



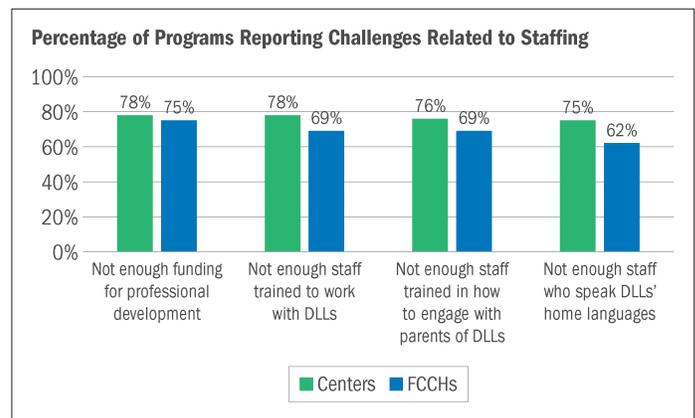
Quick Facts: Professional Development to Support Teachers of Young Dual Language Learners in California

AUTHORS: Iliana Brodziak de los Reyes, Jennifer Anthony, Maryan Carbuccia-Abbott, Heather Quick, Karen Manship, and Candice Handjojo

Given that almost two thirds of California's young children are dual language learners (DLLs), early educators need focused supports to strengthen their capacity to support DLLs' early learning and engage their families.^{1,2} This brief presents a snapshot of professional development challenges, requirements, and supports for early learning and care programs serving DLLs across the state. Findings described here are from a survey of a state-representative sample of early learning program administrators in 16 counties, conducted as part of the First 5 California DLL Pilot Study.³

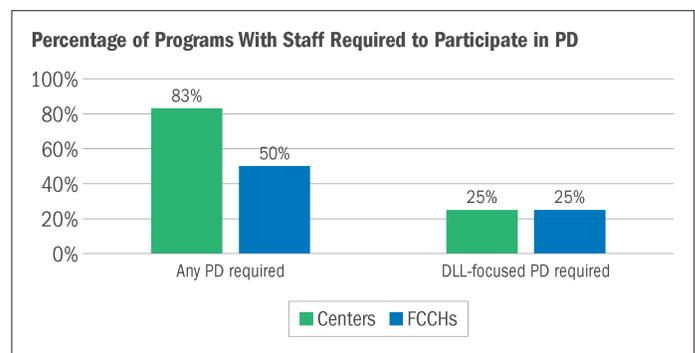
Challenges

Early learning and care programs face a shortage of educators who are prepared to work with DLLs and their families. More than three quarters (78%) of directors of centers and more than two thirds (69%) of family child care homes (FCCHs) reported that they did not have enough early educators who are trained to work specifically with DLLs. A similar percentage of center directors said that their teachers lacked training on how to engage with parents of DLLs (76%) or skills to speak the home language of the DLLs enrolled at their site (75%). Access to professional development (PD) to strengthen the workforce was also limited; three out of four center directors (78%) and FCCH providers (75%) reported that there was not enough funding available for PD.⁴



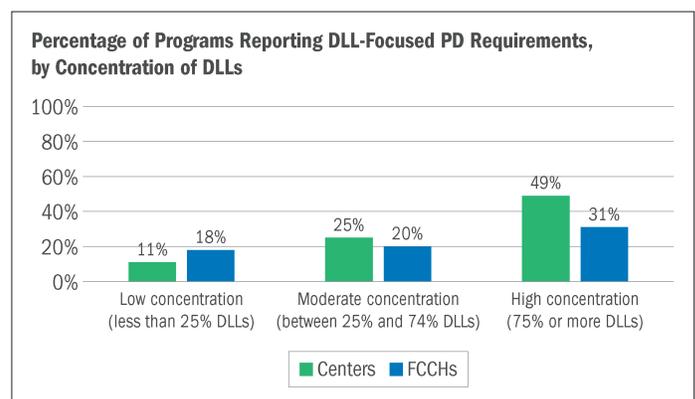
Professional Development Requirements

Compounding, or perhaps contributing to, these challenges, **early educators are rarely required to attend PD specifically focused on supporting DLLs.** In 83% of centers, at least some of the educators or caregivers were required to participate in PD activities within the past year, but in only 25% of centers were early educators required to participate in PD specifically focused on teaching and supporting DLLs.⁵ Compared with staff in centers, fewer FCCH staff were required to participate in PD overall; still, the same proportion of staff in centers and FCCHs were required to attend *DLL-focused* PD.



Requirements for PD vary by funding source and concentration of DLLs. Early educators in Head Start/Early Head Start and state-funded Title 5 programs (such as California's State Preschool program) were more likely to be required to participate in DLL-focused PD than early educators in programs that did not receive these public funds.

