21st Century California School Leadership Academy

External Evaluation Report
Cohort 2, Year 2 (2024–2025)

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Contents

Key Takeaways

Key takeaways from the external evaluation report for the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (21CSLA) Cohort 2, Year 2 include:

1. **21CSLA has broad reach and participation**. 21CSLA successfully engaged a significant portion of California's educational leadership. In the 2024–2025 year, 13,324 leaders from 95% of the state's counties (55 out of 58) enrolled in 21CSLA offerings. These offerings are provided by seven Regional Academies and a State Center at no cost to Title II–funded schools and districts.

2. **21CSLA has an impact on leadership practices**. Participants reported that taking part in 21CSLA resulted in changes to their leadership practices. Most participants (70%) reported adjusting at least one leadership practice as a result of 21CSLA. The most common adjustment was discussing equity-focused leadership practices or strategies with colleagues (75.9%), followed by creating a shared vision among stakeholders (72.1%). There was a statistically significant predictor for these changes: Respondents who attended all of an offering were more likely to report adjusting their practices compared to those who attended half or less of an offering. Leaders also spoke about having expanded their ability to facilitate cycles of inquiry, include staff voices in decision making, and identify root causes of equity issues.

3. **Equity is the foundation of 21CSLA's design and implementation**. The work is guided by an equity statement that focuses on transforming education to improve access and inclusion for systematically marginalized students and adults. In 2024–2025, Regional Academies focused on shifting leader beliefs, including addressing deficit thinking mindsets about students and helping leaders understand how their own biases influence interactions and systems. They tailored offerings to specific equity-related needs, such as equitable grading and supporting multilingual learners.

4. **The structure of professional learning offerings is effective**. Regional Academies offered communities of practice, localized professional learning, and leadership coaching. Participants gave high ratings on the usefulness of offerings, with an average of 4.26 out of 5. The most useful feature identified was the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues. Both communities of practice and localized professional learning offerings were interactive, with communities of practice often having a particular emphasis on community building, role-alike cohorts, and sustaining work over time to address specific problems of practice. Leadership coaching evolved in Year 2, with Regional Academies using data and feedback loops to help coaching participants engage in continuous improvement and track progress toward goals.

5. **21CSLA is collaborative and operates successfully within the California Statewide System of Support ecosystem**. Regional Academies and the State Center engaged in collectives to share best practices and resources internally. Within the Statewide System of Support, 21CSLA collaborated with Geographic Leads and other state initiatives to reduce duplication of effort and align and share resources.

6. **21CSLA can continue to benefit from continuous improvement**. Based on participant and leader feedback, continuous improvement can include logistics, continuity, and data usage. For logistics, offerings can continue to make format adjustments to meet participant preferences and needs in both in-person and virtual settings. For continuity, 21CSLA can provide follow-up support for participants after offerings conclude to reinforce new practices and maintain accountability. Finally, for data usage, 21CSLA can implement metrics to capture and share local impact data and can continue to collect needs assessment data to tailor offerings.

1. Introduction

The 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (21CSLA) provides equity-focused professional learning opportunities to education leaders. RTI served as the external evaluator for the first cohort of 21CSLA programming and is now evaluating Cohort 2.

21CSLA programming is offered at no cost to schools and districts in California that receive Title II funds. The University of California (UC), Berkeley is home to the 21CSLA State Center ("the Center"), which supports seven Regional Academies (RAs) across the state. The seven RAs are listed in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Regional Academies and Regional Academy Lead Agencies

Regional Academy and Geographic Region	Lead Agency
Bay Area (Alameda)	UC Berkeley
Midstate (Tulare)	Madera County Office of Education
NorCal ELC (Shasta)	Chico State Enterprises
North Bay/North Coast (Sonoma)	Sonoma County Office of Education
Placer/Sacramento	Sacramento County Office of Education
SoCal (Riverside / San Diego)	Los Angeles Education Partnership
ValCo (Kern)	Los Angeles County Office of Education

Source: 21CSLA. (n.d.). *Find your Regional Academy*. https://21cslacenter.berkeley.edu/regional-academies

These RAs have the primary role of providing professional learning for education leaders, using three distinct offerings: Communities of Practice (CoPs), Localized Professional Learning (LPL), and Leadership Coaching. Support for RAs is a central role of the Center, as outlined in the request for applications[1] for the second 21CSLA cohort, which runs from 2023 to 2026.[2]

RTI's evaluation of 21CSLA Cohort 2 focuses on collaborative organizational structures, educational partner engagement, RAs' professional learning offerings, and how the Center and RAs focus on equity in the work.

Below, we share the evaluation methods used in Year 2. We then describe early evidence of impacts of Cohort 2 offerings, how equity was the foundation of these offerings, and other features that characterized the offerings, as well as participants' experiences of these features. We offer a summary of connections to other initiatives that participants, RAs, and the Center had within and beyond California's Statewide System of Support (SSOS).[3] Finally, we discuss recommendations and next steps for the external evaluation.

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[1] California Department of Education. (2025). *Request for Applications: 21st Century California School Leadership Academy, Cohort 2*. https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r12/cslacgp23rfa.asp

[2] 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (21CSLA). (2025). *21CSLA Guidance Document, Cohort 2, Years 2-3*. California Collaborative for Educational Excellence. https://21cslacenter.berkeley.edu/publications/21csla-guidance-document-october-2025

[3] The SSOS is designed to build capacity for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to meet students' needs, address disparities in opportunities and outcomes, and sustain improvements.

2. Evaluation Methods

RTI's evaluation of 21CSLA is grounded in the following four evaluation questions:

1. What is the impact of 21CSLA on leaders, schools, and students? (Section 4)
2. How does 21CSLA exemplify and sustain effective professional learning for leaders? (Section 5)
3. How is equity centered in 21CSLA's work? (Section 6)
4. How does 21CSLA make progress in relation to specified metrics and achieve its intended goals? (Appendix A)

Below are the methods we used to explore these questions.

Qualitative data. RTI gathered information about the features and outcomes of 21CSLA's Cohort 2 offerings through focus groups with Center and RA leaders as well as a review of 21CSLA documents (e.g., Center briefs and newsletters; Center and RA website content). In spring 2025, 23 leaders participated in hour-long RA focus groups—one focus group per RA, with two to five participants per group. In addition, 16 21CSLA State Center leaders participated in hour-long focus groups about the Center's deliverables.

The RTI team categorized transcribed data from the focus groups according to codes aligned to evaluation questions. The evaluation team composed an analytic memo for each code, identifying themes and representative excerpts within each set of code output. The team triangulated findings from focus group data, document review, and participant survey findings. The participant survey collected quantitative data as well as qualitative responses to open-ended questions. The RTI team analyzed qualitative survey data to identify prevalent themes as well as nuances in participants' perspectives.

