning.
- **The more you know about students, the more you can adjust.** UDL works well with [differentiated instruction \(DI\)](#) as part of MTSS. While UDL begins with universally integrated supports and structures to ensure all students have access, DI requires regular data about specific students to further refine and develop the instructional model. Therefore, strong DI can naturally build on a UDL foundation to further refine and tailor instruction to support learning acceleration.
- **UDL takes time.** UDL shifts the center of instruction from the teacher to the student, empowering students to take ownership of their learning. This transformation takes time, for both teachers and students. Teachers and systems will benefit from explicit training in UDL alongside collaborative time with colleagues to share ideas and resources, and coaching in their classrooms to enact ideas.

## Curated Tips: Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

Historically, the home cultures, practices, and languages of students of color and English-language learners were seen as a deficit to be overcome. [Culturally sustaining pedagogy](#) flips that narrative and, instead, sees these things for what they truly are—an asset and a resource “to honor, explore, and extend” (Paris 2012, p. 94). When students see themselves in the curriculum and texts selected and feel their experiences and perspectives

are honored and valued, it is much easier for them to access and find relevance in the work of school. When students feel connected to the community and to the learning, it is easier to accelerate instruction.

Diversity is increasingly being acknowledged as integral to success. Using culturally sustaining teaching in tandem with Universal Design for Learning is a powerful way to prepare students for the future.

- **Encourage the continuation and revitalization of students' cultures and backgrounds.** The CDE offers an overview on [asset-based pedagogies](#) and suggestions for [culturally sustaining pedagogy](#) that includes:
  - Value community languages, practice, and ways of being. Consistently and meaningfully center students' languages, literacies, and cultural ways of being in classroom learning instead of considering them "add-ons."
  - Keep schools accountable to the community, with educators and schools in conversation with communities about what they desire and want to sustain through schooling.
  - Connect curriculum to cultural and linguistic histories.
  - Ensure learning sustains cultural and linguistic practices while providing access to the dominant culture (in the U.S., typically white, standard English-speaking, and middle-class).
- **Assess your program's cultural responsiveness.** When getting started or looking to improve your program, it is important to ask some basic questions such as [these](#) to better understand where your program is meeting or missing the equity mark. The California Department of Education offers an overview of Zaretta Hammond's [guide for assessing culturally responsive teaching during school visits](#) which may also help.
- **Incorporate strategies to meet the needs of various learner groups.** Specific strategies have been shown to best meet the needs of particular learner groups. Below are just a few of the tools that can help you support and empower various groups in your community.
  - *Meeting the needs of Native American students:*
    - WestEd's Center for Standards, Assessment, and Accountability's [spotlight on culturally responsive instruction for Native American students](#)
    - San Diego County Office of Education [Instructional Continuity Learning Considerations and Support for Native American Students](#)
    - p. 5 of [Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation](#)
  - *Meeting the needs of Black students:*
    - San Diego County Office of Education [Instructional Continuity Learning Considerations and Support for African American Students](#)
    - p. 6 of [Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation](#)
  - *Meeting the needs of students in foster care or those experiencing housing insecurity:*
    - San Diego County Office of Education [Instructional Continuity Learning Considerations and Support for Students Experiencing Homelessness and Students with Experience in Foster Care](#)
    - p. 9 of [Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation](#)
    - p. 10 of [Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation](#)
  - *Meeting the need of low-income students:*
    - p. 11 of [Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation](#)
  - *Meeting the needs of LGBTQIA+ students:*
    - San Diego County Office of Education [Instructional Continuity Learning Considerations and Support for LGBTQIA+ Students](#)

- p. 12 of [Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation](#)
  - *Meeting the needs of migrant students:*
    - San Diego County Office of Education [Instructional Continuity Learning Considerations and Support for Migrant Students](#)
    - p. 13 of [Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation](#)
  - *Meeting the needs of students in isolated or rural areas:*
    - p. 15 of [Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation](#)
- **Help teachers learn and grow their skills.** Like all aspects of accelerated learning, teachers will need support and time to learn how to teach in this way. Provide explicit professional learning, ensure there's time for teachers to share resources and ideas, and employ coaches and mentors to help teachers develop this work in their own classrooms.
- **Create learning that is equitable and culturally relevant.**
  - Select texts that represent [diverse perspectives and identities](#). When students see themselves and their [experiences positively affirmed in texts](#), they are more likely to feel connected and engage with learning.
  - Choose texts and topics that allow students to use and leverage knowledge from their lives and experiences. In dual-language programs, this can also be done through use of paired texts, where knowledge is built in both languages of instruction.

## Curated Tips: Meeting the Needs of English Learners

Like other historically underserved populations, English learners need access to learning acceleration that is specifically tailored to their learning strengths and needs. This was true before the pandemic and will continue to be true afterward.

