



California Association for Bilingual Education

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION (CABE) ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

2022

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) was founded in 1975 and incorporated in 1976 by a diverse group of visionary leaders committed to promoting bilingual education and the creation of an inclusive and equitable education system that honored the linguistic, cultural, and experiential backgrounds of all students.



Today, CABE is a values-driven organization centered on developing and celebrating students' languages and multicultural richness and backgrounds, their families, and the educators who serve them.

Given its 40+ year history as a cutting-edge leader in the field of biliteracy, professional learning, multicultural competence, and multilingualism, the CABE extended family or "familia" includes a statewide elected body of 14 Board of Directors, over 40 diverse staff (full-time and part-time) and consultants, and collaborative partners dedicated to:

- *moving policy to practice*
- *impacting educator professional learning*
- *increasing parent and family engagement*
- *celebrating the richness of biliteracy and multiculturalism*
- *harnessing a deep commitment to a vision of global success for all*

As with many nonprofit organizations across the state, CABE's priorities, as articulated in the latest strategic plan, were altered in both positive and challenging ways by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While other organizations across the state suffered under the tremendous pressure caused by the pandemic, CABE's strength, as exemplified by its leadership, infrastructure, partnerships, and reputation, facilitated its ability to pivot and adapt in unprecedented ways.

Under the leadership of Jan Gustafson Corea, CABE's CEO and Maria Villa Marquez, CABE's Deputy Director, in partnership with its Board of Directors, CABE increased its funding, staffing levels, and presence in the educational equity space. As a proactive measure, CABE leadership felt 2022 was an optimal time to conduct an internal assessment that would help illuminate the organization's readiness to respond to its growth and develop and formalize its structure, processes, procedures, and internal culture.

Supported through a grant from The Sobrato Family Foundation, CAFE partnered with Laura Valles & Associates, Inc. (LVA) in January 2022 to conduct a 6-month Organizational Assessment process. The main goal of the organizational assessment was to design and implement a qualitative research process to uplift information about the performance of the organization and the factors that could enhance its effectiveness.

Specifically, CAFE boldly committed to further strengthening the organization over the next several years in four key areas:

Assessment Focus Area



As an objective and practical conceptual framework, the focus areas helped frame conversations with the leadership team, staff, and partners to uplift themes about the organization's strengths, opportunities, and priorities.

Over the six months, LVA engaged in a multi-step process that achieved the following milestones:

- **Co-design:** Established a co-design team that included the CAFE leadership team and staff representatives to help guide each project phase.
- **Assessment & Review:** Analysis of internal documents to help guide the design of a survey, protocols, and facilitation guides for the engagement process.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Examination of day-to-day practices that led to identifying themes for each focus area gathered through an anonymous staff-wide survey, eight external partner interviews, and four listening sessions.
- **Strategy Design & Development:** Identification of concrete strategies gathered through two facilitated half-day strategy development retreats with CAFE staff.

As a result of this assessment process, there is a range of priorities and strategies that may, at first glance, feel overwhelming. However, many of these practices are already in place at varying levels across the organization. The best way to understand the suggestions that follow is to consider the following:

- 1** *How can these practices be scaled and sustained across the organization?*
- 2** *What role can CABE's leadership and the Board of Directors play in identifying resources that can support the implementation of the more resource-intensive/longer-term suggestions?*

After much reflection by CABE's staff and leadership identified the following priorities:

Understanding Organizational Growth Priorities

- 1.** Create opportunities for the CABE team to see the direct impact of their work.
- 2.** Provide more opportunities focused on team building, trust, and collaboration.
- 3.** Address staff workload issues and create better work-life balance.
- 4.** Streamline systems between departments to make activities, tasks, and meetings more efficient.

Communications Priorities

- 1.** Provide internal communication management support and strategies to facilitate collaboration and problem-solving.
- 2.** Expand the role of team members and loop them in when communicating with districts.
- 3.** Continue to connect frequently with partners across the educational spectrum (parents, administrators, policymakers, legislators, etc.).

Culture of Learning and Growth Priorities

- 1.** Create an internal infrastructure to support professional development opportunities for CABE staff.
- 2.** Bring full-time and part-time staff together for shared learning, planning, and reflection.

Deepening Policy & Advocacy Priorities

- 1.** Differentiate and define lanes with other organizations who do similar work around policy & advocacy.
- 2.** Include the CABE team more intentionally in the organization's policy and advocacy efforts.
- 3.** Live out equity more fully by intentionally focusing on developing a multilingual approach, such as expanding and involving diverse linguistic and cultural populations.
- 4.** Branch out and make room for youth voices.

During a two-day staff retreat, a broad range of strategies were identified for each of these priorities. Where possible, strategies were listed on a scale from low cost-short-term to resource intensive-long-term. The next step for the CABE team will be to work with the Coordinating Council, Co-design Team, Board of Directors, and the whole team to develop an implementation plan to advance these priorities.

What follows is a description of key findings, strategies, and consultant recommendations based on the organizational assessment process.



INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

As an organization founded during the civil rights movement, the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) is guided by a clear set of values, mission, vision, and theory of action. As articulated in its 2019-2024 strategic plan, CABE's role is to serve as a leading voice on transformative policies and practices that address the needs of English learners and biliteracy students throughout California. One of CABE's greatest strengths is its role as the leading association for thousands of bilingual and multilingual educators, families, students, administrators, providers, and policymakers nationally and internationally.

CABE's vision, mission, and Theory of Action, as articulated in its 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, are:



VISION

Biliteracy, Multicultural Competency & Educational Equity for All.



MISSION

To support the vision of biliteracy, multicultural competency and educational equity for all students, we will embody our shared values by implementing priorities, initiatives and services designed to increase California's capacity to create caring and highly effective learning environments that promote multiliteracy and support English Learners and all diverse populations to graduate college, career, and globally prepared to live their lives to their fullest potential.

THEORY OF ACTION

IF we are an organization that believes in and is committed to:

Equity Servant Leadership Respect Cultural & Linguistic Human Rights Integrity

THEN we will:

EXEMPLIFY PRACTICES that distribute resources based on student need.

PROMOTE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY and share the power in decision making and in developing leadership capacity within everyone.

DEMONSTRATE ADMIRATION for organization members, staff, educators, students, community and for their achievements abilities, qualities and culture.

ADVOCATE, LEAD, SUPPORT AND EMPOWER culturally and linguistically diverse students, families, teachers, and administrators with integrity and equity for all.

BE RESPECTFUL, INCLUSIVE, AND HONEST with the students, families and organizations we serve.

We will hold ourselves accountable to exemplify our mission and vision through a shared reciprocal process with those we serve.

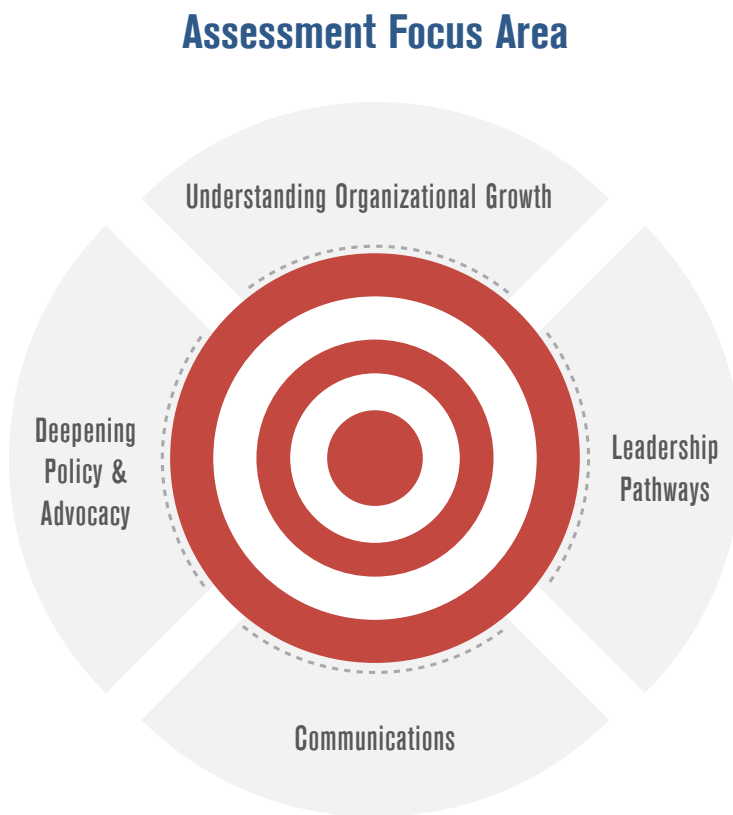
As a statewide leader in biliteracy, multicultural competency, and 21st Century Success for All English Learners over the last decade, CABE has deftly navigated four interrelated realities:

- 1** *Significant changes advanced by the State of California that impact English learners, including the EdGE initiative, English Learner Roadmap policy, the State Seal of Biliteracy, and Global California 2030 goals.*
- 2** *The growth of the bilingual, multilingual, multicultural competency, and dual language policy and advocacy ecosystem.*
- 3** *Tremendous internal organizational growth over the previous 24-36 months.*
- 4** *The COVID-19 pandemic.*

Mindful of these realities, CABE leadership launched an ambitious 6-month organizational assessment process to bolster the organization's readiness to respond to its growth and develop and formalize its structure, processes, procedures, and internal culture. With support from the Sobrato Foundation, CABE partnered with Laura Valles & Associates, Inc. (LVA) to design and implement an assessment process to help staff and leadership think more deeply about the organization's most important questions during this stage of the organization's life cycle.

The Assessment Process

The assessment process was grounded in a conceptual framework designed around a set of big and bold guiding questions:



Understanding Organizational Growth Priorities

How can CAFE strengthen its systems to help with areas of growth? How does CAFE fine-tune its systems to have streamlined and de-siloed information, and how do these systems enable the process of reflection and growth? How can CAFE be poised to address the changing needs and future of the field?

Leadership Pathways

What are the needs and areas for professional growth? What motivates people to grow professionally? What stands in the way?

