



21st Century California School Leadership Academy Cohort 1 Final External Evaluation Report

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Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Overview | 1 |
| 21CSLA Replicability of Effective Professional Learning | 4 |
| 21CSLA Centralization of Equity | 9 |
| 21CSLA Impact on Leadership Practices..... | 12 |
| 21CSLA Connections to the SSOS..... | 16 |
| Appendix..... | 19 |

Overview



The 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (21CSLA) was established by Senate Bill 75 in 2019 as part of the Statewide System of Support (SSOS). The purpose of 21CSLA is to provide high-quality, equity-centered professional learning for school and district leaders in California. The initiative comprises a 21CSLA State Center run by the University of California, Berkeley, School of Education and seven Regional Academies (RAs). The first cohort of 21CSLA ran from 2020 to 2023. The seven RAs were as follows:

- 1.** Alameda Regional Academy, led by the University of California, Berkeley, Leadership Programs and serving Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano Counties.
- 2.** Kern (ValCo) Regional Academy, led by Valley to Coast Collaborative, Los Angeles County Office of Education and serving Fresno, Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties.
- 3.** Placer/Sacramento Regional Academy, led by the Sacramento County Office of Education and serving Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Colusa, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Sierra, Sutter, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Yuba Counties.
- 4.** Riverside/San Diego Regional Academy, led by the Los Angeles Education Partnership and serving Imperial, Orange, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties.
- 5.** Shasta (NorCal) Regional Academy, led by the Northern California Educational Leadership Consortium at the California State University, Chico, and serving Butte, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity Counties.
- 6.** Sonoma (North Bay/North Coast) Regional Academy, led by the Sonoma County Office of Education and serving Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, and Sonoma Counties.
- 7.** Tulare (Mid-State) Regional Academy, led by Madera County Superintendent of Schools and serving Inyo, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Mono, Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus, and Tulare Counties.

21CSLA participants in RAs engaged in communities of practice (CoPs), localized professional learning (LPL), and/or coaching.

- **CoPs** were small cohorts of role-alike leaders facilitated by 21CSLA staff and focused on leadership for equity, continuous improvement, and distance or digital learning. The participation requirement was a minimum of 12 hours.
- **LPL** was additional learning with flexible grouping that complements and is aligned with offerings developed by 21CSLA and informed by regional needs and local input. The participation requirement was 12 hours.
- **Coaching** was individualized support that is job embedded, built on relational trust, and focused on equity-centered challenges and continuous improvement. The participation requirement was a minimum of 25 hours.

This report presents RTI International's final external evaluation for Cohort 1. The purpose of the evaluation was to explore and identify 21CSLA's extent of scale and replication of professional learning, centralization of equity for the purpose of increasing equitable student outcomes, the impact of 21CSLA on leadership practices that affect student learning, and the connection of 21CSLA with the SSOS, along with other connections that help build system impact.

This evaluation was for the third year of Cohort 1 of RAs. In all 3 years, evaluators used iterations of the following four questions to guide data collection and analysis:

Evaluation Question 1: To what extent does 21CSLA scale and replicate effective leadership professional learning?

Evaluation Question 2: To what extent is 21CSLA centralizing equity for the purposes of increasing equitable student outcomes?

Evaluation Question 3: What is the impact of 21CSLA on leadership practices that affect student learning?

Evaluation Question 4: How does 21CSLA connect to the SSOS?

¹ The CoP and LPL survey was sent to 3,308 21CSLA participants, and 622 participants responded. The coaching survey was sent to 374 21CSLA participants, and 154 participants responded. Respondents who did not recall participating in 21CSLA or were not able to attend any sessions for the registered offering were routed out of the survey.

RTI collected data from focus groups of professional learning participants (N = 29), RA Leads (N = 23), and 21CSLA leadership (N = 13); surveys completed by respondents who actively participated in at least one professional learning opportunity (N = 589 for CoP and LPL; 154 for coaching);¹ Geographic Lead Agency (Geo Lead) representatives (N = 11) and Special Education Local Plan Area Lead Agency (SELPA Lead) representatives (N = 12); and program documents.

See the **Appendix** for participant survey administration details as well as respondent engagement and demographics.

The Center reported that in total during Cohort 1 (2020 to 2023), 21CSLA provided 333 offerings serving 8,300 California leaders at teacher, site, and district levels. The Center reported that these estimates were from CoPs, LPL, and coaching RA offerings as well as collective meetings and retreats, summits, webinars, and other trainings.

In Year 3, RAs conducted 59 CoPs, 50 LPL offerings, and 3 LPL/CoP.^{2,3} There were more than 3,500 unique registrants for CoPs, LPL, and coaching statewide (3,212 in CoPs and LPL, and 384 in coaching).

Key findings for Cohort 1 are as follows:

1. RAs offered CoPs, LPL, and coaching, with **eight common features** that reflected research related to professional learning, leadership development in education, and systems change, suggesting promise for scale and replication. These features were sufficient time and formats for participant engagement, useful leadership content, individualized coaching and feedback, continuous improvement approaches, collaboration, opportunities for practice, and offerings tailored to participant needs.
2. **Equity was a central feature** in the structure and content of all RA offerings. Equity in the structure of offerings included paying attention to who was hired to coach or facilitate the offerings, providing targeted affinity groups, and focusing on specific student

² As reported by the Center, RA Leads were asked to populate a master spreadsheet, created by the Center in August 2022, of Year 3 offerings. The evaluation team asked leads to update this spreadsheet by November 2022 for fall offerings and by March 2023 for spring offerings. This spreadsheet included offering title, offering type (CoP or LPL), start and end dates, point of contact information, and format (hybrid, in-person, or virtual). The evaluation team followed up with leads via email to request updates ahead of survey distribution in December 2022 and April 2023. These numbers reflect the most up-to-date information as reported by RA Leads as of May 2023.

³ One RA classified all noncoaching offerings as "LPL/CoP"

populations. Equity content included helping leaders understand and reflect on their own biases and beliefs, continuous improvement approaches in offerings centered on an equity problem of practice, and both leadership and instructional content was equity focused.

3. RA offerings had an impact on leaders and local education agencies (LEAs) they served.
 - RA offerings **influenced participants' knowledge and skills** about evidence-based practices, continuous improvement, and equity. Areas included mindset changes about colleagues and students, leaders' views of themselves, and perspectives on continuous improvement.
 - RA offerings **influenced participant practices** of continuous improvement and equity-focused leadership in their districts and schools. Areas included discussing race and identity, creating a shared purpose or vision, listening and reflecting, changing scheduling practices, using evidence-based instructional practices, leading teams, and leading other leaders.
 - RA offerings **influenced positive changes for schools, teachers, and students.** Participants implemented or improved their practices in equity-focused leadership which influenced positive local changes. Participants noticed and anticipated further changes in their school, teachers, and students. Leaders cited school climate improvements, increased teacher collaboration, a reduction in exclusionary discipline, and increases in student engagement and access to evidence-based instruction.
4. RAs and the Center connected with partners **internal and external to the SSOS.**
 - RAs had several collaborations with county offices of education (COEs) to help tailor offerings to local needs, cofacilitate offerings, and codevelop topic-specific leadership supports. RAs leveraged expertise in universities, nonprofits, and other entities to enhance content in offerings, hire coaches, and codevelop offerings.