The California Department of Education has curated an in-depth resource called the [English Learner Roadmap Implementation for Systemic Excellence! \(EL RISE\)](#), which we recommend as a resource on this topic. Additionally, the [EL Master Plan playbook](#) offers a very thorough tool for schools looking to dive deeper into supporting English learners. Below are some highlights for supporting multilingual students during learning acceleration:

### Curriculum

- **Use the UDL framework** to set English learners up for success from the start. For example, rethink how to position language development support within activities by providing multiple means of representation, providing multiple means of action and expression, and providing multiple means of engagement.
- **Employ culturally sustaining pedagogies** to create positive, multilingual learning environments by planning instruction that pays careful attention to student discourse, belonging, agency, and identity.
- **Prioritize teaching of language skills that are inherently embedded in content standards** to accelerate the development of language and content simultaneously. Organize and plan curriculum and instruction to develop language and content simultaneously. Review the entire scope and sequence of curriculum to make sure specific speaking, listening, reading, and writing tasks are embedded regularly, as well as the sequence of explicit language instruction. The [California English Language Development standards](#) and these [CDE-curated resources on implementing the ELA/ELD framework](#) can help.
- **Give students ample opportunities to engage in intentional and meaningful academic discourse** as a means of accelerating content learning and language development. Students need regular time to practice new English language reading, writing, speaking, and listening

skills both in low-stakes and performance-based tasks in ways that are authentic, meaningful, and standards-aligned.

- **Solicit input from and engage caregivers and community members** working closely with ELs about what the curriculum should include, how it can be organized, and what may need to be an area of focus. Leverage multigenerational settings and assets of community members to extend support to students at home. Adjust curriculum based on feedback from students and families.
- **Create alignment in thematic scope, skills, and instructional practices** used in English and bilingual instruction in dual-language and multilingual programs.

## Assessment

- **Create targeted standards-aligned formative assessments that uncover information about ELs' content and language knowledge.** Learning acceleration is dependent on teachers having accurate information about what students know and can do. To learn more, consider Understanding Language at Stanford University's [Formative Assessment for ELs in Remote Learning Environments](#). These two one-hour virtual sessions focus on strengthening formative assessment practices in remote and non-remote classroom learning environments and are applicable across grades and content.
- **Provide opportunities for ELs to demonstrate their learning in various modalities.** Provide information using multiple modalities and give students options to use multiple means of representation in the assessment where possible to allow them to understand what is asked and show what they know. Use the [California ELD standards](#) to guide the planning of assessments that allow students at various stages of English language development to show what they know about the content without the barrier of language.
- **Employ performance-based assessments.** Such assessments are better suited to gather evidence of student learning for language, conceptual understanding, and metacognition than traditional testing or forms of assessment.
- **Make a plan for when and how to use home language in formative assessments.** Integrating assessments done in home language into the curriculum at key points when gathering information about a student's full linguistic repertoire, such as at the beginning or at the end of a unit, is needed to fully understand students' knowledge.
- **Keep content in mind.** For additional tips on best practices in math, ELA assessment [see here](#).

## Professional Learning

- **Develop a shared understanding of the state and school system's language development approach** and theoretical framework for language education, including the [California ELD standards](#). Make sure this is clear to all stakeholders and grounded in sound educational theory. Build a clear understanding of how this information fits into a broader plan for learning acceleration.
- **Build practitioner capacity to serve ELs** with a focus on the simultaneous development of content knowledge and language. Using resources like Stanford University's [Understanding Language Project](#) and these [resources provided by CDE](#) are a good start.
- **Ensure teachers are equipped to use discipline-specific formative assessments** that measure the development of language and content mastery, and address what these look like in hybrid and/or distance learning environments in either synchronous or asynchronous models. Support teachers in learning how to use the data from these assessments to plan for

the needs of English learners in their classrooms as part of a broader accelerated learning model.

- **Engage in continuous discussions about the equity implications for your English learners.** Consider these [Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation](#) and look to page 8 for questions for English learners.

## Curated Tips: Meeting the Needs of Students with Disabilities

Students with special needs have and will continue to benefit from the intentional and tailored work of accelerated learning. COVID-19 school closures and online learning had an adverse impact on students already struggling to learn. Therefore, it is important for students with disabilities to receive regular academic and behavioral interventions backed by data and using explicit instruction to ensure their appropriate progress in the general education curriculum. Below are ideas for further integrating the needs of students with disabilities into your learning acceleration plan:

### Curriculum

- **Use the UDL framework** to ensure that the needs of all students are addressed to the greatest extent possible. With its emphasis on increasing engaging lessons, differentiating instructional modalities, and allowing student choice in expressing their knowledge, UDL has demonstrated great success in meeting the needs of general education, special education, and at-risk youth. It aids in ensuring success for all students in the general education classroom setting.
- **Employ culturally sustaining pedagogies** to create positive learning environments by planning instruction that pays careful attention to student discourse, belonging, agency, and identity. Students with disabilities are often overlooked as their unique needs can be overshadowed by other important considerations. To ensure high quality instruction and support, teachers must also be familiar with and incorporate culturally sustaining pedagogy with this population.
- **Enact all required accommodations, modifications, and interventions.** Students identified under IDEA with special needs are provided clear accommodations and instructional support through their annual Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). It is critical that these supports are clearly communicated and understood by all teachers and individuals supporting student development. In addition, students with disabilities served under Section 504 may also have classroom supports afforded to them. Whether the accommodations, modifications, or interventions are through an IEP or 504 plan, teachers must be well prepared to implement these supports with fidelity as part of their accelerated learning. The CDE, together with county offices and the CCEE, created this tool kit with [resources for supporting students with disabilities](#).
- **Consult the appropriate special education provider(s) to ensure access to all educational settings, materials, and other resources.** To ensure legal compliance and provide high-quality support to all students, communication and collaboration with special education providers is critical. As settings and instructional methods change, this regular communication will not only ensure that students receive the legal accommodations and instruction they are entitled to, but also aids in ensuring students continue to grow toward

their goals. In this way, clear communication and consultation is a key element in accelerated learning.