Deepening Policy & Advocacy

How does CAFE know what the focus is for the organization in the short- and long-term? Are there other growth areas for CAFE? How does CAFE systematically and intentionally build those focus areas and assess its performance? How does CAFE systematically and intentionally determine its direction and decide on its growth?

Communications

What are the most impactful ways CAFE shares information? What are the most impactful ways CAFE makes itself visible to external stakeholders? What are some of the most effective ways CAFE communicates with staff? How can we assess organizational, departmental, and individual needs?

The Leadership Team was committed to designing an inclusive and equity-driven process guided by a set of planning priorities they believed were essential to understanding the factors that impact organizational performance - from both a strengths-based and opportunity-based perspective:

- 1 Inclusive Engagement:** Ensure the assessment process provides multiple opportunities for input and uplifts the voices and perspectives of its staff, Board, and partners.
- 2 Trust:** Build trust & connections across departments.
- 3 Equitable and Inclusive Leadership:** Harness the Coordinating Council's leadership and staff leadership via the co-design team.

CABE accomplished these planning priorities through an iterative process that prioritized communication, multiple opportunities to listen to and learn from staff and key stakeholders, and sufficient time for reflection and ideation. In furtherance of these priorities, the Assessment process consisted of the following objectives:

- 1 Co-design:** Establish a co-design team with the CABE leadership team and staff representatives to help guide each project phase.
- 2 Assessment & Review:** Review key documents to help guide the development of assessment-related questions.
- 3 Stakeholder Engagement:** Examine day-to-day practices to inform the identification of themes for each of the focus areas gathered through an anonymous staff-wide survey, external partner interviews, and listening sessions.
- 4 Strategy Design & Development:** Identify concrete strategies and actions gathered through two facilitated half-day strategy development retreats with CABE staff.





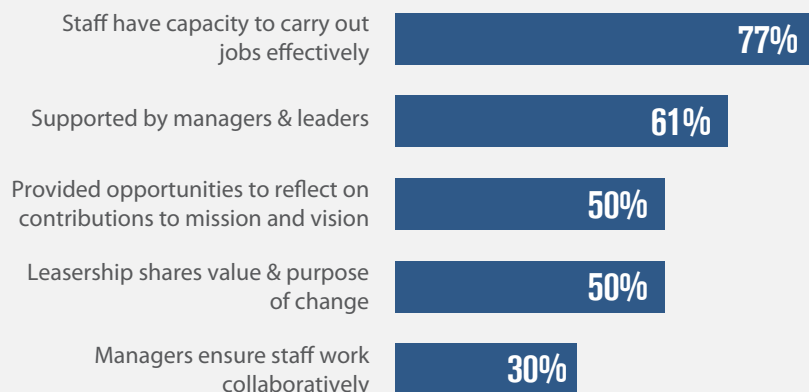
STRENGTHS, PRIORITIES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis of documents, feedback gathered through the engagement process, and the staff retreats highlighted strengths, priorities, and strategies in each of the four focus areas. Where possible, strategies are listed on a scale from low cost-short-term to resource intensive-long-term.

Focus Area 1: Understanding Organizational Growth

Organizational Strengths and Opportunities

Feedback gathered from the staff survey demonstrates that there are clear strengths and a few opportunities for further improvement:



In addition to the strengths identified through the staff survey, the following strengths were also identified across all stakeholder groups engaged in the process:

- *A vast network of partners.*
- *A policy and advocacy leader for English learners due to its relationships with government, role in helping to advocate for the passage of laws, and consistently being at the cutting edge.*
- *They are skilled at creating authentic connections between parents, students, families, communities, and school districts.*
- *They are seen as an expert in family empowerment & community engagement throughout the state and nationally.*
- *The sphere of influence is wide, and the support provided to partners, organizations, etc., is substantial and of quality.*
- *Share power and is a good partner.*
- *Webinars, institutes, and grants positively impact school districts, administrators and teachers, parents, families, and communities who are advocates for English learners.*
- *Addresses relevant concerns, reaching out to various people and groups in its network (parents, practitioners, policy) multilingually.*

Guiding Themes

Analysis of the feedback gathered through the engagement process resulted in two themes used to guide the staff's prioritization and strategy development process. These themes relate to CAFE's value and impact amid its organizational growth and the effect of this growth on the organization's internal culture. These themes are:

→ *Value and Impact*

→ *Internal Culture*

PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

Staff identified priorities and strategies related to value and impact listed on a scale ranging from low cost-short-term to resource intensive-long-term where possible:



Priority 1: Create opportunities for the CAFE team to see the direct impact of their work.

For this priority area, the CAFE team provided a range of strategies to create opportunities for staff in support roles to see the impact of their efforts.

Strategy 1: Share positive stories and survey data results as a formal part of staff meetings to enable all staff to see the direct impact of their work and inspire/motivate all staff.

Strategy 2: Dedicate time on a bi-weekly basis to highlight the work of individual staff members so that all staff can understand the projects they are working on and how it impact the entire team internally and externally.