- The Center's collaborations were for purposes of recruiting leaders to participate, communicating about 21CSLA opportunities and successes, generating feedback to improve 21CSLA, researching 21CSLA, and cofacilitating offerings or presentations. In Year 1, the Center launched "Inquiry: Why Now?," a collaboration with the California Subject Matter Project, a COE, and an RA to develop and implement a professional learning series on integrating instructional content with inquiry. A new initiative in Year 2 was the UTK Leadership Initiative led by the Center in partnership with the University of California, Los Angeles, (UCLA) School of Education & Information Studies, Center X; California Subject Matter Project, and seven RAs, with a train the trainer and leadership certificate started in Year 3. The Center also provided additional opportunities to partner with RAs and for RAs to partner with each other.
5. The **Center modeled and supported** RA offerings and how to centralize equity in offerings. The Center created a Guidance Document and provided support to RAs on how to structure and implement offerings, with opportunities for RAs to work together, get feedback, and make improvements. The Center led with an equity statement as a guide for all offerings, provided guidance for RAs to centralize equity, and modeled equity work through a CoP and collective meetings for RAs. The Center also provided individual support to RA leaders, especially those with leadership transitions or urgent needs.

A detailed description of these findings follow, organized by the evaluation questions.

21CSLA Replicability of Effective Professional Learning



Evaluation Question 1: To what extent does 21CSLA scale and replicate effective leadership professional learning?

This evaluation investigated professional learning features across RAs. The Center supported RAs in how to develop and implement their offerings through formal and informal check-ins, weekly collective meetings, retreats, and the Center’s Guidance Document. Check-ins included individual support to RA Leads, especially those with leadership transitions or urgent needs. The Center created the Guidance Document during the first year of 21CSLA and published it in June 2021 for the purpose of enhancing cohesion and coherence of 21CSLA, then updated the Guidance Document for Cohort 2. The Cohort 1 Guidance Document described the shared purpose of 21CSLA and all three offering types: CoPs, LPL, and coaching. In describing each, the Center described characteristics, elements, misconceptions, and guiding questions for RAs as they developed offerings. RAs used this guidance in Years 2 and 3 of Cohort 1 offerings. They improved offerings in both 2021–2022 and 2022–2023.

The Center also provided weekly support to RAs that included a CoP focused on continuous improvement, collective meetings for program development, coaching, and UTK. RAs determined the representatives that attended each topical meeting. The CoP started in Year 1, and over the 3 years, more RA Leads joined and the Center modeled a gradual release, first modeling facilitation and continuous improvement in Year 1, then working hand-in-hand with RA Leads in Year 2, with RA Leads in Year 3 “taking ownership” by sharing their experiences and providing resources they used in their RA with the group. The Center shared that it also supported RAs by facilitating logic model development across all seven RAs, synthesizing challenges in meetings to provide support, and leveraging connections to support RAs like in LEAs and local networks. The Center also created a calendar and communications toolkit for RAs to use.

RTI's investigation identified common elements of RA offerings during Cohort 1, culminating in effective features in 21CSLA's offerings in Year 3 for this report. These elements reflect effective professional learning which is intensive, ongoing, and connected to practice; centered on content, continuous improvement, and equitable student outcomes; and collaborative.⁴ The elements also reflect the needs for leadership development and systems change.⁵ The following describes seven effective features of offerings: a beneficial amount of time and formats for participant engagement, useful leadership content, individualized coaching and feedback, continuous improvement, collaboration, opportunities for practice, and tailored support for participant needs. The eighth feature, centralization of equity, is addressed in the second evaluation question (see page X).

1. **RA Leads provided enough time and improved formats for participant engagement.**

In Year 2, RAs adjusted their offering structures based on Year 1 feedback, which included having more frequent and shorter sessions as opposed to fewer and longer sessions, allowing for practical implementation between sessions, providing more opportunities for individual coaching, providing a broader selection of offerings to align with participant needs, adapting materials, finding the best providers for specific offerings, and offering advanced sessions.

In Year 3, nearly 90% of respondents to surveys thought that having the opportunity to spend time gaining knowledge and skills had been helpful or extremely helpful. One participant said that "it was very helpful to me to have a long-term connection with teachers from all over [the county]," acknowledging hearing about others' ideas and challenges to help problem-solve and push professional growth. Others acknowledged that the shorter session time allowed for support and practice between sessions. One participant noted that having two sessions in quick succession provided the opportunity for feedback so that they could practice "small changes from one session to the next, versus the idea of doing a survey and not taking action

for a long time." Others said that time between meetings allowed for time to "get reading/homework done," strategize with colleagues about a problem of practice, and plan with their team.

“ Having multiple meetings gave me time to think and figure out my next steps. Each time we met I came away with a new idea or appreciation.”

– 21CSLA participant

Some RA Leads mentioned providing programming in multiple formats, with one noting benefits of providing leaders with recordings of virtual sessions "since there's been such sub shortages and just a lot of complex challenges going on... [The sessions] helped people stay connected and... in the know." One RA Lead noted limitations of virtual programming on the ability for leaders to connect; another mentioned that in-person events were better attended than virtual events. Two RA Leads mentioned using a large in-person event to facilitate collaboration and connection and to preview offerings as extensions of the event. One RA Lead required attendees to come in teams, noting that "large-scale equity problems of practice cannot be resolved in isolation."

Other RA Leads discussed their approaches to the different offering types: CoPs, LPL, and coaching. The Center guided RAs to form CoPs by role, putting those in the same roles together. Most RA Leads said that CoPs were used for developing skills while addressing a problem of practice, while LPL focused more on content delivery. As one RA Lead shared, LPL is "centered on a big topic... that possibly would lead to a problem of practice."

Many RA Leads shared that they organized offerings with attention towards increased coherence across the program rather than by individual CoPs, LPL, and coaching. One RA Lead described the process of coherence between the CoP and LPL: "So the LPLs interweave those topics, and then whatever the problem of practice for the leader really calls to, or whatever lane they really want to focus in, they'll choose a community of practice that then drives the continuous improvement process towards their growth in

⁴ Bishop, J., Darling-Hammond, L., & Jaquith, A. (2015). *Maximizing the use of new state professional learning investments to support student, educator, and school growth*. Learning Policy Institute; California Department of Education. (2015). *The superintendent's quality professional learning standards: Approved by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*; Carter Andrews, D. J., & Richmond, G. (2019). Professional development for equity: What constitutes powerful professional learning? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 70(5), 408–409.