Quantitative data. Quantitative information comes from a participant survey administered in waves to participants throughout Year 2 (2024–2025). Data in this report reflect responses to questions that remained after revisions to the survey in winter 2025. The survey was revised from Year 1 based on the psychometric analysis of the Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 participant surveys as well as feedback from RA Leads. We adjusted the response options of program offerings, aligned participant roles to the 21CSLA Center's database elements, and reformatted questions to align with

the evaluation questions. The Cohort 2 participant survey included three major domains:

- Experience with the 21CSLA offerings
- Perceived usefulness of the professional learning
- Adjustment of leadership practices and equity-focused strategies

The survey was administered to an estimated 4,860 unique participants who participated in Year 2 offerings that ended by June 30, 2025: 1,350 unique participants clicked the survey link (27.8%). The survey data analyzed were narrowed to include only participants who provided their role (n = 1,306).

Descriptive statistics were used to understand participant perception of the usefulness of the offering and adjustment of their leadership practices as a result of the offerings. Regression analyses were used to examine the association of engagement with CoP and LPL offerings perceived usefulness or changes in leadership practices. The model controlled for RA membership and participant roles to remove the confounding of RA-level differences and improve estimation precision.

3. Overview of 21CSLA's Professional Learning Offerings

Table 2 provides an overview of CoPs, LPLs, and leadership coaching, describing each type of offering according to 21CSLA guidance provided to RAs. The guidance emphasizes that these offerings are grounded in four principles related to (1) equity-focused goals, (2) research-based approaches to targeting goals, (3) ongoing learning opportunities, and (4) evaluation and continuous improvement related to program effectiveness. The guidance also aligns the design of offerings to a research base and existing professional learning standards, and includes considerations to guide structures, processes, content, and continuous improvement approaches for each offering area.

The participant survey gathered responses from 1,306 individuals who participated in a CoP or LPL or who received leadership coaching. Half the respondents worked in schools, with 31.3% as teacher leaders and 20.4% as school or site leaders. The rest of the respondents included district leaders (17.3%), county leaders (13.1%), supporting staff (8.0%), coaches (4.1%), higher education researchers (1.7%), and leaders with unspecified roles (4.2%).

The vast majority of participants reported attending most or all of their offering (83.9%) and only 5.2% reported attending less than half. Among the 177 respondents who reported having received coaching as part of their 21CSLA experience, only 64 individuals (37.4%) said that they had completed their coaching experience at the time of the survey, but 150 (90.4%) reported having completed at least 11 hours of coaching.

Table 2: Characteristics of LPLs, CoPs, and Coaching

RA Offering Type	Select Characteristics from 21CSLA Guidance Document for Cohort 2
CoP	Small, sustained, and role-alike professional learning cohorts whose goals are grounded in leadership for equity, continuous improvement, and digitally mediated learning in addition to prioritized special topic activities for California. CoP offerings are a minimum of 12 hours.
LPL	Professional learning offered in diverse forms and informed by regional needs and local input. Also reflective of prioritized special topic activities for California. LPL offerings are a minimum of 12 hours.
Coaching	Individualized coaching built on relational trust, centered on equity-related problems, leveraging continuous improvement principles. Aligned to the California Professional Standards for Education Leaders. Coaching is a minimum of 25 hours. Coaches provide 25 hours of leadership coaching within one year.

Source: 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (21CSLA. (2025). *21CSLA Guidance Document, Cohort 2, Years 2-3*. California Collaborative for Educational Excellence. https://21cslacenter.berkeley.edu/publications/21csla-guidance-document-october-2025

Note: In the Guidance Document, the 21CSLA Center defines leadership for equity as "transform[ing] 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. 6).

4. 21CSLA's Impact

Evaluation Question: *What is the impact of 21CSLA on leaders, schools, and students?*

The purpose of our impact evaluation question for Year 2 was to collect and describe early evidence of the perceived impacts of 21CSLA on leaders, hoped-for and anticipated impacts for schools and students, and expected impacts for schools and students.

Table 3 summarizes the number and percentage of respondents who acknowledged having adjusted their leadership practices *as a result of* participating in 21CSLA. More than half the respondents indicated adjusting each type of the practices listed on the survey, except for implementing district-level policies or practices to address systemic inequalities (46.6%). The majority (70.9%) of participants reported adjustment of at least one practice and 16.5% reported adjustment across all nine types of practices. The most reported type of practices were discussing equity-focused leadership perspectives or strategies with colleagues because of 21CSLA (75.9%).

Table 3: Percentage of Participants Who Reported Adjusting Leadership Practice as a Result of 21CSLA Offering

Leadership Practice	Percentage Agreement (%)	Total Number of Responses
Discussing equity-focused leadership perspectives or strategies with colleagues	75.9	997
Creating a shared purpose/vision among multiple stakeholders	72.1	992
Leading the identification of root causes of an equity-related problem of practice	62.6	986
Conducting cycles of inquiry to address an equity-related problem of practice	58.1	983
Implementing district-level policies or practices to address systemic inequalities	46.6	981
Implementing school-level policies or practices to address systemic inequalities	57.9	977
Creating school or district level teams to conduct cycles of inquiry for improvement	52.0	976
Training other leaders on the content and activities from the offering	54.4	982
Providing opportunities for teachers to lead (e.g., on school-level teams or as coaches)	60.9	976

Further analyses showed that these self-perceived changes were significantly predicted by the level of offering attendance. Compared to those who attended half or less than half of the offering, respondents who attended all of the offering were more likely to report adjusting at least one of their leadership practices as a result of participating in 21CSLA (coefficient = 0.62, se = 0.30, t = 2.09. p < .05).

Participants who reported adjusting leadership practices were asked to provide an example of a change they had made. Open-ended responses described how participants facilitated cycles of inquiry and equity-focused professional development at their sites, included more staff and teacher voice in decision-making, and engaged in systemic equity reviews. In the words of one participant:

> "One way I adjusted my leadership practices was by leading a cycle of inquiry focused on increasing equitable access to the math curriculum for multilingual learners. After reviewing assessment data and engaging colleagues in root cause analysis, we identified that language barriers and limited scaffolds were contributing to gaps in student achievement. I facilitated a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle with our math and ELD (English Language Development) teams, where we implemented strategies such as more visual supports, vocabulary previews, and structured peer collaboration. Throughout the process, I provided ongoing data to help teachers monitor progress and adjust instruction. This collaborative effort not only helped us better support our students but also created a shared vision among staff for improving access and equity in our instructional practices."