Strategy 3: Formalize continuing opportunities for all staff to see the direct impact of CABE's work by inviting them to attend graduations, observe training, and be invited to school sites when CABE staff are recognized for their excellence in bilingual programs.



Priority 2: Provide more opportunities for team building, trust, and collaboration.

Staff identified various strategies that will enable CABE to intentionally build collaboration practices that will help break down internal silos, celebrate accomplishments, and facilitate communication.

Strategy 1: Create an annual action plan to foster team building and trust that includes: opportunities to engage in informal activities such as sharing meals (e.g., picnics); getting to know one another; support for self-care, well-being, and mental health; and checking in on one another outside of the more formal (work-focused) monthly staff meetings.

Strategy 2: Invite part-time employees to staff meetings and continue to build in cross-training opportunities on an ongoing basis providing opportunities for all staff across departments to spend a day with one another so they can learn about one another's roles.

Strategy 3: Implement an asset inventory with all staff to identify, connect, and celebrate strengths, skills, and assets and create a safe space to teach and learn from one another and reach out for specific support.

Strategy 4: Contract an outside consultant to support team-building activities within each department and across the organization. These activities would provide teams with tools and resources to build trust and work together more effectively.

Staff identified the following priorities and strategies related to internal culture to enhance CABE's internal environment. Where possible, strategies are listed on a scale ranging from low cost-short-term to resource intensive-long-term.



Priority 3: Address staff workload issues and create better work-life balance.

Strategy 1: Include the CABE team in grant brainstorming and goal-setting so they can understand projects from their inception and contribute to the design focusing on workload implications.

Strategy 2: Communicate budget allocations for additional temporary staffing support during "peak" periods and create a process for Directors to identify staffing needs and requests.

Strategy 3: Prioritize and provide opportunities for part-time staff to participate in organization-wide events/meetings as the budget allows.

Strategy 4: Effectively manage full and part-time staff workloads by updating the organizational chart to clarify roles and responsibilities and developing work plans throughout the year that delineate precise tasks, deadlines, and staffing plans.

Strategy 5: Provide opportunities via facilitated spaces or coaching for staff to share personal reflections and discuss experiences that cause team members to feel overwhelmed/stressed, and share ideas and solutions..



Priority 4: Streamline systems between departments to make activities, tasks, and meetings more efficient.

Strategy 1: Identify decision-making rules to clarify internal review processes and decision-making processes and authority (e.g., final decision-makers for specific tasks).

Strategy 2: Streamline internal systems by revisiting current internal practices, policies, and procedures, such as:

- a. *Create consistent and easily accessible templates for documents, outreach material (e.g., fliers, ppt templates), reports, etc.*
- b. *Update and regularly implement policies, protocols, training, and procedures.*
- c. *Formalize and clarify internal file management systems, sharing privileges, etc.*
- d. *Regularly update internal calendars with events and deadlines across the organization.*
- e. *Establish a project management system (e.g. Google Drive, Basecamp, etc.) to create consistent and clear direction, expectations, and deadlines for all staff and leaders on tasks, including providing regular updates from leaders on organizational growth opportunities.*

Strategy 3: Improve team meetings through the consistent development of agendas and minutes/meeting summaries that easily communicate key decisions, tasks, responsibilities, and deadlines and next steps.

Strategy 4: Create more intentional opportunities for collaboration between part-time and full-time staff by addressing silos through regularly scheduled team meetings.

Focus Area 2: Leadership Pathways

Feedback gathered through the engagement process showcased CABE’s important role in building the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the broader bilingual/multilingual field, mainly through its annual conference.

Organizational Strengths

Feedback gathered from the staff survey demonstrates that there are clear strengths and a few opportunities for further improvement:



In addition to the strengths identified through the survey process, the following strengths were also identified across all stakeholder groups:

- *The annual conference contributes to learning, parent empowerment, a sense of community, and leadership development for families and educators.*
- *Staff is highly interested in opportunities to grow into new levels of responsibility, other positions, and job responsibilities.*
- *Some professional development (PD) opportunities are offered to the CABE team.*

Guiding Themes

Analysis of all the feedback gathered through the engagement process resulted in a ***culture of learning and growth*** as the guiding theme used to support the staff's prioritization and strategy development process.

PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

Staff identified priorities and strategies related to a ***culture of learning and growth***. Where possible, strategies are listed on a scale ranging from low cost-short-term to resource intensive-long-term.



Priority 1: Create an internal infrastructure to support professional development opportunities for CABE staff.

Strategy 1: Conduct a needs assessment to gather data on professional learning interests, e.g., administrative leadership, policy, management skills, technology, etc.

Strategy 2: Develop a professional learning plan that includes the following components:

- Allocate training hours or days for all departments/staff and offer dedicated external and internal PD opportunities.*
- Develop an organization-wide professional development training calendar available to all staff and provides opportunities during specific periods, such as the summer, when staff can more easily participate.*
- Utilize staff performance reviews that managers can use to tailor and customize professional development opportunities based upon staff interests, organization roles, and leadership pathways.*
- Create a budget for professional development that includes registration fees, additional resources for materials/books, travel fees, etc., and invite management approval of the budget.*

Strategy 3: Provide protected time for staff to participate in training by dedicating resources and identifying cross-training opportunities to help provide coverage.