⁵ Darling-Hammond, L., Wechsler, M. E., Levin, S., & Tozer, S. (2022). *Developing effective principals: What kind of learning matters?* Learning Policy Institute; Hernández, L. E., Darling-Hammond, L., Adams, J., Bradley, K., & Duncan-Grand, D. (2022). Pushing against the grain: Networks and their systems for sustaining and spreading deeper learning. *Journal of Educational Change*, 1–25; Rincón-Gallardo, S., & Fullan, M. (2016). Essential features of effective networks in education. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, 1(1), 5–22.

that area.” Another RA Lead described a coherence model “where LPLs lead into the COPs and then are supported by the coaching itself.” A different RA Lead noted that the cohesiveness and sustainability across offerings departed from “the one-hit wonder approach to the learning. It’s all threaded throughout the year.”

Some RA Leads thought 1 year was not enough for leaders to practice what they learned. One shared having “a lot of frustration that coaching is limited to 1 year, because you cannot take a leader who is not in a place where they’re ready to move, in 1 year, to the place they need to be.” Those who did not get to experience chunked or spread-out sessions for practice during 1 year suggested follow-up sessions: “This was a great start. Change is difficult and systemic change takes a LONG time. It would be great to do more trainings periodically throughout the school year. Maybe 2–3-day follow-up sessions several times over the next 5 years.”

2. RA Lead offerings included useful **leadership content**.

RA Leads provided content that was responsive to needs identified by practicing leaders and policymakers. In Year 2, RA Leads adjusted the content within offerings after assessing regional needs, such as the new ethnic studies requirement in California, specific equity-related instruction and social-emotional learning (SEL) topics, and demands on leaders due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Year 3, Around 91% of respondents reported that the leadership content covered in CoPs, LPL, or coaching sessions had proven helpful or extremely helpful to them. Some 86% of respondents reported that their offering or coaching sessions had provided helpful or extremely helpful professional development, coaching, or training techniques that they could use with other teachers or leaders in the district. Content spanned the how and what of leadership, with the how including ways to lead continuous improvement. One participant commented on a data collection assignment from one session, saying it “provided a structured framework for important data types and sources to consider, research, and analyze when approaching a learner-centered problem.” Participants were asked to bring real-time data to the sessions, which [a participant] found to be very helpful as “it is relevant to our practice.”

3. Individualized **coaching and feedback** were important to participants, whether from a coach or their peers.

In Year 2, an emerging finding from a subset of RA Leads and participants was that participants who experienced both coaching and a CoP at the same time may have enhanced impact compared with participating in just one or the other. Participants interviewed about the integrated approach appreciated the ongoing coaching support as they wrestled with their problem of practice through their CoP, while RA Leads in four regions noted that participants in CoPs wanted coaching to support their application of continuous improvement tools or implementation of equity plans. Many participants interviewed who engaged in CoPs or LPLs but not coaching desired ongoing coaching support to apply skills learned once they returned to their school or district context.

This finding continued in Year 3: those who experienced coaching reported satisfaction and, in some cases, a need for more coaching, whether it was in a coaching-specific offering or a CoP or LPL that incorporated individual support. Those who did not experience coaching mentioned a desire to have individualized support for implementation.

Around 75% of respondents to surveys of all offerings agreed that the CoP, LPL, or coaching activities they participated in had been helpful or extremely helpful in providing an opportunity to get feedback on their work, either from the coach or from colleagues. A similar proportion of respondents to the coaching survey (76%) believed that their coaching had provided an extremely helpful opportunity to work with their coach toward an improvement goal.

About 55% of respondents to the CoP and LPL survey thought that individualized coaching had been helpful or extremely helpful. Omitting the relatively high proportion of respondents (37%) who reported that their offering had not included individualized coaching suggests that over 87% of those who received individualized coaching found the experience helpful or extremely helpful.

“ The one-on-one coaching was the reason I was able to intentionally do this work. With most professional development I am excited and wanting to implement it and do more but am not allotted time and space, and I’m doing it alone. Having a coach and having two other colleagues being coached, too, was a perfect way to get me to follow through on what I know is important and right.

– 21CSLA participant

RA Leads of five regions discussed coaching as focused on helping individuals identify and work towards specific goals related to equity and personal leadership growth. One RA Lead noted that the coaching program starts with the guiding question, “what is your pain point for your students of color in your community?” Then they plan backward toward the learning that undergirds the work, the professional development that supports the leader ... and then develop a laser-focused professional development plan for each individual leader.” Another RA Lead discussed using an equity self-assessment tool to help coaches identify an equity-focused problem of practice to guide development over the year. Another RA Lead provided leaders with a self-assessment to identify strengths and areas of growth to inform goal-setting among participants and coaches. Participants shared that the individual coaching was the “best part of the experience” and that their coaches helped them implement practices in their schools and districts and problem-solve. They also discussed coach support and insight and having someone to talk to through challenging situations. One participant said the coach helped the participant to look at different perspectives in difficult situations and “to look at the situations from an equity lens. This really helped ... to look at our practices and how equity plays a role in engagement and behavior.”

4. **Continuous improvement approaches, which included data analysis, working toward a goal, and testing evidence-based practices was central to learning and improvement.**

All RA Leads described **continuous improvement for an equity problem of practice** as central to offerings. Some 93% of survey respondents reported that their offering or coaching experiences had afforded them helpful or very helpful opportunities to reflect on and improve their work. Approximately 83% believed that their CoPs and LPL offerings provided a helpful or very helpful opportunity to engage in continuous improvement practices.

RA Leads called continuous improvement an “underlying theme” that “everything has to fit” into. The goal was for participants to learn about and build capacity in leading for equity using both continuous improvement and collaboration. One RA Lead emphasized that continuous improvement was more prominent in CoPs than LPL and coaching because CoPs were populated by those in the same role, so they agreed on a shared problem of practice to work on together. At the same time, a high percentage of respondents to both surveys (86%) noted that their

offerings had been helpful or very helpful in understanding and implementing solutions for a problem of practice they had verified for their work. One participant commented on a continuous improvement task of finding a root cause of a problem as a helpful activity that provided “the time to really think through the strengths and challenges of the highlighted problem of practice.”

5. **Collaboration on teams and with others with similar challenges helped build knowledge and skills.**

In Year 2, findings confirmed that RAs offered active learning opportunities in which **leaders collaborate** with one another to address issues in their day-to-day work. One participant emphasized that being on a team from the school district helped the participant decide on and implement skills practiced in a CoP. RA Leads and participants highlighted the usefulness of collaborating across school districts on shared topics of interest. A common theme among individual leaders was their desire to have team members attend to work on their problem of practice together.