Survey respondents also described how participating in 21CSLA offerings improved their ability to work for equity-oriented outcomes at their sites. The impacts they named included:

- "Made me consider the perspective of others and how culture, gender, and other factors impact daily learning situations."
- "Improved my ability to work toward equity-oriented outcomes by helping me slow down, listen more deeply, and lead with empathy and intention. The space allowed me to reflect on my own biases, explore how trauma and lived experiences shape engagement, and reconnect with the 'why' behind equity work."

- "Pushed my thinking further on how inequities may be inadvertently exist within our systems—even as we want what's best for our teachers and students."
- "Provided strategies for recruiting and retaining teachers of color, such as widening recruitment pipelines and building mentorship supports. It also challenged me to reflect on implicit biases and to facilitate ongoing equity-focused conversations with staff."

In open-ended survey responses, participants also reflected on the impact they anticipated their participation in 21CSLA offerings would have on their organizations and, ultimately, on students. They intended to foster community-building and positive cultural shifts within their sites and facilitate equity-focused professional learning. One participant wrote about wanting a "professional development shift from compliance-based training to transformational learning experiences rooted in equity and cultural responsiveness."

For student impact, many respondents wrote about how they anticipated their participation would lead to increased student belonging, engagement, and, ultimately, achievement in school. One participant reported, "I would hope to see engagement increase, and progress academically, social-emotionally, and behaviorally," while another added a "sense of increased autonomy/choice for every student" to the list of hoped-for increases. "Ultimately," wrote one respondent, "students will experience our schools as places where their identities are affirmed, their potential is recognized, and their success is expected."

In focus groups, we also asked RA and Center leaders to reflect on some of the impacts they believed 21CSLA was already making, and impacts they anticipated. These included impacts on (1) education system leaders who are often the participants in 21CSLA professional learning opportunities, (2) leaders' sites (e.g., districts, schools), (3) teachers and other school-based educators, and (4) students.

RA leaders reported that **education system leaders** had learned about culturally responsive teaching and how to adjust education systems for equity; the role of colonization in education systems; and how to coach staff to improve instruction. Leaders increased their self-efficacy and confidence to address equity issues in their sites (e.g., by engaging in critical conversations with staff to counter deficit perspectives of students) and facilitate related professional learning for their staff. They gained actionable tools and connected to a network of supportive peers. One RA leader shared that a participant had reported to them that "the sessions have given me personal and professional tools to be able to be more effective in discussing root causes."

RA leaders also anticipated that, as a result of 21CSLA professional learning opportunities, leaders would know how to use improvement science to understand root causes and analyze data connected to equity-related problems of practice; feel a strong sense of well-being and resilience; self-reflect, address biases, and engage in asset-based thinking about students and families; and find ways to measure impacts of changes they make in their sites.

Reflecting on **impacts at the site level,** RA leaders described how sites explored root causes of equity issues; examined student data (including in data-focused meetings) and addressed students' needs (including by offering more equity-related supports to students); and created action plans, equitable grading practices, an artificial intelligence (AI) policy, common assessments, revised mission statements, and other tools and resources.

As one RA leader described, "In that particular part of our region, they created, with their facilitator and with their staff, a walkthrough tool," based on empathy interviews with students and observations "in order to look for certain things that the students were highlighting that they needed."

RA leaders anticipated that sites would continue to engage in root cause analyses as well as continuous improvement processes, and that they would listen more to students at the margins and bring about cultural shifts reflecting the humanity of the people in their spaces.

RA leaders reported that, as a result of 21CSLA offerings, **teachers and teacher leaders** had collaborated across grade levels, shifted their mindsets about student learning, and learned about inquiry-based instruction and other instructional practices. An RA leader recounted that a "CoP met for the first time offsite for a full day, and it was just a fantastic day of learning where educators from very different local contexts came together to talk about how to improve instructional practice so that it is meaningful, it is student-centered, it is hands-on." RA leaders anticipated that educators would focus on instructional practices and systems for inclusive and positive classroom environments, and that they would collaborate and support one another more as a downstream impact of 21CSLA offerings.

RA leaders reported that **students** gained more equitable access to math courses and reported feelings of belonging, connections to their school, and connections to adults. Young people gave their expert input to education system leaders (including through a youth Tribal council). In the words of one RA leader, "I don't think we're thinking about students separately—that they're part of the conversation of equity. They're part of the conversation of liberation, that we're not defining this for them, that we're doing it in collaboration with them and growing our capacity so that we could do that… Let's sit with students, let's do this and build this together." RA leaders hoped that 21CSLA would help students to understand their power to bring about change and flourish in their identity; experience education systems of creativity and inquiry; and feel a greater sense of belonging and stronger relationships with adults in schools.

Center leaders discussed the overall growth 21CSLA had experienced and the impacts of both the Center's and RAs' work. They reported that relationship-building and trust between the Center and RAs increased in 2024–2025, and that improved Digital Learning Hub resources facilitated training and information sharing within 21CSLA. 21CSLA was offering enhanced resources to support education system leaders, who then supported teachers in their learning and growth. RAs were helping to scale effective ideas in different contexts throughout the state and were learning from how the Center modeled CoPs and LPLs and the content expertise it shared. Coaching was having strong positive impacts on leaders, and the fact that it was no-cost was an important facilitator of the work.

Center leaders reported that in 2024–2025 21CSLA had seen increased interest and participation in offerings and increased audiences on social media. They also noted that there was even stronger collaboration and alignment among the Center and its partners. In the words of one Center leader:

"Organizations that are doing things across the state on important issues see the value of collaborating with and using the resources of 21CSLA to further objectives and arenas that 21CSLA is not necessarily directly involved in, but definitely supportive of. So that's one other aspect of impact and engagement that we've been involved in."

5. 21CSLA's Effective Professional Learning

Evaluation Question: *How does 21CSLA exemplify and sustain effective professional learning for leaders?*

In the Cohort 1 evaluation, we identified effective professional learning elements across all three 21CSLA offering types. These are shown in **Appendix B** and align to research and evidence from professional learning and leadership research as well as the Quality Professional Learning Standards (California Department of Education) and California Professional Standards for Education Leaders.

In the survey, participants were asked to rank the usefulness of 21CSLA offerings in nine domains related to features of effective professional learning, on a five-point scale ranging from "not at all useful" (1) to "extremely useful" (5). **Table 4** summarizes the distribution of the reported usefulness. Participants generally found the offerings to be useful in each domain, with ratings ranging from 4.1 (SD = 1.02) to 4.43 (SD = 0.81). Participants reported that the offerings were most useful for providing opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and least useful for providing individual supports through feedback on their work.