Strategy 4: Designate a full-time, dedicated professional development/training position and/or work with current staff strengths to provide workshops to share strategies and resources with others.



Priority 2: Bring full-time and part-time staff together for shared learning and reflection.

Strategy 1: Create a learning community internally that includes peer coaching and support for implementing and spaces to implement staff learning.

Strategy 2: Identify opportunities for all staff to participate in workshops during the annual conference as attendees and/or engage conference presenters to help provide internal professional development.

Strategy 3: Establish a process for staff to intentionally share best practices and knowledge learned from participating in training, conferences, and professional development opportunities.

Strategy 4: Create a formal onboarding process for new employees that includes opportunities for new staff to shadow other staff/departments so they can understand the entire organization's work.



Focus Area 3: Deepening Policy & Advocacy

Organizational Strengths and Opportunities

Although not viewed exclusively as a policy provider/driver, given the number of other organizations engaged in similar efforts, feedback gathered through the engagement process highlighted CABE's numerous strengths, deep commitment, and expertise in policy and advocacy.

- *A strong policy and advocacy history and reputation guided for many years through the work of Martha Zaragoza-Diaz.*
- *CABE is the "go-to" organization in the state focused on the needs of ELs and multilingualism, as demonstrated by districts looking up at CABE for information on programs and services.*
- *CABE stands apart as an organization focused on classroom practice and how students can make progress with trained teachers.*
- *CABE is seen as an association speaking on behalf of thousands of people and research.*
- *Always at the table for big policy issues that support their vision and mission and can get elected officials to sponsor and pass legislation.*

Guiding Themes

Analysis of the feedback gathered through the engagement process resulted in two themes used to guide the staff's prioritization and strategy development process. These themes relate to the organization's role in the broader bilingual and multilingual education ecosystem and its role in advancing equity internally and in alignment with its mission and vision. The themes are:

→ **Unique Niche**

→ **Equity**

PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

As it relates to **CABE's unique niche**, staff identified the following priorities and strategies ranging from low cost-short-term to resource intensive-long-term:



Priority 1: Differentiate and define CABE's policy and advocacy niche.

Strategy 1: Conduct an internal capacity assessment of CABE staff to leverage existing strengths and clarify the organization's niche.

Strategy 2: Hold a summit with other organizations engaged in the EL and multilingual ecosystem to clarify the unique policy & advocacy role for CABE and the areas of focus for other organizations.



Priority 2: Include the CABE team more intentionally in the organization's policy and advocacy efforts.

Strategy 1: Facilitate opportunities for all staff to attend internal and external policy & advocacy related training, conferences, events, legislative meetings or activities so they can better understand CABE's role in the broader EL and multilingual ecosystem, identify opportunities to strengthen CABE's focus and increase their capacity to share that knowledge with families and schools.

Strategy 2: Provide clearer/simpler updates, such as through the use of infographics, on policy & advocacy efforts that CABE is focused on to help partners understand and promote CABE's work.

Strategy 3: Create opportunities for staff to participate in legislative events in Sacramento so they can meet elected representatives, see where policies are made, and see themselves in the policy-making process.

The staff was very committed to supporting the achievement of CAFE's equity-focused vision and mission statement. Where possible, equity-related strategies are listed on a scale ranging from low cost-short-term to resource intensive-long-term.



Priority 3: Live out equity more fully by intentionally focusing on developing a multilingual approach, such as expanding and involving diverse linguistic and cultural populations.

Strategy 1: Expand the interpretation channel by hiring permanent dedicated staff who can provide interpretation support and translate materials.

Strategy 2: Continue to expand CAFE's cultural and linguistic focus, in addition to Spanish, to include other language and cultural populations, e.g., Asian, Middle Eastern, African American, and Native American communities.

Strategy 3: Work more closely with university teaching credential programs, e.g., Pepperdine CAFE chapter, Whittier College, Loyola Marymount University, Mandarin chapter, etc., to engage diverse, bilingual educators.

Strategy 4: Diversify linguistic and multicultural participation during annual conferences by inviting newer voices as invited speakers and guests.



Priority 4: Branch out and make room for youth voices.

Strategy 1: Establish a youth chapter to help increase the focus on uplifting student/youth voices and State Seal of Biliteracy awardees, including those of African American and indigenous students who are often not part of the conversation.

Strategy 2: Offer opportunities for youth to participate in special events such as career readiness and a shadowing day.

Strategy 3: Create opportunities for youth/students to speak at workshops and conferences.



Priority 5: Take a stronger, more direct, and inclusive position on the issue of equity, language, race, and justice by elevating these issues in other education-related areas.

Strategy 1: While CAFE's historical and current vision and mission is focused on ELs, leadership, staff and the Board will mindfully exemplify inclusive and equity focused terminology, internally and externally, to reflect students and families of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. CAFE will continue to focus on Spanish language development as 82% of ELs speak Spanish, and also intentionally be inclusive of other language, racial and ethnic groups.

