



Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education Meeting

Baltimore, MD | May 13-17, 2025

Rising Together: Shaping a Future of Equity

MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, May 13, 2025 – Baltimore School Visits		
7:00 am – 8:00 am	BREAKFAST AND CHECK-IN	LB TAVERN
8:00 am – 3:00 pm	SCHOOL VISITS – PRE-REGISTERED ATTENDEES ONLY	
3:00 pm – 4:30 pm	BREAK	
4:30 pm – 5:30 pm	SCHOOL VISIT DEBRIEF	BALTIMORE THEATER
5:30 pm – 7:00 pm	PRE-MEETING RECEPTION	LB SKYBAR

Wednesday, May 14, 2025		
7:00 am – 12:00 pm	REGISTRATION	CALVERT FOYER
7:00 am – 8:00 am	BREAKFAST	VERSAILLES
8:00 am – 8:15 am	BALTIMORE AND COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS WELCOME Representatives from Baltimore City Public Schools and the Council of the Great City Schools will welcome attendees and provide opening remarks.	SALON ACD
	<p>PRESENTERS:</p> <p><i>Joan Dabrowski</i>, Chief Academic Officer, Baltimore <i>Ray Hart</i>, Executive Director, CGCS</p>	
8:15 am – 8:45 am	KEYNOTE ADDRESS This keynote will set the stage for BIRE 2025 by highlighting the strengths of immigrant and refugee families and the power of community partnerships. Catalina Rodriguez-Lima, Director of Baltimore’s Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (MIMA), has led initiatives to expand language access, strengthen trust between immigrant communities and city agencies, and develop policies that promote economic inclusion. She spearheaded the creation of the New Americans Task Force and co-authored <i>The Role of Immigrants in Growing Baltimore</i> report. Her leadership has helped position Baltimore as a national model for immigrant integration, ensuring that multilingual communities thrive.	SALON ACD
	<p>PRESENTER:</p> <p><i>Catalina Rodriguez-Lima</i>, Director, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, Baltimore</p>	
8:45 am – 9:00 am	CGCS ENGLISH LEARNERS TEAM WELCOME AND MEETING LOGISTICS The Council’s English Learners (EL) Team will welcome attendees and provide an overview of the meeting logistics. Participants will learn about the <i>Challenge of Practice Work Sessions</i> —dedicated daily time to work on a challenge of practice in small groups with the assistance of expert thought partners.	SALON ACD
	<p>PRESENTERS:</p> <p><i>David Lai</i>, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS <i>De’Aysia Barner</i>, EL Policy Fellow, CGCS</p>	
9:00 am – 9:50 am	RIISING TOGETHER TO WELCOME NEWCOMERS AND EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES This session explores the barriers to opportunity faced by English learners and strategies for supporting these students in K-12 settings. Kerri Evans will share insights on creating safe, supportive environments that foster social-emotional well-being, address systemic barriers, and build pathways to higher education and workforce opportunities. Qi Shi will highlight the	SALON ACD

persistent challenges English learners face in accessing STEM and advanced coursework, presenting opportunities for expanding participation through an asset-based lens. Joan Dabrowski will offer a district-level perspective on initiatives to improve access for English learners and the outcomes of these efforts. Together, these discussions emphasize the collective responsibility to expand opportunities for all students to thrive.

FACILITATOR:

David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS

PRESENTERS:

Kerri Evans, Assistant Professor, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Qi Shi, Professor, Loyola University

Joan Dabrowski, Chief Academic Officer, Baltimore

9:50 am – 10:00 am **REFLECTION AND TRANSITION**

10:00 am – 10:50 am **SHAPING BELONGING: U.S. IMMIGRATION LAW AND MIGRATION** **SALON ACD**

This session explores the history of U.S. immigration law and its profound impact on race, migration, and belonging, particularly for immigrant and refugee students in schools. Julian Lim will draw from her research in *Porous Borders: Multiracial Migrations and the Law in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* to examine how shifting policies and perceptions have shaped the treatment of immigrants. By analyzing exclusionary immigration policies and their ongoing impact, this session will provide essential historical context to understand and address the challenges faced by immigrant students and their families.