Table 4: Average Usefulness Ratings of 21CSLA Offerings

Offering	Mean	SD
Opportunities to engage in continuous improvement skills	4.32	0.851
Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues	4.43	0.806
Opportunities to practice leadership skills in the sessions	4.19	0.920
Enough time to gain leadership knowledge and skills	4.23	0.877
A format conducive to my learning	4.39	0.819
Leadership content relevant to my role	4.38	0.850
Professional development or training techniques that I can use to address needs in my context	4.32	0.867
Equity-focused leadership content	4.20	0.935
Individual supports through feedback on my work	4.09	1.024
Average usefulness across all nine domains	**4.26**	**0.748**

The majority of participants reported that their offering included opportunities to engage in continuous improvement skills such as root cause analysis, problems of practice, and implementing evidence-based practices. The overall perceived usefulness was found to be predicted by the offering attendance. Respondents who attended half or all the offering provided rated much higher on its usefulness than those who did not (coefficient = 0.575, se = 0.17, t = 3.42, p < 0.001).

In focus groups, RA leaders spoke about successes that characterized Year 2 of their Cohort 2 programming. Common themes across RA feedback included that they could listen to voices in the field about local priorities and craft equity-focused offerings (or support grantees to craft LPLs and CoPs) that addressed those specific priorities. Sample topics included education for Indigenous students, ethnic studies, equitable scheduling, education funding, and school closures. Leaders from multiple RAs spoke about the innovative, relevant professional learning they offered this year (facilitated by field experts), as well as the throughlines across their LPL, CoP, and coaching offerings that reflected coherence and mission alignment.

RA leaders reported that there was a great deal of interest in their offerings, thanks in part to positive word-of-mouth from participants in past offerings. Some coaching offerings had waitlists of leaders eager to participate. RA staff saw impacts on leaders they worked with over time, including increased leadership capacity for change and the attainment of individual goals. RAs were working on scaling their offerings while ensuring that their services were not duplicating professional learning supports being offered by other entities.

Next, we delve more deeply into how RA leaders described their CoP, LPL, and coaching offerings in Year 2 and how they tailored offerings to meet contextual needs.

CoPs and LPLs

Leaders mentioned several **similarities between CoPs and LPLs**, emphasizing that the lines between these two types of offerings often blurred. Both forms of offering (1) often focused on topics of interest identified by practitioners, (2) provided opportunities for school leaders to connect with one another and feel a sense of belonging, and (3) involved interactive learning. Both types of offerings guided leaders to "feel empowered to make change and lead change, and to figure out how to do that together," in the words of one RA leader.

However, RA leaders also highlighted **distinct characteristics of CoPs and LPLs**, as captured in **Table 5**. One RA stated that working together as a community was a more of a key characteristic of CoPs than of LPLs:

> "The thing that we found that distinguished [a CoP from] an LPL—a traditional training workshop—is the fact that there is an emphasis on that community aspect of it, right? It's learning as a community, it's learning from one another, learning from one another's experiences, and attacking that problem of practice… as that community."

Another RA leader reflected that, in their experience, CoPs featured an extra call to action and emphasis on putting learning into motion.

Table 5: Sample Characteristics of CoPs and LPLs

Sample CoP Characteristics	Sample LPL Characteristics
• Coherence around a problem of practice • Space for participants to identify strategies to address problems and to practice learnings or skills • Peer-to-peer sharing of resources among participants, • Community-building characterized by equity of voice; can be a self-driven learning space • Role-alike participation (e.g., all principals) • Participant-designed and -led • Typically recurring (e.g., monthly) meetings	• Gatherings of many types of leaders who examine multilayered, complex ideas (e.g., themed summits) • Addressing a learning need identified in the field • Use of adult learning theory and digitally mediated learning methods to share content • Opportunities for learning broadly about a topic area (with CoPs offering deeper dives on more specific elements) • Facilitator-designed and -led • Can be standalone offerings

When asked about **patterns of participation** in CoPs and LPLs, one RA Lead noted that participants who joined offerings with a team of colleagues had more consistent attendance than participants who signed up alone. The Lead reported that "when you're coming with a team, you're holding each other accountable for showing up because you know that you're collectively working on some type of objective together." Their RA collected data that suggests participants who came with a team also applied their learnings in their sites more reliably than others.

Another Lead noted that, over the course of a year, participation in offerings increased as positive word spread about the professional learning opportunities. There was some overlap of participants in LPLs and CoPs, and some coaching participants and coaches also attended LPL offerings together.

Coaching

Three themes stood out as RA leaders described highlights of their coaching programs this year. These were

1. the use of data and feedback loops to help coaching participants engage in continuous improvement and track progress toward goals;
2. the deepening of equity-centered coaching; and
3. collaborations to support coaches in offering impactful, individualized supports to school leaders.

Use of data and feedback loops to support continuous improvement and track participants' progress toward goals. RA leaders described data sources, processes, and tools that coaches and RAs used to continuously improve coaching, meet participants' needs, and support them in achieving their goals. These included surveys of coaches and coach participants, pre-coaching equity assessments, a measurement tool to track progress related to participants' problems of practice, a coach self-reflection, and reviews of coach notes by coaching coordinators to build supports for addressing individual participants' needs. In the words of one RA leader:

> "We do a lot of feedback loops, and we do a lot of surveys with our [coaching] participants… Our coaches look at the data, we look at the data, we summarize it, we talk about it, and I've never been part of a group that has a better feedback loops than what we're doing."

Deepening of equity-centered coaching. RA leaders reported that, in 2024–2025, coaches deepened the equity focus of their work with participants. Coaches focused on supporting participants to address equity problems of practice. In turn, they were supported by RAs in their development as coaches—examples include a book study in which coaches explored how to support equitable leadership practices and an equity-conscious leadership CoP that coaches attended. RA leaders spoke about prioritizing coaching candidates who demonstrated equity mindsets and about how seasoned coaches were deepening their skills around coaching for equity. As one RA leader said:

> "We have a whole cadre of returning coaches and a really wonderfully experienced and equity-minded cadre, so they get to share with each other their best practices. They're doing peer observations as we speak. And so I've seen an increase in…coaches feeling more comfortable leaning into those conversations and staying in that lane [of an equity focus] with 21CSLA coaching."

Collaborations to support coaches in offering impactful, individualized supports to school leaders. RA leaders described several collaborative supports aimed at helping coaches to share, learn, and grow in their practices. Forums included a Center-run Coaching Collective and—varying between RAs—coaching support network meetings, coaching CoPs, coach retreats, quarterly coach meetings, one-on-one check-ins between coaches and RA leaders, and attendance at biweekly RA planning meetings. One RA leader shared an example of the growth they had seen in coaches over time, showcased at a coaching CoP:

> "I attend the coaching community of practice. And what I can see with leaders [is] the fact that they are asking questions that they didn't ask before. They are seeing and wondering things... They're aware of their sphere of control and they're trying to figure out, 'How can I expand that sphere so then I can make a greater impact? And what are the things I can say and do?'"