Strategy 2: Deepen CABE’s commitment to achieving "educational equity for all" by building on its equity series and offering more professional development/events for stakeholders on equity.

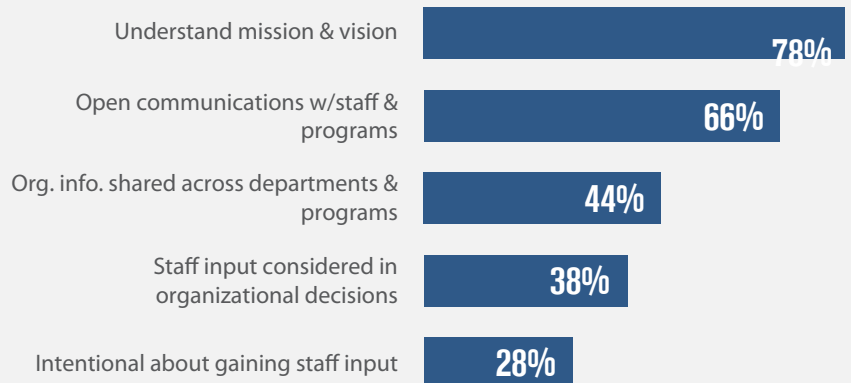
Strategy 3: Build trust and be more inclusive messaging for diverse multicultural and linguistic audiences.

Strategy 4: Leadership will continue to work with the Board to ensure that equitable internal practices for hiring, compensation, and benefits are consistent with high-quality and equitable organizational structures and possibly consider conducting a salary/compensation study as funding permits.

Focus Area 4: Communications

Organizational Strengths and Opportunities

Feedback gathered from the staff survey demonstrates that there are clear strengths and a few opportunities for further improvement:



In addition to the strengths identified through the survey process, the following strengths were also identified across all stakeholder groups engaged in the process:

- *High day-to-day communication across the organization and within teams through emails, newsletters, ED weekly update, and text messaging.*
- *Effective communication with partners through email lists & blasts, action alerts, newsletters, magazines, social media, and websites.*
- *Participation in different initiatives across the state, nationally, and internationally*

Guiding Themes

Analysis of the feedback gathered through the engagement process resulted in two themes used to guide the staff’s prioritization and strategy development process. These themes relate to internal communication practices and policies and communication with external partners. These themes are:

- *Communication Practices*
- *Partner Engagement*

PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

Related to *communication practices*, staff focused on enhancing internal communication, expanding the role of the parent specialist, and enhancing communication with external partners. Where possible, strategies are listed on a scale ranging from low cost-short-term to resource intensive-long-term.



Priority 1: Provide internal communication management support and strategies for collaboration and problem-solving.

Strategy 1: Establish clear email and text-related communication practices that include guidelines around communication during weekends, holidays, and after hours, as well as how to organize email communication and expectations on responses.

As it relates to *partner engagement*, staff identified the following priorities and strategies ranging from low cost-short-term to resource intensive-long-term:



Priority 2: Expand the role of team members and loop them when appropriate when communicating with districts.

Strategy 1: Maintain a list of staff working on special projects and the schools/districts or teachers they liaison with so other staff can partner/collaborate with them.



Priority 3: Continue to connect frequently with partners across the educational spectrum (parents, administrators, policymakers, legislators, etc.).

Strategy 1: Create a public relations position and/or establish a department focused on managing external communication, conference-related communication/recruitment, and enhancing marketing materials.



RESOURCES & RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations reflect key organizational levers that can be activated to address organizational priorities and build on direct feedback from staff, Executive Leaders, and the Board of Directors.

Recommendation 1:

Across the four areas, the overriding suggestion is oriented toward building formal processes and tools, e.g., shared project management, individual work plans, professional development plans, calendaring, resource plans, etc. CABE already uses tools such as Basecamp, Google, MS Teams, DropBox, etc. so it may be a matter of scaling the use of these tools and providing ongoing training. Additional support may include working with outside experts and providing professional development/leadership training. Other resources include:

<https://www.cnmsocal.org/learnconnect>

<https://asana.com/resources/professional-development-plan>

Recommendation 2:

Various resources and best practices to foster team building and trust exist. As leadership considers the best course to achieve this strategy, it is essential to note that this is not a one time activity that occurs as an icebreaker, during an annual staff retreat, or even periodically. Team building and trust-building are at the heart of creating a high-performing organization and require an intentional and ongoing commitment to understanding how to build strong teams and nurturing a positive internal environment and must include collaboration and input of all parties involved. There are several approaches, including organizational/team coaching, professional development, leadership development, and conflict management.