- **Continue predictable education for students with significant cognitive disabilities.** It is essential to maintain consistent routines, high expectations, and tailored supports for students with significant cognitive disabilities, especially during remote learning. Every effort is needed to ensure stability and consistency for those with significant support needs.

### Assessment

- **Monitor progress frequently.** Following school closures and remote learning, it may not be as clear where students are on their learning journey or whether there is a need to adjust the frequency or duration of special education services. Work with special education staff to create a progress monitoring plan for students with disabilities in order to adjust and align special education services so that students are able to meet goals laid out in their IEPs. If necessary, have special education providers revisit student IEPs and make necessary addendums. Case managers for students who have 504s can also utilize progress monitoring and reassess student needs.
- **Focus on goals.** Make sure all teachers and parents are clear on what the goals are in the IEP or 504 plan and how they will support the student to meet those goals. Remember to track and measure goals continuously.
- **Ensure the IEP or 504 plan remains at the center.** Services, accommodations, modifications, interventions, and timelines outlined in the IEP or 504 plan should be upheld. Review any modes and models added to the schools toolbox during remote learning and consider as an IEP or 504 team (as applicable) which strategies could be added, continued, or adjusted to best meet the student need.
- **Keep content in mind.** For additional tips on best practices in math, ELA assessment [see here](#).

### Professional Learning

- **Build general education teachers' capacity to serve students with disabilities.** Provide training and guidance to all teachers of students with disabilities on UDL, explicit instruction, and other strategies beneficial for students with disabilities that are also useful in the general education setting. Consider how to use technology to coordinate and learn from experts, agencies, and other LEAs.
- **Create regular collaboration time for general and special education teachers.** Provide time for teachers supporting the same students to collaborate, share data and ideas, and use data and best practices to plan instruction. Professional learning about co-teaching may also be valuable to support general education teachers, special education teachers, and others in working together effectively.
- **Engage in continuous discussions about the equity implications for your students with disabilities.** Consider these [Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation](#) and look to page 7 for questions for students with disabilities.

### FEATURED RESOURCES:

→ Free UDL Resources from the [Center for Applied Special Technology](#) (CAST)

- [Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy](#) resources from the CDE
- [Rise](#) Resources from the CDE
- CCEE and CDE [Instructional Resources to Support Students with Disabilities](#)
- Roadmap

## Equity

- Diverse Learners Cooperative tips for [learners with reading disabilities](#)
- [20 Ways to Bring More Equity to Your Literacy Instruction](#)
- [Reading Science Denial and Racism's Impact on Educational Equity for African-American Students](#)



## ITERATION AND SUPPORT

Driving Question: How can your team best engage in continuous improvement? How and when will you monitor and reassess progress?

### Why

- Leaders are more successful at supporting all learners when they set clear goals and consistently collect, monitor, and evaluate data and outcomes from schools connected to those goals.
- Leaders who engage in continuous improvement have “more engaged workers coached by more capable managers whose more agile organizations can make more effective decisions” (per [McKinsey](#)).
- Monitoring and assessing progress along the way allows systems to more quickly see needs as they arise, adjust, and create targeted supports. This structure is parallel to the way we expect teachers to support students.

### Key Takeaways

- **Set direction and purpose.** Create a common and clear vision for successful learning acceleration for all students in your system. Make sure your vision and your action plan to achieve those goals are reflected in key documents such as your Local Control Action Plan (LCAP).
- **Use a continuous improvement framework.** [Continuous improvement](#) is a process of identifying what is working and what needs to change, developing a sound evidence-based plan, implementing the plan, and using data to monitor outcomes and make timely adjustments to improve those outcomes. Create a plan for continuous improvement using a model such as the [Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle](#). Frameworks can help your team develop a common language and clear vision of the process that makes the work more efficient and collaborative.
- **Create a sustainable data collection and analysis system.** Know what data you need to collect and from which sources. Use an impact spectrum such as the one described below to help guide your data selection. Set regular times for your team to review and analyze the data to support quick course correction.
- **Model with adults what you want them to do for kids.** Be transparent about how you are engaging in continuous improvement. Provide targeted, data-based, just-in-time, embedded

learning opportunities rather than blanketed professional development. These are the same processes we want teachers to employ when making learning acceleration decisions.

## Curated Tips

### SET DIRECTION AND PURPOSE

- **Assess your current state.** Begin by working with your staff and community to assess where your system is now in relation to learning acceleration. Where are your strengths? Where do you need to focus? Who is experiencing success and who is not? Use that data to determine clear outcomes. Use the components of this playbook to help you determine what areas to explore and set goals around.
- **Get clarity.** In an organization to improve, leaders and other key participants must set clear and firm intentions. Try these questions as a starting point:
  - What problem are we trying to solve?
  - What changes might we introduce and why?
  - How will we know a change is an improvement?
- **Create a road map to success.** Once you have your goals laid out, create an action plan to help you, your team, and your community determine how to get there, a timeline for work, and responsible parties. Be sure to include clear deliverables at each step to help everyone stay on track. Create space for the team to meet regularly to discuss the process, problem-solve, and share ideas.
- **Everybody has a role to play.** The person often best positioned to support acceleration for students will be the teachers with direct knowledge of the student and the content. However, other staff members will be great supports as students complete grade-level work, have questions, need to talk through topics, or have misconceptions that need to be clarified.