In Year 3, collaboration was also important. Participants noted the importance of working with colleagues in their district and across districts. More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents to the CoP and LPL survey believed that their offering had been helpful or extremely helpful in discussions with colleagues in their school or district. One participant “appreciated working across jobs and grade levels... the team activities provided me with access to folks with different skill and knowledge sets.” Another mentioned the opportunity to talk with other teacher leaders in the district: “I enjoyed talking to other teacher leaders in my district and learning what’s working for them. We were also able to come up with some concrete ideas to implement at our school site!”

Over three-quarters (78%) of respondents to the CoP and LPL survey reported that their offering had provided a helpful or extremely helpful opportunity to work on a team toward a common goal: “Meeting as a whole district team in a private room was very helpful. It helped to center us and to give us a common direction.” Others wrote about the opportunity to work with their colleagues as helpful and sometimes the “most valuable” to share experiences and “current realities.”

Even more CoP and LPL respondents (81%) thought that their offerings had been helpful or extremely helpful in facilitating cross-district discussions with colleagues

“ Even in “extremely different school settings, different districts, with really different demographics, [leaders] talk about the value of spending time together. . . on similar equity-based concerns.

– RA Lead on the value of participants spending time together

in similar school contexts. One participant mentioned opportunities to talk in breakout rooms to “process information presented.” Another wrote about the cross-district collaboration as an opportunity to practice difficult conversations: “Discussions with peers from other districts allowed me to feel confident in opening up dialogue that too often gets pushed to the side or discarded because sometimes people fear the ‘hard’ topics.”

6. RA offerings included the opportunity for **practice**, in which participants implemented change ideas and made improvements during the course of offerings.

Participants in Years 1 and 2 discussed opportunities to apply learning from the offerings to their practice, along with a need for more. Others experienced their CoP or LPL over the course of 2 years, sharing that they expanded on concepts learned by applying them over a period of time. In Year 3, around 84% of respondents to both surveys agreed that the offerings (or coaching) had been extremely helpful in providing them an opportunity to practice new skills.

“ The most helpful component of this process is our group being able to take time to connect and fix a problem at our school. Talking about one problem, together every month was the best practice I have ever experienced in my school.

– 21CSLA participant

Practice occurred both during and between sessions. Participants noted practicing having difficult conversations, applying continuous improvement through reflection in their settings, and that practice in general provided a “low-stakes environment.” Practicing how to have “compassionate conversations over very difficult topics, such as race and harassment” was extremely helpful for one participant.

Between sessions, participants implemented ideas individually and with their teams. One participant discussed using empathy interviews “with students to gain a better understanding about whether or not they feel their voice is heard. This activity helped to bring to life the problem of practice from their perspective.”

One RA Lead said that leaders were encouraged to identify and implement changes, no matter the scale, with the aim of improving outcomes for students at their sites: “The idea from the beginning . . . is that you will end this with something you’re going to try. It could be relatively small. It could be a larger overhaul of your systems and structures, again, within your locus of control. But the idea is that there will be something that you’re going to make a change and then evaluate and iterate . . . It will lead to better outcomes for students.”

7. RAs **tailored approaches** to participant needs.

RA Leads reported in each year of Cohort 1 that they used data and needs assessments to inform their offerings. Offerings were then tailored to need-related problems of practice by grouping participants in role-alike groups according to similar school contexts and by providing content and tools so leaders could address emerging needs and challenges at their sites. Participants confirmed that offerings were tailored to their needs. Some participants suggested providing guidance to participants on how to communicate with staff about the work and how to divide the work into manageable portions to make implementation attainable.

The Center and RAs brought up the modeling and support for tailoring that the Center provides for RAs. Center staff described being available on a daily basis “to tackle [RAs] unique (contextually defined) problem of practice.” RAs shared that this helped them ask questions and understand the needs of participants, especially in tailoring problems of practice to local needs. One RA Lead shared that there is “a lot of interest among teacher leaders on developing coaching skills, whether they’re in a formal coaching role or many of them play a coaching role informally with their colleagues.” Teacher leaders practice how to “listen to colleagues and find entry points into learning focus conversations around issues of equity that might come up.”

21CSLA Centralization of Equity



Evaluation Question 2: To what extent is 21CSLA centralizing equity for the purposes of increasing equitable student outcomes?

The 21CSLA State Center Guidance Document released for RAs in June 2021 states that “designing and sustaining high-quality equity-centered professional learning is the core mission and purpose of 21CSLA” (p. 4). Equity is therefore not only a professional learning component but it is central to 21CSLA’s leadership development. Many RAs reported that their 2021–2022 offerings brought a greater emphasis on centering equity across all their offerings. During the last year of Cohort 1 in 2022–2023, all RA Leads centralized equity in the structure and content of their offerings.

1. RAs **centralized equity in the structure** of offerings.

The Center wrote an equity statement in the Guidance Document: “Leaders for equity transform education to improve access, opportunity, and inclusion, for students and adults, especially those who are systemically marginalized and historically underserved, so that they

can thrive” (p. 5). This statement was a “guidepost” for the work of RAs. Throughout the 3 years, equity was shown within the structure of the offerings, from who was hired to coach to who offerings served and a focus on specific student populations. Six leads discussed structures for hiring coaching and facilitation staff, including targeting individuals outside of the state, with an equity focus, and with diverse education backgrounds, such as special education, early childhood education. Most of these leads shared using the Center’s Guidance Document’s qualities of effective leadership coaching for equity for recruiting and hiring coaches.

RAs tailored outreach and offerings to target specific leader populations such as leaders of color; African American leaders; female leaders; special education leaders; teacher leaders; leaders who serve multilingual learners; leaders in rural areas; leaders of small, private, and/or alternative

schools; and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion leaders. Regarding an offering focusing on male Latino leaders, a participant highlighted the feedback received for providing professional development at his site. He shared that, because of the offering structure, he “genuinely felt a sense of confidence and support in knowing that while this work feels lonely at times, there are many of us fighting for the same case: bring equity to our schools.” An RA Lead highlighted the importance of these groups outside of the school context, saying that many participants “expressed need for affinity spaces outside of their employers because they sometimes need more confidential spaces to have their discussions.” Another RA Lead discussed having a CoP for those who identify as leaders of color and the challenges they face, heralding the success that led to a second year for the group.

“ It was helpful as a woman, new to administration, to hear all of the similar experiences with transitioning from teaching to management. . . As a teacher, women also experience unique gender challenges, but there are more workarounds without impediments or impacts on your career trajectory. In management the stakes are higher for those unique gender challenges, and how we handle each situation is critical to continuing in our positions. . . It was very validating and empowering to hear veteran leaders and peers alike share how they navigate these unfortunate inconveniences.

– *Leader in woman-leader-focused offering*

Two RA Leads mentioned that coaches engaged in conversational coaching practice to develop their equity consciousness and ability to coach for equity. One RA Lead asked coaches to participate in the same COPs and LPL offerings as those they coached to help operationalize the learning, specifically to engage in “36 hours of professional learning themselves. . . So they themselves, as coaches, despite some being retired, despite having 400 million hours of experience or years of experience. . . because they’re learning with [those they coach].”