Examples of How RAs Tailored Their Offerings to Address Needs

RA Leads described **relying on numerous sources of data to make community-informed decisions about offerings and tailor professional learning** to address local needs. RAs used information from feedback surveys, advisory councils, scans of local education policies and trends, and other sources to provide needs-aligned professional learning. Leads described close collaboration with participants to assess needs not only at the beginning of offerings but throughout them. In the words of one Lead:

> " "When [participants are] actually at an LPL, we continue to ask them, 'What are your greatest areas of needs?' Because those can change from August on through, so just being able to allow them to have that voice and that space to say, 'We hear you and we want to do what we can from 21CSLA to make sure that we're meeting what it is that you need most.'"

Offerings were also developed as a result of informal conversations that RAs had with system leaders, who had specific areas they wanted to learn more about but not the bandwidth to conduct research or organize an offering themselves. **Table 6** describes many of the sources of data RAs used beyond those informal conversations to address needs, as well as examples of how they tailored offerings.

The membership, size, meeting frequency, and structure of **RAs' advisory councils** varied, but Leads who spoke about receiving input from their councils agreed that they were a helpful mechanism for ensuring that offerings were field-informed and gathering valuable input on design and decision-making. Participants included regional and County Office of Education leaders, superintendents and other Local Education Agency (LEA) leaders, site leaders, and teacher leaders. The Center also had its own advisory council, and RAs reported learning more about the Center during convenings of the council.

Table 6: Data RAs Used to Tailor Offerings, and Examples of Tailored Offerings

Sample Sources of Data That Informed Tailored Offerings	Examples of Tailored Offerings
• CoP and LPL applications • Needs assessments, disaggregated by county to inform catalog of offerings • Participant feedback surveys; in-the-moment or end-of-session feedback collected in meetings • Advisory council input (e.g., superintendents' ideas about local needs) • Coaching records • Street data; localized evaluation methods that may reflect Indigenous data practices • Needs that arise from partnering with institutes of higher education that credential educators • Local district priorities • Local and national events impacting education • Policy initiatives; local legislation	• Continuing an LPL as a CoP so participants could deepen their knowledge and practice of a specific topic • Addressing an unmet need to have a space for equity-forward conversations • Providing topic-specific breakout rooms in virtual meetings • Shifting format from fully virtual to a mix of face-to-face and virtual meetings when leaders expressed that they wanted to begin convening in person • Changing the meeting schedule to accommodate school leaders' schedules

Collaborations That Supported 21CSLA Development and Offerings

RAs provide opportunities for collaboration within their offerings, as an element of effective professional learning. They also model collaboration by connecting among themselves, with external partners, and with other initiatives in the SSOS. Sharing expertise and connecting with others to continuously improve their practices is a means for RAs to strengthen the quality, spread, and sustainability of their programming.

RAs collaborated with one another at Center Collective gatherings, fall and spring retreats, Center workgroups, monthly informal meetings among all RAs, and informal check-ins between RA directors as needed. RAs exchanged resources, bounced ideas off each other, and referred facilitators to one another. RA leaders spoke about having done at least one intervisitation over the last 2 years, and about how instructive the process was, including opportunities to learn about an RA's coach-onboarding process, discuss coaching impact measurements, and share specific strategies for coaching.

Reflecting on intervisitations, one RA leader said, "What we walk away with is definite mindset shifts, because we have seven programs [that] work sometimes in isolation, and this is the time that we come together and we listen." Their colleague added, "I thought it was very enlightening to hear exactly how some of these other RAs, how their programs may look slightly different, and how they might make some slight adjustments. It's nice to be able to hear what's working well for them, compare it to how we're implementing things as well." A leader from another RA described intervisitations as a unique peer-to-peer space where RAs could come together to discuss challenges or questions they were confronting in their daily lives, sharing with colleagues who deeply understood the nature of the work on the ground.

RAs also reported collaborating with other agencies within the SSOS, most often Geo Leads (one RA leader also mentioned partnering with Equity Leads). Describing their collaboration with a Geo Lead, an RA leader said:

> "We attend quarterly Geo Lead meetings where we share highlights of the work and solicit feedback from the Geo Leaders to help inform our work. That group has helped us promote programming and has completed needs assessments to provide valuable insight into how to best serve the various parts of our region."

Another RA leader reported regularly meeting with their Geo Lead "and the leads from the other CDE [California Department of Education] initiatives within the SSOS to share resources, information, provide input, gather feedback, and [for] overall collaboration. 21CSLA presents at every meeting and facilitates [the Geo Lead's] annual strategic planning." A leader of a third RA reported attending SSOS meetings "to learn about other statewide projects and share about our work in 21CSLA," and yet another noted, "We actively highlight resources of CCEE [California Collaborative for Educational Excellence] and CDE in professional learning and in the regional newsletter."

Finally, RA leaders described presentations they had made at conferences throughout California as well as their partnerships and connections with other entities, including County Offices of Education, LEAs, universities, and nonprofits and grant-funded organizations. These included the following:

- Conferences: University Council for Educational Administration, Curriculum and Improvement Support Committee, California Association of Asian & Pasifika Leaders in Education, and Association of California School Administrators (ACSA)
- Nonprofits and grant-funded organizations: 'ataaxum Pomkwaan, So Say We All, and the California Mathematics, Science, and Computer Science Professional Learning Partnership
- Universities: UC San Diego, UC Merced, Cal Poly Humboldt School of Education, the Center for Applied Policy in Education at UC Davis School of Education, and The Center for Research on Expanding Educational Opportunity at UC Berkeley

6. 21CSLA's Focus on Equity

Evaluation Question: *How is equity centered in 21CSLA's work?*

The mission and purpose of 21CSLA is to "design, implement, and sustain high-quality, equity-centered professional learning." As such, the 21CSLA Center created an equity statement to serve as a "guidepost" for the collective work of all 21CSLA partners. In this section, we describe how RAs' offerings aligned with the 21CSLA Equity Statement.

> **21CSLA Equity Statement:**
> 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.

Explicit Focus on Marginalized or Underserved Students and Educators

RAs developed and implemented professional learning experiences to serve students and adults who are marginalized and underserved.