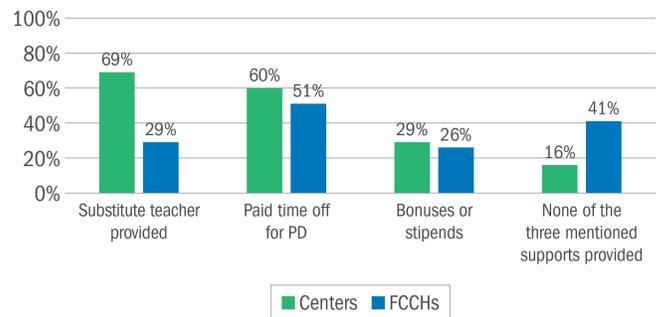
Programs serving a larger proportion of DLLs are more likely to require DLL-focused PD. Early educators in programs with higher concentrations of DLLs (75% or more DLLs) were more likely to be required to participate in DLL-focused PD than early educators in programs with low concentrations of DLLs (less than 25% DLLs). Specifically, staff in nearly half (49%) of centers and one third (31%) of FCCHs with high concentrations were required to participate in DLL-focused PD.



Supports

The majority of centers where early educators are required to participate in PD provide the necessary supports to enable them to participate in those opportunities, such as substitutes and paid training time. Two thirds (69%) of centers in which some PD was required reported that they provided substitute teachers, and 60% offered paid training time. A smaller percentage (29%) reported that a bonus or stipend was provided to educators for their participation. Fewer supports were offered for early educators in FCCHs. Although half of FCCH directors (51%) reported that they provided paid time off for PD, 41% of those who reported some PD requirements for themselves or their staff indicated that none of these three supports was available to them.

Percentage of Programs Providing Supports to Allow Teachers to Participate in PD



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DURING COVID-19

COVID-19 has compounded challenges related to staffing and professional development for early learning and care sites. In a survey of a representative sample of California's early learning program directors conducted in July 2020 for a separate study, nearly two thirds (63%) of program directors reported that they or their staff received some type of online training during the COVID-related disruptions. Center staff were more likely to have participated in these online opportunities than staff at FCCHs; 71% of centers and 58% of FCCHs reported receiving supports or resources.

Professional learning through online discussion groups was the most common PD format during the COVID-19 disruptions. Almost half (48%) of all programs reported participating in online discussion groups or professional learning communities to support their instructional practice. Many centers (42%) also reported receiving ideas and resources they could use for distance learning, though fewer FCCH providers (25%) reported receiving such resources. Fewer than a quarter (22%) of programs reported having received guidance or resources to support DLLs during the closures.

Understanding PD requirements and supports is critical, because they impact early educators' access to opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and classroom practices to support DLLs' learning and to engage their families. Given the large number of DLLs in California and their presence in all types of early learning programs,⁶ these survey findings underscore recent policy recommendations for investment in training opportunities for educators working with DLLs to ensure a qualified workforce that can support these youngest learners as portrayed in the state's new *Master Plan for Early Learning and Care*.^{7,8} Adequate supports and incentives are needed to ensure that early educators in all types of early learning programs can take advantage of DLL-focused PD opportunities.

For a more detailed discussion of these results, please see the full research brief located at <https://californiadllstudy.org/reports>.

¹ Alcalá, L., Kubinec, J., Atkin, C., Karoly, L., King, C., Muenchow, S., & Stipeck, D. (2020). *Master plan for early learning and care: Making California for all kids*. WestEd. <https://chhs-data-prod.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploads/2020/12/01104743/Master-Plan-for-Early-Learning-and-Care-Making-California-For-All-Kids-FINAL.pdf>

² Zepeda, M., Crolotte, C., Doh, J., & Ramos Harris, V. (2020). *The dual language learner policy platform: Informing California's early learning and care policies and investments in 2020-21 and beyond*. Early Edge California and Advancement Project California. <https://earlyedgecalifornia.org/the-dual-language-learner-policy-platform/>

³ The survey was conducted between April 2019 and April 2020. It was administered in English, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Russian. The survey response rate was 74%, with a total sample size of 744.

⁴ For a further discussion of challenges, see Manship, K., Brodzia de los Reyes, I., & Quick, H. (2020). *Quick facts: The landscape of early learning and care programs serving dual language learners in California*. American Institutes for Research. <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/First-5-DLL-Pilot-Study-Quick-Facts-Oct-2020.pdf>

⁵ Note that requirements for staff to participate in PD could come directly from the site director, or from an external source such as a county QRIS initiative. In the survey, site directors were asked, "In the past year, were educators/caregivers in this program required to participate in professional development focused specifically on supporting DLLs?"

⁶ Manship, K., Brodzia de los Reyes, I., & Quick, H. (2020). *Quick facts: The landscape of early learning and care programs serving dual language learners in California*. American Institutes for Research. <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/First-5-DLL-Pilot-Study-Quick-Facts-Oct-2020.pdf>

⁷ Alcalá, L., Kubinec, J., Atkin, C., Karoly, L., King, C., Muenchow, S., & Stipeck, D. (2020). *Master plan for early learning and care: Making California for all kids*. WestEd. <https://chhs-data-prod.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploads/2020/12/01104743/Master-Plan-for-Early-Learning-and-Care-Making-California-For-All-Kids-FINAL.pdf>

⁸ Alliance for a Better Community and Advisory Board for the Consortium for English Learner Success. (2020). *2020-2021 policy agenda*. http://www.afabc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/EL_2020_Policy_Agenda.pdf