### ENGAGE IN CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CYCLES

- **Iterate cyclically to fine-tune competencies.** Keep using the data to help assess and adapt. Get feedback and continue to work together. Be sure to [host meetings and staff conversations](#) with both administrators and teachers to discuss data, celebrate successes, work through challenges, and continue planning together.
- **Leverage an existing continuous improvement toolkit for expediency.** Instead of creating a continuous improvement process from scratch, consider using existing models and toolkits to help ease the lift. Our accompanying [work plan](#) for this playbook offers a high-level glimpse into the [Plan-Do-Study-Act improvement process](#). For something more thorough, consider CCEE's [toolkit for continuous improvement](#).

### USE DATA TO MONITOR AND ADJUST

- **Determine what data to collect.** Continuous improvement, like learning acceleration, is driven by regular data collection and analysis. Consider using an impact spectrum like this one adapted from the work of [Teacher Development Network LLC](#) to consider the range of data you might collect now and over time:

- *Implementation data*
  - Professional learning metrics: How are we supporting staff in learning to accelerate learning? (Consider data sources that show how much, how often, and on what educators are receiving professional learning and coaching to develop their skills, as well as the response to those trainings.)
  - Program implementation metrics: How well is the program being implemented? (Consider data sources that show you how the program is rolling out in alignment with goals and action plans, such as systems and structures developed to support the initiative at the district, school, team, and classroom level.)
- *Impact data*
  - Teacher practice metrics: How and in what specific ways is the practice of teachers improving? (Consider triangulating data from several sources including self-report/surveys, observations, evaluations, and so on.)
  - Student learning metrics: How and in what specific ways is student learning improving? (Consider triangulating data from several sources including pre-formative and post testing, teacher reports, specific population progress, etc.)
- **Consider data sources you already have and build from there.** Do you already gather data on professional learning, give an annual survey, or review testing data? If so, consider how you might use this data to establish a baseline from which to set goals. You might also be able to harness these same sources to support you in gathering data related to your learning acceleration efforts. Remember that data collection takes time and several sources to fully understand what is happening. Start with what you have and build sustainably from there.
- **Analyze, reflect, and act on the data.** Create structures to review, synthesize, and analyze the data. Set aside time with appropriate stakeholders at strategic points to look at findings, ask questions, make adjustments, and determine next steps. Make sure the process is clear and transparent to all involved. Determine when and how you will share your findings with others. Sharing and including appropriate stakeholders in the creation of your plan helps make everyone accountable.

## DATA-DRIVEN CONTINUOUS SUPPORT

- **Identify priority knowledge and skills for adults.** Map out the adult learning competencies necessary for effectively meeting your accelerated learning goals. Use the topics described in this playbook to guide your thinking. Align your desired outcomes and your LCAP as you create a plan for support and professional development.
- **Collect data on current state and needed supports.** Work with your staff to:
  - survey what is hard, what feels manageable, and what they want to learn in relation to identified competencies;
  - do walkthroughs of classrooms to observe grade-level instruction and implementation of curriculum to understand how teaching and learning is currently being enacted; and
  - collect lesson plans, materials, and work samples for review and/or have teams/PLCs review these materials together and make recommendations for professional learning needs.

- **Create a goal-aligned professional learning plan.** Work with educators and leaders to determine the best way to support teachers in gaining the identified competencies, given the needs and assets in your community.
  - Prioritize key needs and offer training to address identified knowledge gaps.
  - Utilize coaching and mentoring systems to help teachers and teams implement new learning in their classrooms. PD is important, but it is not enough to make change happen all on its own. Targeted one-to-one coaching from highly trained mentors and coaches is crucial to helping teachers enact new ideas and grow more quickly.
  - Rethink schedules to allow teachers time for collaboration, planning, learning, iteration and coaching during the school day as they adapt to and refine these new practices. Once your programs are off the ground, these tools from Instruction Partners can help you [improve your PLCs, coaching practices, and other staff supports](#).
- **Offer high-quality professional learning.** Organizations focusing on accelerating learning for students cannot do so without high-quality professional learning for staff. According to [research](#) from the Institute of Education Sciences, high-quality professional learning:
  - is tied to specific content and outcomes;
  - incorporates active learning;
  - is job-embedded;
  - is collaborative;
  - provides models;
  - includes coaching;
  - is sustained and continuous; and
  - is aligned with school goals, standards and assessments, and other professional learning activities.
- **Offer meaningful choice.** Choice generates engagement, especially for adult learners who know their own strengths, needs, and learning preferences. Cedar Rapids Community School District created a [BINGO board](#) to encourage educators to select content and learning experiences based on their specific needs. This [slide deck](#) from Dallas ISD illustrates a creative, supportive, personalized way to present PD experiences and engage educators.
- **Be patient and persistent.** Making big systemic changes such as the move to learning acceleration takes time to enact. Here are few reminders to keep you going when the work is not easy:
  - Make sure your plan has opportunities for regular meaningful staff collaboration.
  - Use best practices for meetings, as suggested in this [sample agenda](#) to help guide the work forward.
  - Frustration and disagreement are part of the process and they don't mean it isn't working. Acknowledge the depth of mindset and practice shift this new phase of learning requires of teachers. Veteran teachers will feel like novices again, tried-and-true practices for student engagement may not work, and technical hurdles will create frustration. Provide ample support and resources for the team during the change process and encourage them to keep going.
  - Model strategies you are asking teachers to use to engage learners.