PRESENTER:

Julian Lim, Associate Professor, Johns Hopkins University

10:50 am – 11:00 am **REFLECTION AND TRANSITION**

11:00 am – 11:50 am **WRITING OUR NARRATIVES: TELLING AND LEADING WITH IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCES** **SALON ACD**

Saima Sitwat will share her narrative as an immigrant, through her works *American Muslim: An Immigrant's Journey* and the *Becoming American* project to explore trauma, identity, and belonging among immigrant families. She will highlight how educators can humanize the immigrant experience and create inclusive, supportive school communities. Participants will also engage in a guided workshop activity, reflecting on their experiences with culture and belonging. Through structured prompts, they will practice honing and sharing personal or professional stories, gain tools to use storytelling to build empathy, strengthen relationships, and advocate for immigrant students and families.

PRESENTER:

Saima Sitwat, Assistant Director of Ecumenical and Interfaith Ministries, Loyola University

11:50 am – 12:00 pm **REFLECTION AND TRANSITION**

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm **LUNCH AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE** **VERSAILLES**

PERFORMERS:

Highlandtown Elementary/Middle School No. 215 (Kelly Weber, Music Teacher and Middle School Band Director)

1:00 pm – 1:50 pm **UNDERSTANDING EL TRENDS AND IDENTIFYING CHALLENGES OF PRACTICE** **SALON ACD**

This session explores key findings from the Council of the Great City Schools' updated 2025 report, *English Learners in America's Great City Schools: Demographics, Achievement, and Staffing*. Participants will examine national and district-specific data on EL demographics, achievement, and staffing, considering implications for program improvement. Through a guided exercise, attendees will identify trends within their districts to explore further in the

upcoming challenge of practice sessions, beginning with a root cause analysis to deepen understanding and drive meaningful responses.

PRESENTERS:

De'Aysia Barner, EL Policy Fellow, CGCS
David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS

1:50 pm – 2:00 pm **REFLECTION AND TRANSITION**

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm **OVERVIEW OF THE CHALLENGE OF PRACTICE TOPICS** **SALON ACD**

Experts and practitioners will provide an overview of the challenge of practice topic areas, highlighting the importance of each topic, discussing persistent challenges, and sharing available, relevant resources. The overview will help participants select a topic area for the challenge of practice work sessions.

FACILITATOR:

David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS

PRESENTERS:

Leadership – *Valeria Silva*, Independent Consultant
 Newcomers – *Jen Chard*, City University of New York
 MTSS & ELs – *Farah Assiraj*, CEO and Founder, cairEducation
 Access to Rigor – *Okhee Lee*, New York University
 Dual Language and Multilingual Pathways – *Tammy Alsace*, Independent Consultant;
Gabriela Uro, Program Director, WestEd; *Kate Wright*, Project Director, WestEd

3:00 pm – 3:15 pm **BRIEFING ON CHALLENGE OF PRACTICE SESSION PROTOCOLS AND MILESTONES** **SALON ACD**

Participants will receive an overview of the protocols and milestones for the challenge of practice sessions. The session will also cover the role of expert thought partners and provide tips for maximizing the effectiveness of the work sessions.

PRESENTER:

David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS

3:15 pm – 3:30 pm **BREAK AND TRANSITION**

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm **CHALLENGE OF PRACTICE WORK SESSION: PROBLEM DEFINITION** **ASSIGNED ON SITE**

Salon C
 Salon B
 Salon E
 Hanover Suite A
 Hanover Suite B

Participants will select an area of focus and determine a challenge of practice based on an examination of current practices and the extant data or metrics that substantiate the identified challenge of practice.

FACILITATORS:

Leadership – *Valeria Silva*, Independent Consultant
 Newcomers – *Jen Chard*, City University of New York
 MTSS & ELs – *Farah Assiraj*, CEO and Founder, cairEducation
 Access to Rigor – *Okhee Lee*, New York University
 Dual Language and Multilingual Pathways – *Tammy Alsace*, Independent Consultant;
Gabriela Uro, Program Director, WestEd; *Kate Wright*, Project Director, WestEd

5:00 pm – 5:30 pm **CHALLENGE OF PRACTICE WORK SESSION PROGRESS REPORT AND GALLERY WALK** **SALON ACD**

Groups from each challenge of practice topic area will share their progress on the challenges of practice they have been exploring, including the problems they have defined and key insights from their work session. Through a gallery walk and structured feedback, participants will learn from one another, offer constructive input, and refine their focus. The session will conclude with time for teams to strategize their next steps and prepare for the final two work sessions, ensuring that they are positioned to develop meaningful, actionable solutions.