RAs also diversified their offerings across regions to equalize the distribution of services. RA offerings responded to the necessity for leaders to address the needs of specific student populations not equitably served, such as multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ students.

In Year 3, of the 112 CoPs and LPL offerings, 48 (43%) had equity or equity-related concepts in the title. Twenty-nine (26%) of these called out equity specifically; titles included *Envisioning and Leading Equitable Transitional Kindergarten Classrooms*, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Teaching for Equity and Social Justice*, *Five Practices of Equity-Focused School Leadership*, and *Equity Conversations in Instructional Coaching*. Nineteen (17%) other offerings referenced equity-related concepts like antiracism, universal design, and inclusionary practices in the title; titles included *Universal Design for Learning Series*, *Supporting African American Learners*, *Implicit Bias Awareness and Mitigation Training*, *Transforming School Cultures Through Challenging Everyday Racism*, and *Myths and Misunderstandings of Inclusionary Practices*.

2. RAs **centralized equity in the content** of offerings.

Throughout Cohort 1, RA Leads shared that their offerings included content about the **connection between the education system and inequitable student outcomes** so that leaders could better understand how to analyze and change policies and procedures within these systems. Participants reported that they wanted to improve their use of data and other continuous improvement tools for dismantling systemic racism and that offerings focused on these areas. RA Leads reported that their offerings included **themes of equity and social justice** in continuous improvement approaches, regardless of the topic. For example, many coaches asked participants to create an equity leadership goal that drove their work. Participants also shared that they created action plans to hold themselves accountable to implement new equity practices.

All RA Leads during Years 2 and 3 shared that their offerings included strategies for leaders to understand and reflect on their own biases and beliefs to build a foundation to improve equitable practices at their schools. Many discussed **critical reflection** as essential in changing their leadership practice. One RA Lead described the efforts as “breaking through implicit bias barriers” to be a culturally responsive leader. In interviews and surveys, many participants reported that they learned to reflect on their own biases and how they influence decision-making, behaviors, students, and others around them. During Year 3, an RA Lead explained this critical reflection as “awareness of who I am, my identity, my implicit biases, and then it’s that shift in mindset and then it turns to behavior.” The RA Lead added that it is ongoing, starting with the 12 hours of an offering

which provides “on-ramps to wherever people are ... [to] focus more from the individual to the organizational level” which, when pulled together is the “art of leadership.” A participant shared that an activity of reflecting on individual identities and the perspectives that they had about these identities “was helpful because so much of equity-based practices are rooted in relationships with others ... and how to communicate with others who differ is a practice of relationships and [a] place of understanding is where we can drive equity forward.”

All RAs discussed building participant skills in **continuous improvement that address inequitable systems and practices** at their district and support their staff through implementing these changes. Many offerings focused on helping leaders address an equity-related problem of practice and dilemmas to meet explicit equity needs of districts and schools in their region. Participants reported in interviews and surveys that they built skills in helping

educators reflect upon their personal attitudes, biases, and roles in creating equitable opportunities; tackling hard topics; providing a safe space for equity discussions; using SEL signature practices in meetings; including all voices in decisions about systems; and asking questions of their staff on how teams implemented equitable practices. Other goals of participants were to implement equity-centered scheduling and restorative practices.

In Year 3, survey respondents weighed in on the helpfulness of three equity-focused features of their coaching or training. More than three-quarters of respondents found each of these features to be helpful or very helpful:

Equity-focused leadership content: 86%

Equity-focused instructional content: 79%

Equity-focused critical reflection: 85%



21CSLA Impact on Leadership Practices



Evaluation Question 3: What is the impact of 21CSLA on leadership practices that affect student learning?

Evaluators investigated knowledge and behavior or practice changes for participants, their organization (district, school), who they lead (teachers), and the ultimate beneficiary (students). Over the first 3 years of 21CSLA, offerings influenced participants' knowledge and skills about evidence-based practices, continuous improvement, and equity as well as specific practices of continuous improvement and equity-focused leadership in their districts and schools. Year 3 showed that these influences continued, with an addition of specific behaviors that leaders implemented and planned to implement along with school and student changes that they observed or anticipated would occur.

1. *Participants developed knowledge, mindsets, skills, and confidence for equity leadership.*

In Year 2, Participants shared that they developed skills in equity-focused leadership with an increased understanding about racism, structural barriers to student success, and ways to identify and disrupt those barriers, and that every

challenge was viewed through an equity lens. RAs offered tools, like an equity pause, in which leaders were asked to pause as they managed a challenge at their school or district and ask, "Is this equitable for all of us? Are groups missing? Or are there voices that are not heard?"

In Year 3, participants reported that because of their participation in 21CSLA, they perceived an increase in knowledge or change in mindset (93%, N = 593). Knowledge and mindset changes referred to perspectives related to both equity and continuous improvement, and both RA Leads and participants referred to increases in knowledge about racism and disrupting inequities, skills in and confidence for equity conversations, and knowledge and skills in continuous improvement for equity.

Two RA Lead members mentioned that participants reported changes in confidence to **discuss issues around race and identity**. One participant noted, "I feel so much more equipped when I hear things at my school that make me uncomfortable... I feel like I now have... tools and

language to engage people in conversations when I hear things at my school." An RA Lead shared feedback from leaders about their growth of an equity mindset: "Things that they didn't think about before that they're thinking about now, and that they're actually implementing at their sites and what context they're in."

Another RA Lead discussed observing participant **mindset changes about colleagues and students** as leaders reported on interactions with other leaders not like them: "You do see that change in mindset as well as the change in being and beliefs [about equity]" and "having [antiracism] focus on supporting Black and brown students and teachers to be able to address the needs of just their own mindsets in terms of educating those students and ensuring the students have what they need to be successful." A leader acknowledged the change from deficit-based to asset-based thinking: "I have transformed the way I think from looking at deficits to seeing how we can leverage strengths to empower students and communities to achieve equitable educational opportunities."

One RA Lead discussed an emerging finding for **teacher leaders' view of themselves**. Some teacher leaders did not see themselves as leaders prior to the sessions but changed their mindsets to view themselves as leaders for equity. One RA Lead saw the "most growth" for teacher leaders who started "to change their mindset about how they can impact the system from their context."

Both RA Leads and participants referenced knowledge gained and changed **perspectives on continuous improvement**. One participant attributed an introduction to equity audits as influencing knowledge and skills, as it provided "a strong framework for our team to follow specific steps that lead to programmatic equity, and specifically with regard to our disciplinary process/policies." Understanding of continuous improvement steps, helped participants "see the importance of reflection and challenging assumptions through the root cause analysis." Another participant worked as a coach with staff who experienced management challenges with colleagues. The coach introduced the Appreciative Inquiry resource from an offering and found the "leader's mindset and approach changed. As a result, the communication and problem-solving efforts between the leader and her colleagues was more positive and productive." Those who learned and practiced Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles also commented, with one sharing a change in perspective about implementing them: "PDSA

cycles were not new to me, but it did become clear how simply they can be implemented and how to use them efficiently for change."