Explicit focus on marginalized or underserved students

RAs implemented professional learning that focused on improving outcomes for specific student groups such as multilingual learners and immigrant (including undocumented) students. Two RAs hosted student panels in their regions' yearly conferences or at institutes to ensure students' voices and experiences grounded their offerings. A few RAs noted that they were connecting their professional learning directly to the needs of LEAs in need of Differentiated Assistance (DA).[4] In the words of one RA leader:

> "Part of our charge here at the county office is supporting districts that are eligible for DA, which means that we're helping them focus their dashboard data and really drill down to root cause analysis. From that, we're able to see really specific trends around what's happening here in our local area to make sure that when we're offering learning through [21]CSLA that we're incorporating that and also incorporating continuous improvement."

Explicit focus on marginalized or underserved adults

RAs developed offerings for specific groups of marginalized or underserved leaders or educators. RAs created affinity groups for leaders of different social identities and supported the diversification of education leadership. One RA leader also spoke about providing online learning opportunities for rural leaders unable to easily access in-person learning experiences.

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[4] LEAs are identified for DA when specific student groups have not met performance targets for 2 or more years or the LEA has not met other CA dashboard outcomes for 2 or more years.

Content to Transform Inequitable Systems and Improve Access, Opportunity, and Inclusion

RAs were helping build the capacity of leaders to disrupt and transform inequitable systems in their sites by providing **specific content to help them cultivate the necessary mindsets of equity-focused leaders.** Many RAs focused on shifting leaders' mindsets and beliefs and becoming aware of their own biases and identities. For example, one offering focused on addressing leaders' abilities to address their staffs' "deficit thinking." Another RA helped leaders understand their own traumas and triggers that could influence how they treat or interact with students. One RA leader said that in 21CSLA offerings "there is a huge focus on, 'Who are you as a person? What are your own unconscious biases? What is your background?'"

As mentioned above, **RAs tailored their opportunities for system leaders to address specific access, opportunity, and inclusion challenges in their regions.** For example, one RA developed an LPL for leaders experiencing school closures or mergers and another for leaders planning equitable scheduling in secondary schools. Another RA implemented offerings focused on culturally responsive environments and equitable systems for grading. The latter provided opportunities for "talking about how grading systems are not equitable at the moment, and then unpacking and having continuous conversations about the very nuanced decisions that [educators] are making in separate courses that affect a person's whole life trajectory," (RA leader).

RAs used tools, resources, and frameworks to design and support understanding of equity leadership. For example, one RA created an equity leadership continuum and had leaders reflect on their growth using the continuum.

21CSLA coaching was specifically directed to focus on building leaders' equity mindsets and skillsets by focusing on an equity problem of practice. To ensure coaches had the skillsets and mindsets to support leaders' development, **RAs provided opportunities for coaches to hone their equity coaching skills**. For example, one RA implemented an equity-conscious leadership institute for all coaches and those interested in becoming coaches. Another conducted a book study with coaches to strengthen their equity lenses. A third RA created two cohorts of coaches to differentiate equity coaching skills for emerging coaches and coaches who had more experience with coaching for equity.

7. Recommendations

In this section, we discuss recommendations drawn from participant, Center leader, and RA leader feedback to continuously improve 21CSLA and its evaluation.

1. **Continue providing evidence-based professional learning offerings**. RAs offer CoPs, LPLs, and leadership coaching. The offerings align to the professional learning research base. Many respondents expressed appreciation for the offerings and encouraged continuation. For example, participants reported that continued offerings will encourage more leaders to attend, the offerings were well-planned with enough time, and that the participating teams had an effective learning experience.

2. **Make adjustments to the offering formats, including logistics, as needed**. RA offerings are through a variety of formats (i.e., virtual, hybrid, and face-to-face). Several respondents preferred face-to-face over virtual but were satisfied with the virtual platform. Others mentioned poor audio, the need for a climate-controlled room, and consistent wi-fi in convenings with large groups. RAs could consider adjustments to formats based on participant needs.

3. **Improve needs assessments to tailor offerings to participant needs**. RA offerings are tailored to participant needs, as demonstrated by RA use of ongoing needs assessments. Several respondents made suggestions to support continuous improvements

on tailoring offerings. For example, respondents expressed interest in (1) specific skills and practice for their job role, (2) more time for questions about sample situations, and (3) follow-up conferences to focus on strategy-specific practice. Others advocated for broader education contexts such as including early childhood-specific program roll-outs and guest expert speakers.

4. **Provide follow-up and continuity after offerings**. RAs provide offerings for both new and continuing participants; however, several participants without offering follow-ups expressed interest in continued support to reinforce their practices learned from the offerings. For example, several separate groups of respondents shared that they will continue to meet as a team and wished for coaching and opportunities to hold them accountable for implementation of their ideas.

5. **Plan and implement metrics for offering-related impact**. RAs and offering participants provided examples of impact, from participant knowledge and new practices to changes in their districts and schools that influence improved student achievement. The external evaluation collects these data across RAs. However, many participants are making impacts in their settings that may be helpful for other leaders across the state. RAs could consider collecting local impact data to provide evidence of impact as exemplars in the evaluation.

Appendix A: Examples of 21CSLA Center Progress on Deliverables

RAs and the Center are expected to meet the cumulative 2-year deliverables between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2026. **Table A-1** lists the Center's deliverables in Areas 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8 and examples of progress toward them in Cohort 2, Year 2 from data collection through June 2025.

Areas 3, 4, and 5 are not the focus of the evaluation, and there were also 21CSLA coaching enhancements added to the deliverables in Year 2 that were associated with another funding source. However, Center staff referenced activities related to these deliverables in focus group discussions. They spoke of extending their work on digitally mediated professional learning and offering resources on their Digital Learning Hub (Area 3) and sharing Universal Transitional Kindergarten (UTK) training modules (Area 4)—including through CoPs. The Center's website showcases its work on briefs and webinars, and Center staff discussed the progress of the Professional Learning Lessons Study Collective in a focus group discussion (Area 5). For coaching enhancements, a Center leader spoke about completing several onboardings where "we have supported new members of RA teams to get a sense of who the State Center is, what is 21CSLA coaching, what are the key components, and who are these people that are helping support them in this work." The Center also held a Coaching Clinic on June 4 and 5, 2025.

Table A-1: Center Deliverables and Examples of Progress in Cohort 2, Year 2

Work Areas and Deliverables within Each Area	Examples of Progress Toward Deliverables Area in Year 2 of Cohort 2
Area 1: Collaborative Organizational Structures: Create ongoing meetings, workgroups, communications, and data structures that facilitate the collaborative and inclusive work of the project. The Center will:	
1. Regularly utilize multi-modal communications to collaborate with RA Leads, educational partners, and external stakeholders, including CDE, SBE (the State Board of Education), and CCEE.	• 21CSLA internal newsletters (for Center staff; for RA staff). • Communications loops with CCEE and CDE.
2. Coordinate and facilitate weekly Collective meetings related to the eight key areas of work.	Center-led Collectives on topics including leadership coaching, program development, UTK, and continuous improvement. UTK Collectives offer an "opportunity to continue to build relationships and synchronize our efforts and equity across the state by bringing all of our trainers together to receive updated content and UTK field developments, share research and practices, and communicate the new ways the initiative will be implemented," (Center leader).
3. Host bi-annual hybrid Collective retreats that foster the 21CSLA community, embed relevant research, employ digitally mediated learning techniques, and create collaborative activities for shared continuous improvement efforts.	Hybrid Collective retreats supported by enhanced capacity and knowledge among new staff of supporting hybrid events, that also feature videos of students in action.