FACILITATORS:

David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm **WELCOME RECEPTION** **LB SKYBAR**

Thursday, May 15, 2025

7:00 am – 4:00 pm **REGISTRATION** **CALVERT FOYER**

7:00 am – 8:00 am **BREAKFAST** **VERSAILLES**

8:00 am – 8:55 am **SUPPORTING REFUGEE YOUTH: TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE AND EXPRESSIVE ARTS** **SALON ACD**

Addressing refugee mental health in schools requires culturally responsive, trauma-informed approaches. Drawing from work with the *HEAL Refugee Health & Asylum Collaborative*, this session will explore the critical role of schools in supporting refugee youth and their families. Participants will gain insights into the mental health needs of immigrant students, the impact of trauma, and the importance of holistic, community-centered care. The session will highlight expressive arts therapies as a powerful tool for healing and engagement. Through interactive discussions, attendees will explore practical strategies for fostering inclusive learning environments and strengthening school-based mental health support for refugee students.

PRESENTER:

Nouf Bazaz, Clinical Assistant Professor, Loyola University

8:55 am – 9:00 am **TRANSITION**

9:00 am – 9:55 am **THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX: PROMOTING MULTILINGUALISM FOR ALL IN A CHANGING WORLD** **SALON ACD**

Developing and expanding Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs with equity and community in mind requires planning and advocacy. Sarah Shin will provide a framing for the session, setting the stage for district leaders from Atlanta and Chicago to share insights on mobilizing communities, ensuring equitable expansion, and leveraging multilingualism for workforce readiness. They will discuss lessons learned, challenges faced, and what they would do differently. Participants will engage in interactive discussions on tailoring DLI programs to diverse contexts and expanding pathways, such as IB bilingual diplomas and the Seal of Biliteracy, to benefit all students. This session will provide actionable strategies for growing multilingual opportunities and strengthening DLI programs across different district settings.

FACILITATOR:

David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS

PRESENTERS:

Sarah Shin, Professor of Education, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Margaret McKenzie, Director, Multilingual Programs & Services, Atlanta

Olimpia Bahena, Deputy Chief, Multilingual-Multicultural Education, Chicago

9:55 am – 10:00 am **TRANSITION**

10:00 am – 10:50 am **ADVANCING ENGLISH LEARNER SUCCESS THROUGH SYSTEMS, DATA, AND SCHOOLWIDE SUPPORT** **SALON ACD**

As EL enrollments continue to grow, districts must implement intentional systems to ensure equitable access to high-quality instruction and wraparound support. This panel highlights how three districts are adapting and improving schools through strategic planning, data-driven decision-making, and targeted school support. Jefferson County will share its innovative model for identifying and supporting high-density ML schools, detailing how district leaders provide professional development, build instructional capacity, and set clear expectations for school transformation. Clark County will showcase its multi-tiered, data-informed framework for integrating language supports, collaborating across departments, and providing essential services through its Family Support Center and Newcomer Support Team. Omaha will present its approach to school improvement through a multilingual lens, focusing on data review protocols, the development of targeted “boost groups” for language proficiency growth, and the alignment of professional learning to enhance student outcomes.

FACILITATOR:

De'Aysia Barner, EL Policy Fellow, CGCS

PRESENTERS:

Vongmany Edmonds, Manager of Instruction, Office of Multilingual Learners, Jefferson County (KY)

Justin Matson, Executive Director of Multilingual Learners, Jefferson County (KY)

Jill Handley, Assistant Superintendent of Multilingual Learners, Jefferson County (KY)

Erick Casallas, Assistant Superintendent, English Language Learner Division & Services, Clark County (NV)

Carrie Cunningham, Multilingual Learner Teaching and Learning Consultant, Omaha

10:50 am – 11:00 am	BREAK AND TRANSITION	
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	MATERIALS REVIEW SESSION I	
<i>Breakout 1</i>	CURRICULUM ASSOCIATES	SALON C
<i>Breakout 2</i>	PARTICIPATE LEARNING	SALON B
<i>Breakout 3</i>	TRANSLATELIVE	SALON E
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	LUNCH AND VALERIA SILVA AWARD PRESENTATION	VERSAILLES

1:00 pm – 1:50 pm **CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS I**

Breakout 1 **WELCOMING NEWCOMERS: IDENTIFICATION, SUPPORT, AND ENGAGEMENT** **SALON ACD**

Effectively responding to the needs of newcomer students requires a deep understanding of their educational backgrounds, language development, and support systems. This session introduces a new publication from the Council of the Great City Schools that guides districts in defining and identifying newcomer students, gathering essential educational and linguistic information, and using data to inform instructional placement and wraparound services. Chicago Public Schools will share practical strategies for engaging newly arrived communities, including fostering partnerships with newcomer families, navigating the educational system, and connecting families to vital community resources. DC Public Schools will discuss their experience supporting schools with historically low populations of multilingual learners, focusing on professional development for general education teachers, coaching for school leaders, and adjustments to the itinerant ESOL model to meet the needs of newcomer students and create an inclusive school culture.