2. *Participants implemented or improved their practices in equity-focused leadership.*

In Year 2, most participants reported individual practice changes because of their participation in 21CSLA. For example, many survey and interview respondents described changing their practice to better support their colleagues with addressing inequities at their school, such as focusing on intentional use of data, creating a shared vision around equity, and facilitating conversations equitably.

In Year 3, half (53%) of respondents reported that their offering or coaching experience had prompted them to adjust their approach to **discussing equity-focused leadership** perspectives or strategies with colleagues in their district, and about a fifth had either started (10%) or planned to start (10%) these discussions. One participant noted leading a CoP around advancing equity using improvement science and using the approach in coaching practice.

Participants had similar responses when asked about their practices **creating a shared purpose or vision** among multiple stakeholders. One participant discussed the shared purpose in an equity **audit of scheduling practices** at the participant's site:

“What I didn't want to have happen is for [staff] to identify some big, large thing that they knew was maybe inequitable but they had no power to do anything about because then what would we talk about for the next 4 weeks together? So as soon as they had those sorts of things identified, we had a whole series of activities and readings where they then narrowed it down to who are the people that you can work with within your area of influence at your site to change this?”

– RA Lead

This example also highlights an approach to finding a root cause to then start a cycle of inquiry to make improvements. CoPs, LPL offerings, and coaching were likely to inspire new practices in identifying root causes of an equity-related problem of practice (31% of respondents had started or planned to start this practice) or conducting cycles of inquiry to improve an equity-related problem of practice (32% of respondents had started or planned to start this

practice). About a third (32%) of respondents noted that they had adjusted existing practices around creating school- or district-level teams to conduct cycles of inquiry for continuous improvement, and 28% had either started this practice, or planned to, as a result of the coaching or offering.

In Years 2 and 3, participants reported gains in knowledge and skills on **effective instructional practices and practices to support student SEL**. Examples they provided were in instruction for English language acquisition, collaboration across departments for both instruction and SEL, and moving from a compliance to a teaching and learning focus. One RA Lead mentioned that participants created their own local equity conferences, indicating changed behaviors and beliefs about equity: “So what we’re seeing is their behaviors have changed, their beliefs on equity have changed, because now they’re offering these conferences. In one of the six counties, that conference is now something that they do annually, and it has become part of their being.” Another RA Lead mentioned that participants incorporated staff voice into decision-making, which helped build staff well-being.

A participant mentioned forming a professional learning community to implement strategies from the offering, saying that the professional learning community was “planning our classes for next year with full inclusion AND resource specialist/general education teacher collaboration” and would include the college and career counselor in the meetings.

Twenty-nine percent of survey respondents said that they started or planned to change district-level policies or practices that address systemic inequalities. A relatively high percentage (11%) of respondents reported that they did not plan to start this practice, which may be due to their school-level role, and only 28% reported that this was an existing practice they had adjusted due to their 21CSLA offering. For example, one district investigated how its approach to English learner reclassification was deficit-based and implemented strategies to make it asset-based and equitable among student groups. The district revamped its policy due to the 21CSLA work. An RA Lead remarked, “they were giving their testimony to inspire the [new leaders]... Good work happens.”

Respondents were more likely to change school-level policies to address systemic inequalities (35%) than district-level policies. Some 28% had started or planned to start doing so. One leader talked about creating a new universal

design for learning plan, knowing that implementation “will advance equity for all students.” An RA Lead explained that an assistant superintendent who attended a 21CSLA conference session created an equity plan that was supported by the offerings and individual coaching. A participant mentioned addressing inequitable hiring practices: “through my coach’s help, we were able to change our hiring practice to make it more attractive for recruiting and hiring diverse applicants.”

One RA Lead mentioned that coaching helped leaders **become more reflective practitioners and better listeners**, saying that participants discussed increases in their reflections and listening. The RA Lead also observed these listening and reflection behaviors during sessions: “Being a better listener is a big [behavior] that’s come up as a trend. And also having a willingness and a desire to engage in more difficult conversations than they might not have engaged in otherwise.”

An emerging finding was that many leaders supported or planned to support other leaders in their district, including teacher leaders. A relatively high percentage (16%) of respondents did not plan to train other leaders in their district on the content and activities from their offering. About 29% of respondents reported having adjusted existing practice in this area, and an equal share of respondents had either started this practice or planned to do so. Finally, roughly two in five respondents reported that they had adjusted their practice of providing opportunities for teachers to lead, 8% noted they had introduced this practice, and 16% planned to introduce this practice as a result of participation in 21CSLA coaching or offerings.

3. *Participants anticipated changes in their school, teachers, and students as a result of 21CSLA.*

Expected, long-term outcomes of participation in 21CSLA are changes in the environment and individuals who leaders affect. In Year 3, 65% of coaching participants (N = 119) and 39% of participants in other offerings (N = 465) agreed that they saw impacts from their work in 21CSLA on their school, teachers, or students, while 33% of coaching participants (N = 119) and 59% of participants in other offerings (N = 465) agreed that it was too soon to tell.

RA Leads and participants who discussed or responded to specific improvements observed shared improvements in school climate, teacher collaboration and voice, instruction, and student learning.

Regarding student outcomes, in Year 2, some leaders who focused on evidence-based practices for students' social-emotional needs or behavior challenges noted improved results on school climate surveys or a reduction in disproportionate suspensions, expulsions, and special education discipline. In Year 3, most RA Leads mentioned that leaders participating in offerings resulted in school- and district-level changes like reductions in suspension, reductions in Individualized Education Program meetings, increases in the use of restorative practices, and revamps to English learner classification criteria to be equitable.

Some participants mentioned noticing improvements in school climate, where students felt safe and supported. One participant observed, "My school is happy, inviting, and full of messages of inclusion and sends a message that we believe that ALL students are capable of achieving great things!" The participant added that teachers in the school expressed gratitude in the support of their day-to-day needs and that students approach adults with their needs: "My school is so much STRONGER!! Just ask them!" Another participant agreed with the climate improvements: "Our school has become more inclusive. Safe spaces for students have been clearly designated, and select students have expressed their appreciation." Another wrote that students shared their lived experience and practiced empathy: "Students are openly talking about their lived experiences and identity. They are willing to share openly and practice more empathy towards themselves and others."

RAs and participants also observed changes in teacher voice and collaboration. One RA Lead mentioned that cognitive coaching was powerful in reducing social distance between superintendents, principals, and teachers, leading to more buy-in and less compliance around equity issues like discriminatory discipline. Another observed better staff teamwork served students better and collaboration helped with horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment.