Table A-1: Center Deliverables and Examples of Progress in Cohort 2, Year 2—continued

Work Areas and Deliverables within Each Area	Examples of Progress Toward Deliverables Area in Year 2 of Cohort 2
4. Hold individual Regional Academy check-in meetings at least once annually to adjust and enhance Center programming and service to the regions.	Center staff check-ins with RA staff multiple times per year, including Center staff for each RA in each area of work serving as point people for questions; Center staff check-ins prior to continuous improvement Collective meetings. RAs reported that Center staff were responsive to their questions and have adjusted some practices in response to feedback.
5. Refine the statewide database to synthesize LPL, coaching, and CoP attendance and participation reports from each RA to share with state partners. Produce customized reports for each RA and support Leads in data analysis and interpretation that informs the larger work of 21CSLA.	• Database that offers RAs a "bird's eye view" to understand participation and attendance trends (Center leader). • Addition of data analyst role that will facilitate understanding of impacts.
6. Design and implement internal collaborative structures on identified focal areas (e.g., Center all-team, area work teams, leadership team, and board).	• Leadership board that includes university professors, has enhanced presence in 21CSLA retreats, and helps ground 21CSLA's work in scholarship. • Work across teams on professional learning packages. CoP involving Center staff.
Area 2: Educational Partner Engagement: Connect, engage, and partner with Pre-K–12 leaders, SSOS, and external organizations to foster inclusive educational partner input and engagement. The Center will:	
1. Convene a bi-annual advisory council consisting of a group of state-level leaders who represent active educational leadership-oriented professional and policy organizations.	Advisory council made up of a mix of professionals from education agencies and organizations, as well as universities. This has facilitated stronger connections with the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA).
2. Contribute to and participate in all SSOS meetings and other SSOS-hosted activities, including submitting newsletter items to CCEE and collaborating with other SSOS project leads.	• Addition of role of SSOS liaison "to help us be more elevated in our consciousness about how to support the system of support" (Center leader) and "go beyond what the state system of support initially referred to as awareness of each other to this concept of integration" (Center leader). • 21CSLA staff presenting at SSOS agencies' events and forming strategic partnership with Equity Leads.
3. Strategically submit papers, workshops, panel discussions, and other presentations to local, state, and national educational leadership conferences with a focus on equity to generate exposure and access to 21CSLA research, projects, and offerings. Co-present with RA Leads when appropriate.	Presentations (including some co-led with RA staff): • Empowering Critical Gen AI Literacy with UDL 3.0. at UDL Leading the Way Summit (San Joaquin Office of Education). • Critical AI Literacy, Empowering Youth at CISC conference (Anaheim). • Designing Affinity Groups to Uplift, Amplify, and Empower Leaders of Color at the ACSA Equity Summit. • UTK Module 7: Family and Community Engagement for High-Quality Transitional Kindergarten at Community Engagement Initiative's Peer Leading and Learning Network (Anaheim).
4. Upon request and, when appropriate, participate on statewide project teams and advisory councils with a leadership component and mission-aligned to 21CSLA.	Cohort 2 data to be collected in Year 3.

Table A-1: Center Deliverables and Examples of Progress in Cohort 2, Year 2—continued

Work Areas and Deliverables within Each Area	Examples of Progress Toward Deliverables Area in Year 2 of Cohort 2
Areas 6 and 7 Area 6—CoPs: Facilitate small, sustained, and role-alike professional learning cohorts grounded in leadership for equity, continuous improvement, and digitally mediated learning in addition to the state-prioritized special topic activities. Area 7—LPLs: Provide a variety of forms of professional learning informed by regional needs and local input in addition to the state-prioritized special topic activities.	
1. Offer digitally mediated professional learning design ideas and tools to support the development of RA CoP/LPL offerings (same deliverable for Area 6 and 7).	Professional learning packages being created and shared digitally that, as a Center leader put it, serve as a "collection of resources, multimedia…that Regional Academy leaders would be able to pull from as they design their own professional learning" on topics including navigating divisive political and cultural climates, cultivating partnerships, and fostering relational trust and belonging. Packages include podcasts, videos, interactive maps.
2. (Area 6) Facilitate CoPs for the 21CSLA Collective in areas such as Coaching and UTK trainers. 2. (Area 7) Purposefully demonstrate and embed research-based approaches to powerful learning experiences design principles in Center-led events and activities.	• (Area 6) Modeling CoPs for RA staff through the communities within Collectives (e.g., UTK, program development, and continuous improvement Collectives). • (Area 7) Practice guides that describe decisions behind design practices; hybrid learning guides.
3. When requested, serve as a thought partner to RA Leads for ideating CoP/LPL offerings (same deliverable for Area 6 and 7).	Serving as a thought partner on RAs' AI-focused offerings.
Area 8—Leadership Coaching: Provide individualized coaching that is built on relational trust, aligned to the California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CPSEL), and focused on equity-centered problems of practice using continuous improvement principles. The Center will:	
1. Facilitate Coaching Collectives and professional learning opportunities that support RA Leads' equity leadership coaching knowledge, skills, and dispositions, as well as best practices for program design.	Facilitating monthly Coaching Collectives with RA coaching teams, focused on programmatic updates, tools, effective practices, developing relational trust, etc.
2. Further define and develop tools and resources that support leadership coaching for advancing equity and continuous improvement.	Continued development and refinement of tools for coaching. "Coaching-centered tools: So, there are lots of wonderful tools in development and we get lots and lots of feedback from RA leaders about the ways that these might enhance their coaching programs," (Center leader).
3. Conduct coaching check-ins with each RA through observations, the collection of coaching artifacts, and ongoing conversations with RA leaders, regional coaches, and local leaders.	Consultancies have provided a structure for Center staff to observe coaching provided by RAs and provide feedback and answer questions.
4. Provide customized consultancy support to RA coaching coordinators.	Through consultancies, Center coaching staff "make ourselves available: if [RAs] need a particular kind of support for their coaching programs, we are there to help think with, talk with, move forward with their thinking around their particular programs," (Center leader).
5. Develop a structure for collecting observational data, use data to generate ongoing conversation, and practice sharing among and across RAs.	Consultancies have provided a structure for Center staff to observe coaching provided by RAs and provide feedback and answer questions.