- See the [Creating a People-Centered Culture section](#) of CCEE's Field Guide for ways to celebrate success and improve morale. These are hard times, and small acts of acknowledgment can go a long way.

## FEATURED RESOURCES:

- **Work Plan:** [Refine](#)
- **Video:** [Continuous Improvement](#) from CCEE & TNTP

## Additional Resources

- Carnegie Foundation's reflection guide on [Transforming Educational Systems Toward Continuous Improvement](#)
- EDC's guidebook and toolkit on [Building a Culture of Continuous Improvement](#)
- Knowledgeworks' [The Education Changemaker's Guidebook to Systems Thinking](#)



## LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY

### Driving Question:

How do we rethink the role of technology as a tool for accelerating learning across systems?

### WHY

- The power of technology to provide educators and learners access to information and opportunities grows every day. California has been building its technology infrastructure for years and is in a good position to use technology to accelerate progress for students.
- Technology allows enhanced personalization and engagement for students and can create more supportive and equitable learning cultures in schools and districts. (SRI report, "[Using Technology to Personalize Learning in K–12 Schools](#),") Also, it is clear that technology will continue to play a central role in nearly all aspects of our lives over the coming years. Therefore, preparing students for career and life means, in some part, exposing them to meaningful technology while at school.
- To make the best use of existing resources to ensure the best possible student outcomes, leadership teams must constantly reevaluate the role and use of technology in their schools, including inventorying their current technology through the lens of learning acceleration practices before establishing new ones.
- The online safety of students and staff should remain an important priority for districts seeking to boost learning, equity, and well-being.

### Key Takeaways

- **High-quality digital learning requires intentional planning and effective online instruction.** Create a clear path for planning and implementation. Here is a [1-pager of considerations for planning, launching, and sustaining the use of technology](#) in an impactful manner for LEAs.
- **Classroom technology should contribute to students' learning, experiencing, communicating and doing.** Resist the urge to add technology only to create a wow factor or so that students are exposed to technology. If it does not align to your larger plan, it will be a distraction.

- **Safety is a priority.** When using technology, it is critically important that educators intentionally design and implement practices that create safety—emotional and identity safety, belonging, and connection.
- **Preparing and supporting teachers for teaching supported by technology is critical for online learning.** National standards can help guide practices for effective digital teaching and learning. <https://www.iste.org/standards/for-educators>
- **Look for programs or curriculum that address acceleration**—reviewing information from a previous grade only to the extent necessary to support learning new, grade-level subject matter.

## Curated Tips for LEAs: Rethinking the Role of Technology

While more research is needed, there are signs pointing to technology’s power to personalize learning and meet the needs of students. While most agree on the ability of technology to provide experiences that lead to deeper learning, some educational institutions have yet to make the shift to more innovative approaches. To help, we offer some important considerations when it comes to rethinking the role of technology in schools:

- **From devices to design.** Historically, technology departments within school districts have largely focused on providing tech support to staff and servicing devices. A more student-centric approach will require greater collaboration with educators and a shift in focus away from devices to designing educational experiences that allow for or create opportunities for deeper learning. After all, what use is a large amount of devices if they are not being used effectively?
- **From top-down to collaborative.** Gone are the days in which technology departments could work in isolation and dictate systems and procedures to LEA staff and students. In our connected world where technology is ubiquitous, technologists must now be excellent collaborators who learn about staff and student needs, invite feedback, create engagement, and have a service orientation. Technology steering committees and ongoing workgroups can aid in technology integration and adoption.
- **From student consumption to production.** Access to information remains an important component of equitable learning. But to prepare students for their futures, technology needs to facilitate not only access to information but the ability to produce content and showcase their learning. For example: students can use technology to collaborate with each other and display their learning via digital portfolios or other presentations of learning.
- **From reactive to strategic.** As the complexity and pervasiveness of technology increases, LEAs may want to ensure that technology leadership within their districts has a direct line to district leadership. Chief technology officers (or equivalent) are most valuable when they sit at the cabinet level, where they can ensure technology efforts are aligned to core values and strategic frameworks. They can play an important role in bridging instructional approaches and operational needs as their responsibilities generally straddle multiple areas, such as instructional support, administrative support, data systems and management, online security, staff training, research and development, and procurement and negotiation of contracts. The CCEE provides this [1-pager of considerations for planning, launching, and sustaining the use of technology](#) in an impactful manner for LEAs.

## Curated Tips for Effective Classroom Implementation

When considering how to use technology in the classroom for in-person or online learning:

- **Design for context.** Whether working online for some or all instruction, identify content and instructional activities that are best delivered in person (synchronously) and without interaction (asynchronously). If at all possible, reserve instructional activities requiring the most collaboration (e.g., authentic problem-solving, co-learning experiences, visits with experts) for in-person instruction. Be strategic about how to make these choices to ensure curricular cohesion, instructional alignment, engagement, and accessibility for all students.
  - Some suggested digital tools for math include: Desmos, NearPod, Pear Deck, Screencast-O-Matic, Google tools: Slides, Sheets, and Forms, infographics, Geogebra, VoiceThread
  - Some suggested digital tools for ELA include: virtual field trips, recorded read-alouds, daily electronic journals, digital writing portfolios, character descriptions
- **Be strategic about your choice of technology.** Make sure selected tech contributes to students' learning, experiencing, communicating, and doing. That includes access (technology availability for students and educators), usage (technology's use in the learning process), and skills (the students' and educators' ability to use the technology in meaningful ways). [Reimagining the Role of Technology in Education](#) can support your organization in thinking through what teachers and systems need to know when it comes to selecting and employing technology to support accelerated learning.
- **Ensure technologies are accessible to all students.** [Providing Effective and Equitable Digital Learning for all Students](#) requires considering how devices and tools as well as the internet need to be equitably accessible to all students.
- **Consider recording content.** Whether working online or in the classroom, video and audio recordings allow students to replay content to deepen their understanding and practice their listening skills, communicate their understanding while practicing speaking skills, and communicate feedback to one another that is more personable and accessible than purely text-based feedback.
- **Technology can also spark engagement and encourage authentic collaboration.** For example, students can create a video response explaining their strategy for solving a problem and other students can respond via their own videos. Students can collaboratively create digital infographics or create their own visualizations in Google slides. Teachers can invite experts in mathematical fields to give virtual talks and engage with students.
- **Help teachers develop their technological expertise, too.** In addition to understanding how to effectively plan and implement instruction for accelerated learning, they will also need support learning how to select and use educational technologies in strategic ways. Consider how to use existing professional learning and coaching structures to help teachers quickly develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and confidence.
- **Choosing the right online curriculum matters.** When using technology to accelerate (rather than remediate) progress it is important to know:
  - How the essential content of the curriculum is chosen. Make sure that the curriculum chosen reflects the LEA's curriculum and CCSS
  - What percentage of time a student spends on grade-level content
  - What teacher training is part of the program
  - Whether the program's strategy for moving students forward academically reflects the district's curriculum
- **Collaboration is key.** Make time for teachers to collaborate and support one another as they create authentic learning experiences that leverage technology and content-specific pedagogical training
  - PLCs are helpful. Consider forming a PLC responsible for dividing content based on areas of expertise, creating activities, and sharing ideas for integrating technology.

Consider using these resources to help: [Reimagining the Role of Technology in Education](#) and [Providing Effective and Equitable Digital Learning for all Students](#)

- The [National Council of Teachers of English](#) provides resources to build teachers' knowledge of new digital tools and strategies they can use in online or blended learning settings.
- **Use digital tools to foster teacher-student relationships.** Teachers' presence combined with great digital tools can help build teacher-student relationships that boost students' sense of belonging to the school community.
- **Digital citizenship is a priority:** [DigCitCommit](#) competencies is a framework that allows teachers to consider strategies for teaching and reinforcing a comprehensive set of digital citizenship skills. [Tech InCtrl](#) provides lesson materials and ideas aligned with these competencies.
  - Math provides opportunities for collaboration, sharing ideas, solving problems, asking questions, and using tools to connect with others and address global issues.
  - ELA provides opportunities for practicing evaluation of sources. "Complements the research and media skills currently incorporated in the [College and Career Readiness \(CCR\) Anchor Standards of the California State Standards for ELA and Literacy](#), reflect on digital identity, etc.
- **Use technology to assess student learning.** Technology allows teachers to use ongoing data to inform their instruction. Use digital tools for frequent, formative assessments that may be used to inform instruction.
  - Some examples of tools to use in math are: 1-to-1 conferencing with students, having students write out explanations and share online for feedback, quick check-in tools like Google Forms or Zoom polls
  - Some examples of tools to use in ELA could include synchronous entrance slips, asynchronous exit tickets, quick checks for understanding, online polling, writing project virtual check-ins, rubric creation, Google Forms, shared writing, choice boards, Jamboard
- **Encourage creativity.** Make sure to nurture creativity and creative expression to communicate ideas, knowledge, or connections. Collaborate and co-learn with students to discover, use, and create new digital resources.
  - Some suggested tools are: [Seesaw](#) (digital portfolios), Scratch (online programming), Canva (infographics), Flipgrid(video-discussion), Google Workspace (online collaboration tools)

## Curated Tips for Online Safety

**Learners are online more than ever and facing increased threats to their safety and privacy.** As system-level leaders, it is important to provide as many safeguards and assurances as you can for families and learners. We've compiled a series of steps to help you plan for the most secure online experiences. We also encourage you to look to leading online platforms, such as Zoom, for their guidance.

- **Work to understand your current security and safety measures with your technology staff.** Review your system and current security measures on a regular basis to understand changes and uncover new needs.

- **Understand the current vendors and tech providers you engage with.** Review current vendors' [data interoperability](#) and online safety measures. Be sure that there is documentation so that, if there is a breach or issue, you are aware of the existing policies in place.
- **Articulate a plan for responding to threats to system-level and student online safety and security.** As more and more students move online, we need to ensure that safety is explicitly taught and secured through specific measures.
- **Communicate the plan to the community.** In a user-friendly way communicate plans and expectations to students, family, and staff.
- **Provide support and training for educators in online safety.** Educators may have varying levels of understanding about [online safety](#). Be sure that they are aware of the policies in place and how to best protect their students when designing and delivering online learning.

#### Key Resources

- [Rethinking the Classroom for Blended Learning](#)
- [The Technology Integration Matrix](#)
- [Providing Effective and Equitable Digital Learning for all Students: Key Considerations for Districts](#)

#### Technology

- [Digital Learning Integration and Standards Guidance for English Language Arts and English Language Development](#) (ELA/ELD) by the CDE
- [ISTE Standards for Educators](#)
- [National Standards for Quality Online Teaching](#)
- [Reimagining the Role of Technology in Education](#)
- [Providing Effective and Equitable Digital Learning for All Students](#)

# Beyond the School Day



## PARTNERING WITH CBOs

Driving Question: What community-based organizations do you have available, and how can you maximize them?