Developing an action plan to foster team building and trust is an essential first step in building an organization-wide commitment. Some resources (low-cost research to high-cost professional development) include:

[*https://www.workstyle.io/team-trust-building-activities*](https://www.workstyle.io/team-trust-building-activities)

[*https://www.cnmsocal.org/learnconnect*](https://www.cnmsocal.org/learnconnect)

[*https://soulsalt.com/build-trust-in-a-team/*](https://soulsalt.com/build-trust-in-a-team/)

Recommendation 3:

There are standardized tools to identify, uplift, and celebrate staff strengths, skills, and assets. While these tools can be used internally, working with a professional who can guide the implementation and application of what is learned through these tools is helpful. These tools include:

[*https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/252137/home.aspx*](https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/252137/home.aspx)

[*https://www.discprofile.com/what-is-disc*](https://www.discprofile.com/what-is-disc)

[*https://positivepsychology.com/strength-finding-tests/*](https://positivepsychology.com/strength-finding-tests/)

Recommendation 4:

Staff engagement around decision-making is vital for building trust, developing inclusive solutions, and identifying any blind spots related to staffing or budgetary needs. Some helpful resources/research includes:

[*https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/organizational-effectiveness/rapid-decision-making*](https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/organizational-effectiveness/rapid-decision-making)

[*https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/topics/talent/organizational-decision-making.html*](https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/topics/talent/organizational-decision-making.html)

[*https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/untangling-your-organizations-decision-making*](https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/untangling-your-organizations-decision-making)

[*https://hbr.org/2006/01/who-has-the-d-how-clear-decision-roles-enhance-organizational-performance*](https://hbr.org/2006/01/who-has-the-d-how-clear-decision-roles-enhance-organizational-performance)

[*https://hbr.org/1967/01/the-effective-decision*](https://hbr.org/1967/01/the-effective-decision)

Recommendation 5:

In concert with CABE's next strategic planning process, integrate opportunities to reflect on progress made with the implementation of this organizational assessment and update the organizational assessment as necessary.



CLOSING

CABE is an impactful and cutting-edge organization that plays a critical role in the bilingual/multilingual education ecosystem. Over its 47 plus year history, CABE has been led by executive leadership, the Board of Directors, and staff, and partners clearly committed to achieving the organization’s bold vision and mission.

While undertaking an organizational assessment is challenging for any organization, as it requires a high degree of openness, transparency, and vulnerability, it is evident that everyone involved with CABE (leadership, Board, staff and partners) all deeply value CABE’s staff and its work.

As CABE looks to the future, the opportunity lies in strengthening CABE’s internal environment to support better work-life balance for staff and in defining CABE’s policy & advocacy niche in partnership with similarly focused partner organizations. In particular, a focus on staff well-being and workload management is critical given that the COVID-19 pandemic has spurred what is described as the great resignation across the U.S., with unprecedented numbers of staff quitting their jobs due to issues around pay, workloads, and opportunities for advancement¹.

This reference to the national crisis does not mean to suggest this is a risk for CABE, particularly because many of the priorities and strategies outlined in this report are already in place to varying degrees. Rather, as a whole system, it is important that everyone involved with the organization focus on how to intentionally scale existing practices to ensure CABE continues to be a strong, stable, and impactful organization. Given the organization’s strong leadership, there’s little doubt that CABE will continue to be successful.

In closing, it is our hope that the recommendations and resources outlined in this document resonate with organizational staff and leadership.

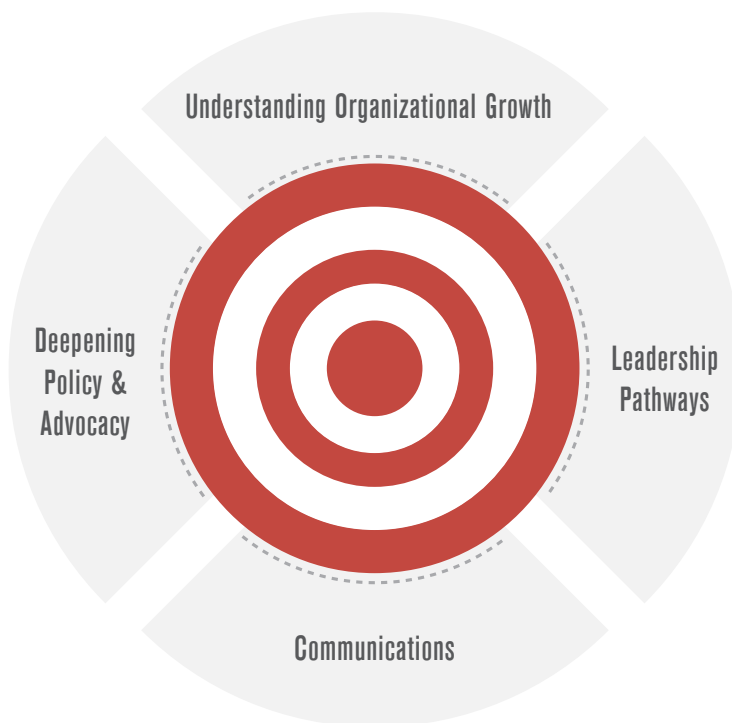
¹<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/03/09/majority-of-workers-who-quit-a-job-in-2021-cite-low-pay-no-opportunities-for-advancement-feeling-disrespected/>

APPENDICES

The Assessment Process

The assessment process, which included a staff survey, interviews and listening sessions was grounded in four focus areas framed around a set of big and bold guiding questions:

Assessment Focus Area



Understanding Organizational Growth Priorities

How can CABE strengthen its systems to help with areas of growth? How does CABE fine-tune its systems to have streamlined and de-siloed information, and how do these systems enable the process of reflection and growth? How can CABE be poised to address the changing needs and future of the field?