Table A-1: Center Deliverables and Examples of Progress in Cohort 2, Year 2—continued

Work Areas and Deliverables within Each Area	Examples of Progress Toward Deliverables Area in Year 2 of Cohort 2
Coaching Enhancement (Added in Year 2)	
6. Create and implement a two-part, virtual onboarding series for new coaches (1.5 hours total), offered up to three times per year.	See introduction paragraph in this appendix for examples of progress toward the added deliverables.
7. Create and design a 2-day 21CSLA Statewide Coaching Clinic intended for new and existing coaches to ground their understanding of leadership coaching for equity principles and practices.	
8. Create up to eight Professional Learning Packages on topics related to coaching for equity rooted in the 21CSLA Way for RA application in their regions.	
9. Design a 21CSLA peer observation coaching for equity model that can be used to supplement local observation efforts.	
10. Create a 21CSLA Guidance Document-Informed Question Bank to support RA leaders in the development of RA-specific feedback forms. Develop a validated and reliable coaching participant survey and coaching program assessment tool designed to measure the impact of coaching on equity-centered leadership.	

Appendix B: Effective Features of Professional Learning

We provided RA Leads with an optional pre–focus group personal reflection activity. We explained that the external evaluation of Cohort 1 led us to understand that CoPs, LPLs, and coaching offerings were characterized by the effective features of professional learning listed below. We asked them to think about the top five elements each of their types of offerings did well. We reshared the list below during the focus group as a starting point for a discussion about effective features of CoPs, LPLs, and coaching.

Features of Effective Professional Learning for 21CSLA Offerings

Formats that facilitate participant engagement (including digitally mediated learning practices). Formats that facilitate access to and engagement in offerings. Includes digitally mediated learning through hybrid and/or virtual offerings; digital tools and resources to enhance leaders' critical digital literacy and help them support the use of educational technology in schools.

Timing and cadence that facilitate access and participation; offerings are of sustained duration.

Collaboration. Opportunities to work with peers to address issues that arise in leaders' day-to-day work. Collaborations facilitate learning from others and their unique knowledge sets and skills. Leaders collaborate around shared topics of interest.

Useful leadership content. Content that is relevant and helpful to leaders, focused on the "what" and "how" of issues that leaders confront in their practice.

Centralization of equity. A focus on helping leaders "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."[6] Leaders gain tools and skills to analyze their own mindsets, disrupt systems of racism and oppression, and establish asset-based systems. Learning opportunities engage leaders in critical reflection and inquiry, are inclusive and inclusion-focused, and center transformation and systems change. Equity is reflected in the structures, staffing, leadership makeup, and content of offerings.

Continuous improvement. Leaders diagnose problems (including by analyzing data and focusing on root causes). They set goals and implement strategies to meet them, including evidence-based practices. They determine whether change occurred after implementing strategies. They repeat cycles of analysis, improvement-focused action, and reflection.

Opportunities for practice during professional learning. Leaders actively practice new skills during professional learning sessions. Participants practice change ideas and make improvements in real time during the course of offerings.

Tailored support for participant needs. Offerings are designed to address specific needs of participants. Needs are identified through data analysis and needs assessments. Content and tools help leaders address needs and challenges in their unique contexts.

Individualized feedback (may include coaching). Participants receive individualized feedback on their work from a coach and/or peers. Feedback might relate to participants' leadership practices or their plans to meet goals. Feedback helps leaders self-assess, focus on equity, and problem-solve to make improvements in their sites.

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[6] 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (21CSLA). (2025). *21CSLA Guidance Document, Cohort 2, Years 2-3* (p. 6). California Collaborative for Educational Excellence. https://21cslacenter.berkeley.edu/publications/21csla-guidance-document-october-2025

Appendix C: 21CSLA Center highlights

The 21CSLA Center is housed at UC Berkeley. As shown in Appendix A , the Center's impact is through eight areas of work. The majority (70.9%) of participants reported that they adjusted at least one leadership practice as a result of 21CSLA participation.

Highlights from the Center's work in 2024–2025 were:

- **Expanding reach with statewide projects**. The Center prioritizes UTK content in its UTK Training Modules and UTK Leadership Certificate course. The purpose of the Certificate is to "provide graduate coursework with specialized knowledge to aspiring and new administrators who are charged with the implementation of UTK in California." In 2024–2025, 74 participants completed the UTK Certificate Program and reported course features as useful. Most participants reported knowledge gains whether or not they had prior familiarity with UTK.

> In 2024–2025, 13,324 leaders from 55 of 58 (95%) of California counties enrolled in 21CSLA offerings.
>
> - Enrollment in LPLs was 51%, with 81% attending half or more of an offering.
> - Enrollment in CoPs was 32%, with 78% attending half or more of an offering.
>
> Of the two attendance formats, 62% of enrollees attended in person and 21% attended virtually.

Source: 21CSLA Center. (2025). *21CSLA Formative Annual Report: Cohort 2, Year 2, Quarters 1-4 Reporting Periods*. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BeuZfq_CJu1nlLNSzNwDWdxKWnqEaslI/view

- **Providing access to the latest evidence-based leadership practices**. The Center hosts webinars, podcasts, and a website; presents at conferences; and develops research briefs and guidance for digitally mediated learning. In 2024–2025, research-practice webinars addressed transformative social-emotional learning, AI, and equitable leadership in rural contexts. *The Equity Leadership Now!* podcast explored innovative and compelling work at the intersection of research, policy, and practice with equity-conscious leaders.

- **Building the Statewide System of Support**. The Center connects, engages, and partners with Pre-K–12 leaders, SSOS Leads, and external organizations to foster inclusive educational partner input and engagement. This effort integrates work within and external to the SSOS to increase access to quality leadership professional learning and reduce duplication of state funding efforts.

> " RA leader: "We have a very close relationship with our [Geo Lead]…[We] facilitated their strategic planning for the year [which was] really helpful in building relationships because we're working with their Assistant Superintendents and hearing from them what they need…[to] focus on the leadership of the initiatives."

- **Guiding and supporting statewide equity leadership**. The Center provides guidance, support, and infrastructure to seven RAs. The Center's Guidance Document outlines the eight areas of work, provides professional learning principals, and guides RAs in designing and monitoring CoPs, LPLs, and leadership coaching. The Center coaches RA leaders and facilitates their collaboration; this year it provided Statewide Coaching Clinics that convened RA leaders to enhance their coaching practice in 2-day, in-person sessions informed by RA progress and needs.