Community-based organizations (CBOs) are organizations that provide various supports for youth, such as after-school programs, youth-development organizations, learning hubs, and enrichment programs. These organizations often have roots in the community and reflect students' backgrounds. They can be key partners in meeting students' needs and accelerating their learning.

### Why

- "It takes a village to raise a child." We cannot do this work alone. We need to lean on all suitable partners to uplift, support, and play a role in accelerating learning for our students.
- [Research compiled by the Children's Aid Society](#) (see page 20) shows that well-implemented collaboration among community-based organizations, schools, and parents to provide additional support for students can directly impact student achievement.
- Accelerating learning doesn't always mean direct academic support, but can come in the form of mentorship or enrichment that unlocks the motivation to learn.

### Key Takeaways

- **The key is instruction, not supervision.** The most critical thing is to vet partners and provide training to ensure that CBOs are offering not just supervision, but high-quality academic support aligned with instruction.
- **Leverage existing relationships to find your partner.** You don't always have to reinvent the wheel. Do you already partner with an after-school provider? Then consider rescoping that relationship and providing guidance to ensure you are leveraging the relationship as well as you can. Are you looking for a referral for a new partner? Ask a parent, teacher, or peer leader with deep ties to the community for suggestions.

- **Align on a shared vision, academic priorities, and best practices for improving student outcomes.** In order for CBOs to best support learning acceleration, they need to have a sense of grade-level standards. Communicate your academic priorities, philosophies on accelerating learning, and high-level grade-appropriate content. Maintain regular communication to determine what adjustments are needed to get you closer to your goals.

## Curated Tips

- **Assess your needs and determine the type of partnership you want.** As a LEA team, think about your needs and what you are trying to accomplish specifically.
  - Are you trying to move the needle on homework completion? Do you need to make sure students have access to books and are reading? Are you trying to inspire and motivate students? Are families looking for additional supports or experiences that could be provided by a CBO partner? This is a great opportunity to strengthen your connection to families and involve families in shaping the school programming.
  - Given the many ways you can work with a CBO, think about what type of relationship you are looking to cultivate. On one end of the spectrum is a community school, with dedicated funding and staffing to support an integrative CBO partnership model; in between is something like the the San Francisco Community Hub Initiative (a citywide, neighborhood-based strategy to support children, youth, and families during the school year, in which community hubs provide support for students in grades K-12 who are utilizing SFUSD's distance learning curriculum, and prioritize children and youth with high levels of need); at the other end of the spectrum are schools that do not actively engage with outside partners. Are you in a position to scope more integrative partnerships to provide wraparound services, or are you, for example, looking to provide families with a list of community resources they can pursue? There is still significant value to partnering with CBOs even if you are not on the "community school" end of the spectrum. (And if you do decide to pursue an integrated partnership where you'll be sharing student information, consider FERPA implications around data-sharing and standard operating procedures related to clearing any partner that may be working with students on site.)
- **Leverage relationships to find a CBO partner.** Conducting a market analysis to find a CBO partner can feel daunting. Instead, consider revamping an existing relationship or leveraging community relationships to find organizations to support what you are trying to do.
  - Do you already partner with an after-school program that is going well, and is that program willing to alter offerings to better support learning acceleration?
  - Could a parent, teacher, or peer leader who is deeply involved in the community connect you to organizations that meet your needs?
  - Does your County Office of Education have a list of service providers?
- **Determine fit with potential partners.** Once you narrow down your potential partner list, look into each to ensure outcomes are strong and others have had positive experiences with the organization.
- **Once you've chosen your partner, align on a shared mission, vision, and definition of success, and work collaboratively:** Research from Annenberg on strategies to avoid when establishing partnerships specifically mentions avoiding [misalignment of expectations](#) (see

page 6). Align mission, vision, and definition of success. Once you're on the same page and have started to build trust, you'll have the rapport to share learning acceleration strategies and make full use of the CBO's assets, experience, and perspective. You each bring a unique set of ideas to best support students' well-being and learning outcomes.

- **Communicate academic priorities, learning acceleration strategies, and grade-level standards.** In order for a CBO to support learning acceleration, participants need to have a sense of what students are working on, including grade-level standards and the focus on ensuring three-quarters of students' work is at grade level. Consider sharing the research related to learning acceleration and other resources, such as this [tool](#) from Seek Common Ground, that provide a concise overview of learning outcomes by grade level.
- **Create structures for ongoing communication.** Will you set up quarterly team check-ins to assess how things are going? Will the CBO partners and teachers have each other's contact information and be able to reach out to discuss individual student needs on an ongoing basis? This is a team effort; maintaining two-way communication and being upfront about how a student is doing can all help move the needle. The [Community Schools Playbook](#) shares strategies for effective collaboration (see page 69).
- **Use your principal's time strategically and involve team members in maintaining the CBO relationship.** A principal's time is limited. Consider having the principal invest more time in the early stage of the partnership development (e.g., vetting partners and aligning with them on vision and outcomes). Once the principal has trust in the partnership, they can feel more confident designating someone else to lead the process and avoid getting into the weeds of managing the day-to-day activities. This is a great opportunity to provide an emerging leader with a chance to gain experience by leading an impactful initiative for the school.