FACILITATOR:

David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS

PRESENTERS:

David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS

Jen Chard, RISLUS Research Associate, City University of New York

Beata Arceo, Director of International Student Services, Chicago

Erika Pereira, Director, Academic Planning & Itinerant ESOL Services, DC

Breakout 2 **BUILDING CAPACITY FOR EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION** **SALON B**

This session highlights district approaches to professional learning that enhance instruction for English learners and all students. Guilford County Schools will share their approach to planning and sustaining professional development aligned with rigorous content standards, emphasizing targeted coaching, curriculum alignment, and learning communities. St. Paul Public Schools will present the *CLIP Framework*, designed to operationalize WIDA 2020 and expand instructional capacity among non-ESL teachers, incorporating evidence-based practices from *Long-Term Success with Experienced Multilinguals*.

FACILITATOR:

De'Aysia Barner, EL Policy Fellow, CGCS

PRESENTERS:

Vanina Hackett, EL Director, Guilford County (NC)
Soledad Lardies-Dunst, EL Coordinator, Guilford County (NC)
Sophie Ly, Assistant Director of Multilingual Learning, St. Paul

Breakout 3

POSSIBILITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS: AI AND TRANSLATION/INTERPRETATION TECHNOLOGIES **SALON E**

Emerging technologies offer new opportunities to enhance support for English learners and their families. This session highlights district-led efforts to implement these tools with English learner needs at the center. Metro Nashville Public Schools will present their work in developing district guidance on the use of translation and interpretation devices, ensuring alignment with civil rights obligations and meaningful communication with English learner families. Fayette County Public Schools will share their approach to rolling out translation and interpretation devices in schools, including strategies for training school staff, supporting implementation, and fostering inclusive communication between schools and multilingual families. Newark Public Schools will share how AI technologies are being used to increase student agency, support teachers in planning scaffolded lessons for English learners, and help families engage with the school system and advocate for their children.

FACILITATOR:

Tammy Alsace, Independent Consultant, CGCS

PRESENTERS:

Molly Hegwood, Executive Director, Office of English Learners, Metro Nashville
Manuel Diaz De Leon, Coordinator, Office of English Learners, Metro Nashville
Rose Santiago, Director, Multilingual & Gifted and Talented Services, Fayette County (KY)
Jessica Sanchez, Liaison of Interpretation and Translation Department, Fayette County (KY)
Marisol Diaz, Director, Bilingual, ESL, and World Language Education, Newark

1:50 pm – 2:00 pm

TRANSITION

2:00 pm – 2:50 pm

CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS II

Breakout 1

SUPPORTING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS INSTRUCTION FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS

SALON ACD

This session highlights how Baltimore and Jefferson County are implementing structured approaches to support English learners in foundational literacy development. The Council of the Great City Schools will first provide an overview of the CGCS *Framework for Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction for English Learners* (Spring 2023), which defines a vision for foundational literacy skills instruction for ELs, outlines six guiding principles, and offers criteria for evaluating instructional materials. Baltimore’s initiatives focus on equipping ELD and early childhood educators with best practices to ensure MLs develop strong literacy skills. Jefferson County utilizes a *Reading Intervention Decision Tree* to guide instruction, professional development, and coaching at the school level. Grounded in this framework, the session provides practical strategies to enhance foundational literacy instruction and improve outcomes.