Leadership Pathways

What are the needs and areas for professional growth? What motivates people to grow professionally? What stands in the way?

Deepening Policy & Advocacy

How does CABE know what the focus is for the organization in the short- and long-term? Are there other growth areas for CABE? How does CABE systematically and intentionally build those focus areas and assess its performance? How does CABE systematically and intentionally determine its direction and decide on its growth?

Communications

What are the most impactful ways CAFE shares information? What are the most impactful ways CAFE makes itself visible to external stakeholders? What are some of the most effective ways CAFE communicates with staff? How can we assess organizational, departmental, and individual needs?

The anonymous and confidential engagement process consisted of coding and theming all of the qualitative information gathered through the following activities:

- **Anonymous staff survey**
- **Eight 30-minute interviews with external partners.**
- **Four 60-minute listening sessions with the Board of Directors, full-time staff, part-time staff, and representatives from the Coordinating Council.**

Unique sets of questions were designed for each stakeholder group.

Listening Session: Board of Directors

Leadership Pathways

What role does CAFE currently play in developing a new cadre of leaders in the field of multiliteracy and educational equity? How could CAFE improve its leadership pathways?

Communications

What are the most impactful ways that CAFE shares information with the Board? What could be improved upon?

What are the most impactful ways that CAFE makes itself visible to stakeholders outside of CAFE? What could be improved upon?

Deepening Policy and Advocacy

What are some emerging opportunities in the field of education where CAFE could expand or deepen its impact on advocacy and policy?

What areas for improvement would you like to see addressed to deepen the policy and advocacy efforts of CAFE? Organizational Growth

What areas for improvement would you like to see addressed to strengthen the operational infrastructure of CAFE?

In what areas do you feel the Board excels in supporting CAFE or CAFE's mission?

Are there other ways the Board could support CAFE or CAFE's mission?

How would you describe the unique role or value proposition of CAFE? (i.e. in the lives of students, families, educators, partners and communities, what does CAFE offer that other organizations do not? How does CAFE fit into the broader ecosystem?)

Listening Session: Full-Time Staff

Leadership Pathways

As staff, what resources or support do you need to do your job well and feel job satisfaction? (e.g. professional development, capacity, internal operations, etc.)

What professional development opportunities would be most helpful to strengthen your role within CABE?

Organizational Growth

What changes have you seen in advancing CABE's mission and vision of multiliteracy and educational equity for all?

How does CABE support you in feeling connected to the vision of the organization?

In what ways do you play a part in CABE's impact?

Communications

What are some of the most effective ways CABE communicates with staff?

Where are there areas that CABE could be more effective in keeping staff in the loop about what's going on across the organization?

In what ways do you play a role in providing feedback on organizational projects or decisions?

Organizational Growth

Where are there areas to enhance the culture of CABE so staff feel satisfied and fulfilled with their jobs?

Listening Session: Coordinating Council

Leadership Pathways

As CABE leaders, what resources or support do you need to do your job well and feel job satisfaction? (e.g. professional development, capacity, internal operations, etc.)

What leadership skills are you most interested in developing to strengthen your role within CABE?

Organizational Growth

What changes in CABE's impact or role in the field of multiliteracy and educational equity have you seen over the past few years?

How does CABE support staff in feeling connected to the vision of the organization?

In what ways do you play a part in CABE's impact in the field of multiliteracy and educational equity?

Communications

What are some of CABE's most effective internal communications strategies?

What are some changes that could be made to internal communications?

In what ways do you play a role in providing feedback on organizational projects or decisions?

Organizational Growth

Where are there areas to enhance the culture of CABE so staff feel satisfied and fulfilled with their jobs?

Listening Session: Partners

Leadership Pathways

In what ways does CABE play a role in developing new leaders in the field of multiliteracy and educational equity?

Organizational Growth

What are some of CABE's most effective external communications strategies?

Communications

What value does CABE add to the field of multiliteracy and educational equity that is different from other organizations?

From your perspective, where does CABE make the deepest impact on policy?

What are some of CABE's most effective advocacy strategies?

Organizational Growth

How would you describe CABE as a partner in the work of supporting quality multiliteracy and educational equity?

What are some of the challenges you experience working with CABE?

What are some emerging opportunities where your organization can collaborate with CABE?

How can CABE be an optimal partner for the work your organization does?

What role would you like CABE to play in the multiliteracy and educational equity field?

Listening Session: Part-time Staff

What is the value of CABE to the field of bilingual/biliteracy education?

In what ways do you play a part in CABE's impact?

How does CABE support you in feeling connected to the vision of the organization?

What resources or support do you need to do your job well and feel job satisfaction? (e.g. professional development, capacity, internal operations, etc.)

What are some of CABE's most effective internal communications strategies? What would you like to see more of?

Where are there areas to enhance the culture of CABE so you in your role can feel satisfied and fulfilled with your job?