One RA Lead discussed an example of a rural district that worked to establish equitable student discipline policies. Leaders used continuous improvement tools to study a tiered intervention for relationship building. An outcome was a reduction in exclusionary discipline across all student groups, which they attributed to the intentional focus on improving relationships.

In another example, an RA supported a school district in studying the out-of-school suspension rate across the district. Leaders used data to pinpoint systemic inequalities and, through RA coaching, had equity-focused conversations around race and discipline. The district attributed a 50% decrease in out-of-school suspension to this work.

In Year 2, most participants interviewed reported anticipating an impact on student outcomes in the future, such as increased student extracurricular engagement and a reduction in disproportionate special education referrals. They attributed these expectations to their development of knowledge and skills on how to create equitable systemic change at their district.

In Year 3, many leaders reported similar ideas. Site leaders anticipated strengthening their school. For example, one leader was focused on providing input and feedback on the school's special education process to "constructively help ensure the school is more aligned and compliant. But these will impact the teachers and the students too." Other leaders said that students would benefit from upgrading the grading system to be more equitable, hiring teachers from diverse backgrounds, focusing on student engagement, streamlining school-wide processes, and "having a more focused leadership team to create rhythms to bring us back to our big buckets and highlighted practices to model in our professional development and staff meetings." Student engagement and achievement were also mentioned as anticipated changes. Participants reported improvements in evidence-based teaching practices, writing about relating instruction to student lives, teachers taking ownership and feeling valued in the school, project-based learning, and positive teacher-student relationships.

21CSLA Connections to the SSOS



Evaluation Question 4: How does 21CSLA connect to the SSOS?

The SSOS consists of several resource leads run by COEs, which include community engagement, math initiative, equity, scale-up multi-tiered system of supports, and SELPA resource leads as well as regional English learner specialists. Specific COEs are also tasked with supporting other COEs in their region as Geo Leads. The COE is the primary support in the system for LEAs. As part of this system, 21CSLA focuses on training and supporting leaders at all levels to improve LEAs.

Throughout Cohort 1, The 21CSLA State Center and RA Leads reported on intentional interactions within the SSOS. A few RA Leads pointed to work with state agencies, Geo Leads,⁶ SELPA Leads,⁷ and other agencies in the SSOS to inform their offerings and communicate about potential

⁶ As part of the SSOS, Geo Leads build the capacity of other COEs in their area, coordinating and providing Differentiated Assistance.

⁷ As part of the SSOS, SELPA Leads provide capacity building support in special education content areas and in system improvement so that an integrated educational system meets the needs of all learners, including students with disabilities.

partnerships to support leaders in their regions. Most RA Leads mentioned COEs and some mentioned SELPAs when asked about the SSOS, and both the Center and RA Leads reported on connections outside of the SSOS Lead Agencies. In the final year of Cohort 1, the Center and RA Leads both built on and added to the connections internal and external to the SSOS, with aims to communicate about 21CSLA, gather feedback for improvements, cofacilitate offerings, and bring in additional expertise for leader development.

1. *The Center worked with SSOS Leads and partners across the state to support LEAs.*

In all 3 years of Cohort 1, Center leadership staff members reported interacting with SSOS Lead Agencies as part of their outreach strategy to help recruit leaders to participate in 21CSLA activities and communicate about opportunities and successes. They connected with SSOS Lead Agencies on social media, shared RA offerings with SELPA Leads and Geo

Leads, and communicated with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) and California Department of Education, including adding submissions to CCEE newsletters to let leaders know about general offerings across the state. In Year 3, the Center repurposed the internal RA newsletter to be externally facing and distributed it to all SSOS Leads on a monthly basis. The Center also provided CCEE and CDE with 21CSLA activities for CCEE's SSOS newsletter and CDE's Universal Prekindergarten newsletter. The Center also collaborated with partners to build supports for RAs, conduct research, and continuously improve the Center's work.

In Year 1, the 21CSLA State Center launched "Inquiry: Why Now?," a collaboration with the California Subject Matter Project, a COE, and an RA to develop and implement a professional learning series on integrating instructional content with inquiry. A new initiative in Year 2 was the UTK Leadership Initiative led by the Center in partnership with the University of California, Los Angeles, (UCLA) School of Education & Information Studies, Center X; California Subject Matter Project, and seven RAs. The goal of the UTK Leadership Initiative is to prepare equity-focused leaders for California's rollout of transitional kindergarten (TK) for all 4-year-olds. In Year 3, the Center developed eight UTK Leadership professional learning modules in partnership with nonprofits such as the Center for District Innovation and Leadership in Early Education: California's Bold Pre-K Aims; Envisioning Equitable TK Classrooms in Action; Supporting, Integrating, and Aligning Equitable TK Classrooms, Continuous Improvement Through Equitable P-3 Assessments, Equitable TK Classrooms for Social-Emotional Development, Equitable TK Classrooms Through Inclusive Practices; Family Engagement for High-Quality TK Experiences; and Inquiry Through Play. With RAs, the Center planned and implemented five of the eight modules as a pilot, completing 10 pilots in six regions serving over 250 leaders. Members of the Early Childhood Divisions in LEAs and COEs attended the pilots. The Center plans to pilot courses for a leadership certificate in summer 2023. Another collaboration that the Center started was with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, which works with all administrator licensure programs in the state to provide information about 21CSLA and how 21CSLA can support program efforts.

The Center started several new research collaborations in Year 1 that continued throughout Cohort 1. One was

with the Goldman School of Public Policy to analyze the national early learning landscape to support the UTK Leadership Initiative. Additional partnerships were with RAs to understand how they facilitate and conceptualize issues of equity, develop and deliver coaching-related offerings, and provide content about transformational leadership. The Center also partnered with RAs to develop a theory of change across RAs.

In Year 3, the Center's communication with the advisory board increased from quarterly to monthly. The Center also invited one leader representative from each RA to join the advisory board for Cohort 2. The Center also created a leadership board to bring scholars and participants to 21CSLA from California Subject Matter Projects, University of California (UC), Berkeley, and UCLA, with representation from northern, central, and southern California. The Center held two hybrid retreats for RAs, with both virtual and in-person participants, which included collaborations with presenters. The fall retreat focused on understanding the connections between incarceration and schools, and included a collaboration with the UC Berkeley Art Museum. The spring retreat focused on developing the capacity of 21CSLA to support leaders of color as one of the equity initiatives, which included a collaboration with UCLA to present on microaggression. Sessions were recorded to provide opportunities for nonattendees to view them.

In May 2023, the Center hosted a Showcase, coordinated at the request of state agencies, with an estimated 100 attendees. Guests included SELPA Leads, COE staff, Geo Leads, CDE, CCEE, and SBE staff. The Showcase featured a keynote address by the president of the State Board of Education and roundtables led by RAs and the Center, which shared highlights from 21CSLA offerings and research over the past year. The Center produced a public-facing website and report on the Showcase.