FACILITATOR:

David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS

PRESENTERS:

David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS
Tina Ruiz, EL Coordinator, Baltimore
Jennifer Walker, Educational Associate, Baltimore
Vongmany Edmonds, Manager of Instruction, Office of Multilingual Learners, Jefferson County (KY)
Jill Handley, Assistant Superintendent of Multilingual Learners, Jefferson County (KY)

Breakout 2 **MAXIMIZING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH STRATEGIC SCHEDULING AND TARGETED SUPPORT** **SALON B**

This session highlights two impactful approaches to curricular access and acceleration. The School District of Palm Beach will share an approach to student scheduling, which ensures all students, including those traditionally underserved, have intentional opportunities for acceleration. Through strategic master scheduling and monitoring, this approach has led to increased student achievement and graduation rates. DC Public Schools will focus on how small, targeted changes in policy and practice have improved outcomes for over-age and under-credited newcomer students. These changes include equitable foreign transcript evaluations, credit recovery options, and alternative pathways like GED and CTE programs, demonstrating positive trends for graduation rates among newcomer students.

FACILITATOR:

Tammy Alsace, Independent Consultant, CGCS

PRESENTERS:

Patricia Ordóñez-Feliciano, Executive Director, Multicultural Education & School Transformation, Palm Beach
Raquel Ortiz, Director, DCPS Welcome Center, DC
Ana Acevedo, Foreign Transcript Specialist, DC

Breakout 3 **EMBEDDING SUPPORT FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS ACROSS CONTENT AREAS** **SALON E**

This session will explore strategies from two districts focused on enhancing the success of English learners across content areas. Washoe County School District is reimagining English learner instruction by shifting from traditional pull-out models to a teacher capacity-building framework, where English Language Facilitators (ELFs) collaborate with educators to integrate language development into content instruction. Participants will learn about the impact of this approach on student outcomes. Additionally, Baltimore City Schools will discuss efforts to support the continuum of learners in schools, including multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and gifted/advanced learners. Efforts to support multilingual learners have encompassed integrating ML-focused strategies into professional learning across content areas, enhancing parent and family engagement, strengthening operational supports such as scheduling and grading, and fostering partnerships across multiple offices.

FACILITATOR:

De'Aysia Barner, EL Policy Fellow, CGCS

PRESENTERS:

Megan Waugh, Director, Department of English Language Development, Washoe County (NV)
Maria Reamore, Director, Multilingual Learners, Baltimore
Jalima Alicea, Executive Director, Teaching & Learning, Baltimore

2:50 pm – 2:55 pm

TRANSITION

2:55 pm – 4:25 pm

CHALLENGE OF PRACTICE WORK SESSION

ASSIGNED ON SITE

Salon C
 Salon B
 Salon E
 Hanover Suite A
 Hanover Suite B

The second day of the challenge of practice practicum/exercise will be devoted to elaborating on the proposed responses or solutions to the identified challenge of practice, detailing specific actions needed, required district resources and support, as well as anticipating intended and unintended outcomes for distinct stakeholders. District teams will weigh all of these factors to select the final response or solution to be implemented.

FACILITATORS:

Leadership – *Valeria Silva*, Independent Consultant
 Newcomers – *Jen Chard*, City University of New York
 MTSS & ELs – *Farah Assiraj*, CEO and Founder, cairEducation

Access to Rigor – *Okhee Lee*, New York University
 Dual Language and Multilingual Pathways – *Tammy Alsace*, Independent Consultant;
Gabriela Uro, Program Director, WestEd; *Kate Wright*, Project Director, WestEd

4:25 pm – 4:30 pm	TRANSITION	
4:30 pm – 5:30 pm	STUDENT AND FAMILY VOICES TO INFORM SERVICES AND INSTRUCTION	SALON ACD
	Baltimore City Public Schools students and families will share their aspirations and experiences within English learner programs. The panelists will inform participants about bright spots in programs and raise potential blind spots or persisting challenges to address.	
	FACILITATORS: <i>Maria Reamore</i> , Director, Multilingual Learners, Baltimore <i>Jalima Alicea</i> , Executive Director, Teaching & Learning, Baltimore	
	INTERPRETER: <i>Larisa Avellaneda</i> , Educational Associate – English Language Development, Baltimore	
5:30 pm – 6:00 pm	BREAK AND TRANSITION	
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm	RECEPTION	PRATT STREET ALE HOUSE (206 W PRATT ST)