## Additional Resources

- National Center for Community Schools' [Needs Assessment Design Packet](#).
- [Leveraging Community Partnerships for Integrated Student Support](#) from EdResearch at Brown University
- [Aligning Tutoring Curriculum to School Curriculum](#) from the National Student Support Accelerator
- [What is a community school?](#), a 3-minute video by the Partnership for the Future of Learning
- CCEE's [Summer Game Plan Series](#)
- A guide on [building community schools](#) by the National Center for Community Schools
- RecoveryLab: supporting students' academic and social-emotional needs ([executive summary](#) and [full report](#)) by the National Center for Community Schools

## FEATURED RESOURCES:

- Work Plan: [Support](#)
- [Aligning Tutoring Curriculum to School Curriculum](#)

→ [Leveraging community partners for learning acceleration](#) from Brown University and CRPE



## ENGAGING FAMILIES

Driving Question: How will you strengthen the home and school connection? What is appropriate for at-home learning?

### Why

- [Research by the National PTA](#) found that the best predictor of student success is the extent to which families encourage learning at home and involve themselves in their children's education.
- Students who attend schools that actively and authentically engage families as partners see greater success both in school and later in life, according to the [Carnegie Corporation of New York](#).

### Key Takeaways

- **Families create positive learning environments.** Research shows a connection between family involvement and academic achievement. Encouraging family engagement is more than common courtesy; it's one of the best ways to create a positive learning environment for every student and support student success.
- **Intentional relationship-building empowers parents.** Families become more confident in their role as advocates and more engaged in their ability to help their kids become more successful, effective learners when school-family relationships are intentional and involve mutual respect, open communication, and inclusion in decision-making ([Joining Together](#)).
- **Intentionally designed at-home work can have a targeted impact on students' learning.** Leveraging technology and what we have learned from distance learning, we can make it easier for students to work at grade level from home.

### Curated Tips

- **Ensure that 100% of families connect with their teachers.** Set a goal of having each family hear from their child's teacher at least once per quarter. As your system works towards 100% contact, monitor any disparities in family contact between demographic groups (including racial demographic groups, students with IEPs, multilingual learners, or students who receive free and reduced lunch).

- **Get at the heart of what families want and need.** Design a survey to better understand what supports families would like to better support their learners. Consider having guardians rate how true statements like these are for them:
  - I know whom to reach out to at my child's school if I have questions or concerns.
  - I know how to contact my child's teacher(s) if I have questions or concerns.
  - I feel comfortable reaching out to my child's teacher(s) if I have questions or concerns.
  - The district/network is responsive to my feedback.
  - I know whom to contact if my child has a problem accessing their online classes or schoolwork.
  - I know how to help my child resolve technology problems when they arise.
- **Use and address survey responses.** Make sure you address issues raised in the survey and think through common challenges that inhibit parent engagement, like scheduling conflicts or an intimidating atmosphere. Ensure that you respond to what you learn from parents.
- **Communicate to parents what children should know and be able to do, and offer training and resources.** Many teachers share behavioral expectations, but few take the time to help families understand what their child should know and be able to do. Make academics part of every conversation.
  - Consider these [family-friendly grade-level learning overviews](#) and [roadmap](#) to common core for parents (also available in [Spanish](#)).
  - Highlight for parents the skills covered in class, along with resources parents can use to review these skills. Sites like [Be A Learning Hero](#) offer activities and tools for families; [Clave al Éxito](#) (Key to Success) helps Spanish-speaking parents engage in their children's education.
  - Consider hosting workshops or recording videos explaining classroom content before it is covered and explain how parents can effectively support student learning both at home and in the classroom.
  - Communicate to parents how they can support their child's academic progress:
    - Support strong school attendance: Here are [sample emails and tools](#) to engage families around attendance.
    - Ensure students complete their assignments.
    - Encourage students to [form study groups](#) and learn with peers. Study groups can be a great way to share learning, address misconceptions in a group.
    - Help parents understand academic data so they understand when their child is on target or when they are behind. This will help them engage with teachers in the latter case. Here is how one school is [sharing data with parents](#).
    - Encourage families to ask [questions](#) about what students are learning. Questioning is a great tool families can use to deepen understanding and engage their kids. Here are some sample [questions about books](#).
- **Leverage existing systems like student support teams to support the parent-teacher partnership.** Make sure your SST process is not just a screener for special education but an authentic parent partnership opportunity to talk about learning gaps and tools.
- **Personalize homework and leverage tech.** Make use of blended learning strategies like playlists and personalized learning plans to adapt learning at home to the needs of students while also making it easier for families to know what students are learning.
  - Consider [flipped homework](#).
  - Create [personalized playlists](#) of what students can do through online content.

## Additional Resources

- [Playlists Building 101](#) by EdElements
- LAUSD's [parent road maps for each grade level](#)
- [Questions to help parents create conversations about learning](#) by the CCEE
- TNTP's guide on how to [partner with families virtually](#)

## FEATURED RESOURCES:

- **Work Plan:** [Support](#)
- **Video:** [Engage Families in Learning Acceleration](#) from National Student Support Accelerator
- **Document:** [family-friendly grade-level learning overviews](#) by Seek Common Ground
- Bilingual [roadmap](#) to common core for parents in [Spanish](#) from CGCS

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## APPENDIX

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### WORK PLANS FOR THE PLAYBOOK FOR ACCELERATING LEARNING

[The latest version of the Work Plans for the Playbook for Accelerating Learning can be found here.](#)