

September 7, 2022

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California  
1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 1868 (Luz Rivas)—Request for Signature**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of UnidosUS (formerly the National Council of La Raza), I write to urge you to sign AB 1868, which seeks to disaggregate data of English Learners in order to strengthen California's guidance and resources for Long-Term English Learner (LTEL) students. AB 1868 will ensure that LTELs are correctly identified and provided with targeted interventions that best meet their needs. The lack of disaggregated data makes it difficult to understand how each subgroup is doing academically, which makes it challenging to provide the resources and support systems students need for academic success.

UnidosUS is the nation's largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization and has built a stronger country by creating opportunities for Latinos for more than 50 years. Through its unique combination of expert research, advocacy, programs, and an Affiliate Network of nearly 300 community-based organizations across the United States and Puerto Rico, UnidosUS simultaneously challenges the social, economic, and political barriers at the national and local levels. The UnidosUS California-based Affiliates include 63 community-based organizations that invest more than \$1.8 billion and employ more than 15,000 staff to provide direct services to approximately 1.8 million Californians annually. UnidosUS is headquartered in Washington, DC, and has an office in Los Angeles and staff in Sacramento. Through partnerships, community investments, and state research and advocacy on housing, health, and education, UnidosUS advances opportunities for the more than 15 million Latinos who call California home.

In the 2019–20 school year, approximately 6 million students were enrolled in California's public schools. More than 1.1 million were English Learners (ELs),<sup>1</sup> and 82% of ELs were Spanish speakers,<sup>2</sup> with roughly 200,000 of ELs being LTELs.<sup>3</sup> Thirty-six percent of these LTELs are dually identified as students with disabilities. Another 130,000 ELs are considered at risk of becoming LTELs and of falling behind in school.<sup>4</sup>

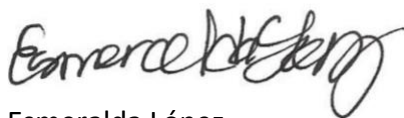
Having an adequate support system is crucial for the academic success of EL students. Over the years ELs have seen progress regarding academic achievement. However, they are still

graduating at lower rates than their peers; 67% of ELs graduate high school, compared to 83% of all students.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, ELs have lower A–G completion rates; only [10% of ELs graduate having completed A–G, compared to 47% of all students.](#)

The current accountability system combines Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) and EL students into a single EL indicator, making it difficult to distinguish between ELs, LTELs, and RFEPs. AB 1868 seeks to break down special education data by English language status\* and type of disability. Additionally, it provides further disaggregation of achievement, enrollment, and other data for LTELs and students at risk of becoming LTEL. This would include access to disaggregated test results for the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress—which encompasses Mathematics and English Language Arts—and the English Language Proficiency Assessment

This measure is a step in the right direction for prioritizing our LTELs. UnidosUS is pleased to support AB 1868 and respectfully requests your signature when the bill comes before you. If you have any questions regarding our support, please contact Viviana Martin, Policy Strategist, Policy and Advocacy at [vmartin@unidosus.org](mailto:vmartin@unidosus.org).

Sincerely,



Esmeralda López  
California State Director  
UnidosUS

cc: Assemblymember Luz Rivas

Nichole Muñoz-Murillo, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor

Angie Wei, Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor

Emily Patterson, Assistant Legislative Deputy, Office of the Governor

Melissa Immel, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor

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<sup>1</sup> Manuel Buenrostro and Julie Maxwell-Jolly, *Renewing Our Promise: Research and Recommendations to Support California's Long-Term English Learners* (Long Beach, CA: Californians Together, 2021), 13, [https://californianstogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Renewing\\_Our\\_Promise\\_to\\_LTEs.pdf](https://californianstogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Renewing_Our_Promise_to_LTEs.pdf) (accessed August 15, 2022).

<sup>2</sup> UnidosUS, *California Latino Students & English Learners Fast Facts 2020–21* (Washington, DC: UnidosUS, November 6, 2020), <http://publications.unidosus.org/handle/123456789/2098> (accessed August 20, 2022).

<sup>3</sup> Manuel Buenrostro and Julie Maxwell-Jolly, *Renewing Our Promise*.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> California Department of Education, “2020–21 Data Summary,” <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/datasummary.asp> (accessed August 18, 2022), Table 1.

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\* This includes, but is not limited to, separately reporting data for (1) Long-term English Learners, (2) English Learners at risk of becoming Long-term English Learners, (3) English Learners, and (4) Reclassified Fluent English Proficient pupils.