Friday, May 16, 2025

7:00 am – 8:00 am	BREAKFAST	VERSAILLES
8:00 am – 9:00 am	ASSET-BASED ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT	SALON ACD
	Danyang Wang, a researcher in bilingual language development and assessment, will discuss how schools can distinguish language development trajectories from language-related disabilities in multilingual learners. She will share formative assessment strategies that help educators monitor language skills while avoiding misidentification. Margarita Gomez, an expert in writing development and sociolinguistic justice, will explore how writing assessments can validate multilingual students’ linguistic knowledge rather than penalize them. Drawing from research on translanguaging and asset-based assessment, this session will offer practical strategies for designing more equitable evaluations that recognize students’ full linguistic repertoires and enhance instructional practices.	
	FACILITATOR: <i>Tammy Alsace</i> , Independent Consultant, CGCS	
	PRESENTERS: <i>Danyang Wang</i> , Assistant Professor, Speech-Language Pathology, Towson University <i>Margarita Gomez</i> , Associate Professor of Literacy Education, Loyola University	

8:50 am – 9:00 am	TRANSITION	
9:00 am – 10:00 am	MATERIALS REVIEW SESSION II	
Breakout 1	TALKINGPOINTS	SALON C
Breakout 2	ENGAGE2LEARN	SALON B
Breakout 3	INTERVENE K-12, INC.	SALON E
10:00 am – 10:05 am	TRANSITION	
10:05 am – 11:10 am	CHALLENGE OF PRACTICE FINAL WORK SESSION	ASSIGNED ON SITE
Salon C	The third day of the challenge of practice practicum/exercise will be devoted to detailing the next steps of an overall plan to address the challenge of practice as part of a broader implementation plan. District teams will also outline a corresponding communication plan that generates buy-in and sustained organizational support/resources to achieve the desired outcomes.	
Salon B		
Salon E		
Hanover Suite A		
Hanover Suite B		
	FACILITATORS: Leadership – <i>Valeria Silva</i> , Independent Consultant	

Newcomers – *Jen Chard*, City University of New York
 MTSS & ELs – *Farah Assiraj*, CEO and Founder, cairEducation
 Access to Rigor – *Okhee Lee*, New York University
 Dual Language and Multilingual Pathways – *Tammy Alsace*, Independent Consultant;
Gabriela Uro, Program Director, WestEd; *Kate Wright*, Project Director, WestEd

11:10 am – 11:15 am TRANSITION

11:15 am – 12:00 pm CHALLENGE OF PRACTICE WRAP-UP: ACTION PLANS AND NEXT STEPS SALON ACD

District teams will present the results of their Challenge of Practice practicum/exercise. One district team from each focus area will present their identified Challenge of Practice, the proposed response or solution (including detailed steps and resource requirements), and a draft communication plan. Non-presenting district teams will share their work on flip charts posted around the room. Time for a gallery walk will be provided at the end of the session.

FACILITATOR:
David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS

PRESENTERS:
 Volunteer District Teams (Selected on Site)

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm LUNCH VERSAILLES

1:00 pm – 1:55 pm A JUSTICE-CENTERED APPROACH TO STEM EDUCATION TO EMPOWER MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS SALON ACD

This session explores a justice-centered approach to STEM education that engages students in addressing real-world challenges. Drawing on recent research, Okhee Lee will discuss how integrating STEM disciplines—including data and computer science—with language learning can empower multilingual learners by leveraging their transnational knowledge and diverse meaning-making resources. The session will highlight key insights on preparing educators to support students in challenging systemic injustices, as well as potential obstacles. Participants will gain practical strategies to create more inclusive and impactful STEM learning experiences for all students.

PRESENTER:
Okhee Lee, Professor, New York University

1:55 pm – 2:00 pm TRANSITION

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CONNECTING READING AND WRITING SALON ACD

Guilford County Schools will showcase how they integrated the National Writing Project (NWP)/Council hybrid courses on Teaching Academic Writing to English Learners (ELs) into professional learning, highlighting the impact on educators and students. Participants will engage in a hands-on learning activity using course materials and explore specific training practices that support language development across all domains while meeting rigorous content standards. The session will also break down the structure of a unit and lesson flow, designed to intentionally address both language and content learning needs. Additionally, participants will observe a modeled lesson demonstrating effective instructional strategies for integrating language and content learning.