In Year 3, the Center revised the Guidance Document to focus on Year 2 and developed Cohort 2 Year 1 deliverables. The Center collaborated with RAs and state agencies for input and feedback, and integrated more connections to the SOS into the deliverables.

2. *Within the SSOS, RAs collaborated with Geo Leads and COEs and highlighted their internal collaborations with the Center and other RA work.*

During Cohort 1, RA Leads reported on connections across the SSOS, especially connections with COEs as well as some with Geo Leads and SELPA Leads. In Year 2, some RAs reported specific connections, like coaches from COEs working with the multi-tiered system of supports Lead Agency, an exploration of the overlap in work with the SELPA System Improvement Lead, and partnering with SSOS Lead Agencies in the region to provide offerings as part of 21CSLA. For example, in one RA, a SELPA Lead facilitated a CoP for special education leaders, and the special education Educator Workforce Investment Grant program led another offering.

RA Leads in Year 3 mentioned collaborating with Geo Leads. One RA Lead collaborated with a Geo Lead to disseminate information about offerings. Another RA Lead presented at Geo Lead meetings to gather feedback on offerings, as the Geo Lead served on the Center's advisory council. One other RA Lead collaborated with a Geo Lead on an arts initiative, "around having more arts-integrated learning offerings, like transforming schools and instructions through arts integration... They came to us asking us if we could help them support leaders who are implementing these models in their schools because it is a transformative educational model, and the leaders needed support."

Many RA Leads discussed their relationships with COEs. Several RA Leads worked with local COE leaders to brainstorm offerings based upon local needs. One RA Lead helped modify a COE's equitable leadership framework, and other RA Leads collaborated with COEs to plan a program to address science fair participation among students from systematically marginalized communities and to develop a pipeline for aspiring rural leaders. One RA Lead shared that its relationship with a COE was "recovering" after receiving a grant that other COEs had also applied for, causing a strained relationship at first.

“ I think one of the most creative partnerships [is where our partner] identified a very low number of students from systemically marginalized communities were actually submitting projects . . . [and] found out that those kids didn't really have any mentors to help them . . . [Our partnership] is to really find leaders in the community and in the schools who want to become mentors . . . then to pair them up.

– RA Lead

RA Leads also discussed collaborations and connections with the Center and partner RAs. One RA Lead highlighted that the Center organized retreats and regional meetups for RA Leads to connect with each other and learn from each other's experiences, noting that two RA Leads "met as a collective and... planned the 2 days or day and a half of activities that [the RA Leads] wanted to learn from each other." Another RA Lead partnered with the Center's evaluator at UCLA to leverage knowledge and practices around continuous improvement for a Summer Institute. Another RA Lead focused on the collaboration across RAs in CoPs led by the Center surrounding math leadership, culture, and rural education. Some RA Leads discussed collaborating with the Center to pilot UTK Leadership modules. One RA Lead mentioned that the Inquiry Now offering was "done in conjunction" with the Center's Inquiry Why Now? team. The Center also started to convene facilitators of racial affinity groups across 21CSLA to discuss emerging issues and needs.

3. *All RA Leads connected or collaborated with organizations that are external to SSOS Leads.*

Outside of specific Lead Agencies within the SSOS and COEs, several RA Leads talked about connecting with SELPAs, specifically for assessing needs in the region to inform their offerings. Other RA Leads partnered with organizations like Education Trust, Epic Education, and Solution Tree to present or cofacilitate their offerings. Other collaborations discussed were with California Rural Education Network; Small School District Association; San Diego State University; University of California, San Francisco; University of California, Berkeley; Dyslexia Project; and University of California, Irvine, Eclipse Project to support the state environmental initiative. One RA Lead collaborated with California State University, Chico; Cal Poly Humboldt; Bell; Chico Unified School District; University of California, Davis; and California State University faculty who presented at summer and winter institutes. Two RA Leads mentioned also reaching out to and collaborating with nonprofits and community groups to involve them in their equity work. One RA Lead partnered with a rural organization "to help high schools get more kids to get on their pathway, whether it be a career technical pathway or a college pathway."

Appendix

There were two surveys. The first survey was for CoP and LPL participants and was administered twice: once in December, for CoPs and LPL offerings that ended in December, and again in May for CoPs and LPL offerings that ended between January and June. The second survey was for participants in coaching. Coaching typically occurred throughout the school year, beginning either in fall and continuing through spring or starting in spring. Therefore, the survey was administered in May for coaching offerings that ended in June or earlier.

1. CoP and LPL and Coaching Engagement From Survey Respondents

Survey respondents were asked about the number of hours in which they engaged in CoPs and LPL offerings, with each requiring at least 12 hours per offering. Approximately 80% of respondents to the CoP and LPL survey reported having participated (or planning to participate, for offerings ending in June) in at least half of the meetings for their offering, and about 50% reported attending or planning to attend all meetings (N = 589).

The evaluation team distributed the coaching survey before the end of many coaching activities,⁸ so respondents reported the approximate number of hours they had completed by the time they took the survey (N = 154) and approximate number of hours of coaching left in the year (N = 154).

- More than half (56%) of respondents had completed at least 16 hours of coaching by the time of the survey, and nearly three-quarters (73%) had completed more than 10 hours of coaching.
- Only 9% of respondents had completed their 2022–2023 coaching activities by the time they took the survey.

⁸The survey data collection period for the coaching survey and the second CoP and LPL survey began on May 4, 2023, and ended on May 24, 2023.

- Approximately 61% of respondents reported that they had 5 or fewer hours of coaching left in 2022–2023, though a fifth (21%) of respondents expected to complete an additional 6 to 10 hours of coaching before the end of the year.

2. Survey Respondent Demographics

Survey respondents were asked their demographics, including their role in education, years of experience in education, racial and ethnic identification, and gender identity. Instructional staff accounted for a third (33%) of respondents to the coaching and CoP and LPL surveys (N = 579). Nearly a quarter (23%) of respondents were teachers, and an additional 10% were instructional coaches. Principals (14%) and assistant principals (7%) together made up about a fifth of respondents, and district or county office administrators accounted for over a quarter (26%) of respondents. About 1% of respondents identified their role as “counselor.”

A third (33%) of respondents reported having 2 to 5 years of experience in their position, and an additional 21% had been in their position for a year or less (N = 580). About 19% of respondents had been in their position for 6–10 years. Around a quarter (27%) of respondents had been in their role for more than 10 years.

Respondents who identified as “white” represented a majority (58%) of respondents to the coaching and CoP and LPL surveys (N = 616). Over one-fifth (22%) of respondents identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino/a/x. Comparatively few respondents identified as African American or Black (8%) or Asian or Asian American (8%). About 6% reported that they preferred not to answer the question.

Respondents were asked their gender identity (female, male, nonbinary, or prefer not to answer). Most (79%) respondents identified as female, while 18% identified as male (N = 578). Those who identified as nonbinary made up fewer than half a percent of respondents. About 3% of respondents preferred not to answer.