

English Learners (EL)

The English Learners (EL) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) constitutes the only national, sustained forum among state education agencies, researchers, and policy experts on issues of standards and assessment for English learners. The EL SCASS explores issues of policy implementation, particularly focusing on college- and career-ready academic standards and state English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards, their aligned assessment systems, and state policies that affect instruction, curriculum, professional supports, and leadership for ELs. EL SCASS members, in collaboration with advisor Kenji Hakuta and co-advisor Magda Chia, determine specific issues of focus.

Over the course the 2016-2017 membership year, the EL SCASS addressed a number of issues:

- Supported and learned from state implementation of the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Title I accountability provisions to include English language proficiency development:
 - [Including English Learners in Your State Title I Accountability Plan](#)
 - [Incorporating English Learner Progress into State Accountability Systems](#)
- Launched a state collaborative research study on state policy and local support for recently arrived English learners (RAELs) in collaboration with Ilana Umansky at the University of Oregon and Delia Pompa at the Migration Policy Institute.
- Continued working with state leaders engaged in teacher evaluation systems to include principles from the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards for instruction for English learners. This is in collaboration with Diane August of AIR.
- Provided guidance through a publication, titled English Language Learners with Disabilities: A Call for Additional Research and Policy Guidance, on identifying and supporting English learners with disabilities to avoid misidentification, advance academic achievement, and appropriately exit students from special programs and services. This work is in collaboration with Soyoung Park, Stanford University; Joni Magee, Massachusetts Department of Education; Martha Martinez, Oregon Department of Education; Lynn Shafer Willner, WIDA; and Jen Paul, Michigan Department of Education.
- Created additional material addressing local policy and practice addressing needs of for English learners with disabilities in collaboration with Soyoung Park, Stanford University, and Martha Martinez, Oregon Department of Education.
- Engaged in an extended discussion of standardized statewide entry and exit criteria for ELs required under Title III for ESSA state plans. See the CCSSO publication titled Effort on Moving toward a Common Definition of English Learners.

For 2017-2018, the EL SCASS will focus on the following topics:

- Continue work on ongoing projects: ELs in new Title I accountability provisions, supporting recently arrived English learners, teacher evaluation systems, guidance to identify and support English learners with disabilities, and Title III ESSA state entry and exit criteria.
- Early Childhood Education: Identifying factors that impact early childhood education and the transition to kindergarten, especially around issues of early childhood bilingualism, cultural diversity, assessment of program quality and the proper assessment of children's school readiness.
- Federal guidance on immigration: Understanding changes in federal immigration policy, particularly those delegating federal authority to local agencies, and implications for state education directors.

Advisor: Kenji Hakuta and Magda Chia

Kenji Hakuta is Lee L. Jacks Professor, emeritus at the Graduate School of Education at Stanford University. He has served on the Stanford faculty since 1989, except for three years (2003-2006) when he founded the University of California at Merced as its Dean of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts. He specializes in improving educational opportunities for English Learners through his academic interests in the areas of psycholinguistics, bilingualism, and second language learning. He is the author and editor of many articles and books, including *Mirror of Language: The Debate on Bilingualism* (1986). He has served on numerous national, state and local commissions and boards, and is actively involved in supporting the work of school districts and states around the country. Kenji obtained his Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology at Harvard in 1979. His academic accomplishments have been broadly recognized, and he is an elected fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Educational Research Association, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the National Academy of Education.

Magda Chia is the Director for Strategy, Impact and Policy at the Understanding Language Initiative (UL) at Stanford University. In her role, she develops and helps execute collaborations with states and districts to advance coherent education policy and practice. She works on outreach to educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders using a cross-disciplinary approach. Chia helps guide UL in work across several key components of education--pedagogical practices, professional development, assessment systems--within the context of supporting and celebrating the diversity of students across the country. Chia's research addresses validity and fairness in assessments across diverse student populations including English learners, students with disabilities, and English learners with disabilities. She specializes in the relationship between cultural and linguistic diversity and assessment development, implementation, data use, and classroom instruction. Her work has been funded by numerous organizations, including the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, National Science Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Education. Prior to UL/SCALE, she led the efforts across multiple fields to produce summative, interim, and formative assessments that support all students. Chia received her doctorate in education, equity, and cultural diversity at the University of Colorado, Boulder. She holds a master's from New York University, and was a Fulbright scholar in Peru.