FACILITATOR:
David Lai, Director of ELL Policy and Research, CGCS

PRESENTERS:
Vanina Hackett, EL Director, Guilford County (NC)
Soledad Lardies-Dunst, EL Coordinator, Guilford County (NC)
Carlos Bartesaghi, EL Lead Teacher, Guilford County (NC)

EVENING ON YOUR OWN

Saturday, May 17, 2025

8:00 am – 9:00 am	BREAKFAST	SALON C
9:00 am – 9:30 am	COUNCIL PROJECTS UPDATE Ongoing projects will be shared for discussion and feedback. Attendees will be invited to share pressing issues to inform upcoming projects.	SALON C
9:30 am – 10:00 am	BIRE DEBRIEF AND 2026 PLANNING Goals, issues, and venues for future meetings will be discussed.	SALON C
10:00 am	MEETING ADJOURNMENT	



Materials Review and Focus Group Sessions I

Baltimore, MD | May 15, 2025

Rising Together: Shaping a Future of Equity

Salon C

CURRICULUM ASSOCIATES - ADMINISTRATOR ROLES IN *MOSAICO FUNDAMENTOS POR I-READY*

Curriculum Associates is launching *Mosaico Fundamentos por i-Ready*, its first Spanish foundational literacy program, for back-to-school 2025. Paired with *Magnetic Foundations*, it offers seamless K–2 instruction in English and Spanish, supporting students on their path to biliteracy. This session explores how administrators can lead and support effective curriculum use and successful program implementation. **Key Questions:** (1) What actions should administrators take to support Spanish literacy? (2) What supports do monolingual English administrators need to effectively lead a Spanish literacy program? (3) What guidance helps instructional leaders inspire, support, and monitor implementation?

Salon B

PARTICIPATE LEARNING - EXPANDING DUAL LANGUAGE IMPACT TO STRENGTHEN ELL OUTCOMES

Research by Thomas and Collier shows that dual language programs close academic achievement gaps for English learners more effectively than English-only or transitional bilingual models. The Dual Language Mastery Program from Participate Learning was developed with dual language teachers and administrators in mind, and we hope to use this session as an opportunity to learn which components may also benefit mainstream teachers of ELLs. Participant insights will help inform how the program can evolve to support multilingual learners more broadly and strengthen its overall impact on ELL outcomes.

Salon E

TRANSLATELIVE - SUPPORTING MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS AND THE VILLAGE THAT SUPPORTS THEM, WITH ONE SOLUTION

School districts have more diversity in students, families, and communities than ever before; which has potential to be an enormous asset. Schools also need support to unlock the asset that multilingual communities bring. In this session, together we will identify the real-life challenges school districts face in partnering with families and communities to unlock the full potential of their students; the reality of limited time and resources; and the promise of a single solution to support not only emerging multilingual students but also the families and the communities surrounding them. Participants will leave understanding the potential of one simple solution.



Materials Review and Focus Group Sessions II

Baltimore, MD | May 16, 2025

Rising Together: Shaping a Future of Equity

Salon C

TALKINGPOINTS - USE OF AI AND TECHNOLOGY TO ENGAGE MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES TO HELP ALL STUDENTS SUCCEED

Research shows family engagement is an extremely powerful force in improving student outcomes. However, schools find it challenging to systemically realize the power of family-school partnerships, especially for multilingual families. Come learn how Council member districts are leveraging AI and technology to build asset-based partnerships with families in their home languages, expand staff capacity and scale best practices through in-app guidance and real-time data. Experience the innovative features we're rolling out this fall, including the attendance improvement solution, and share your feedback. Leave with proven practices using AI and technology to engage multilingual families to help all students succeed.

Salon B

ENGAGE2LEARN

Join this interactive session to explore how engage2learn's GroweLab platform supports district-wide talent development with embedded tools for English Learner (EL) success. Participants will review key features, including EL-specific resources and competencies aligned to research-based best practices. We're seeking your insights: What's working? What's missing? How can GroweLab better meet your district's unique needs? Your feedback will directly inform enhancements to ensure even greater support for educators serving multilingual learners. This session is ideal for instructional leaders, EL coordinators, and district administrators committed to improving outcomes for EL students through strategic, tech-enabled coaching.

Salon E

INTERVENE K-12 - WORKING SESSION WITH FAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS USING LOCAL STANDARDS-ALIGNED ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY SCREENERS

Many districts do not have access to local screeners to measure English language proficiency across the school year, resulting in delayed data and limited ability to inform instruction or advocate for resources. **Working Session** – We will introduce standards-aligned English Language Proficiency screeners designed for BOYs, MOYs, and EOYs. Participants will explore sample items, stakeholder reports, and real data from Fayette County Public Schools. The session offers an opportunity for leaders to collaborate/ideate on data use cases and reporting. **What Participants Will Get** – Participants will receive Pilot access to run English Proficiency Assessment at their schools.