



Language Access to CCRC Activities for Latinos and All Californians

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NALEO Educational Fund

The nation's leading 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that facilitates full Latino participation in the American political process, from citizenship to public service.

Established in 1981, NALEO Educational Fund is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors.

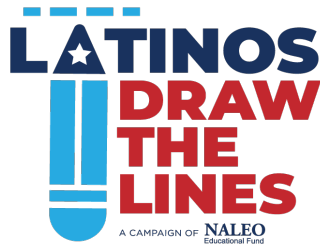
LEADERSHIP



CHAIR

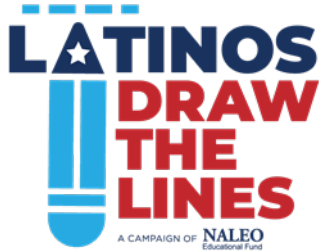
**Hon. Mara Candelaria
Reardon**

Indiana State Representative



NALEO Educational Fund's redistricting principles and priorities:

- CCRC maps must provide Latinos with a fair opportunity to choose their elected representatives – compliance with U.S. Constitution and the federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) are top criteria; respecting COI's are also high priority.
- Process must be must be transparent; provide the public a meaningful opportunity to participate and be heard.
- CCRC's membership should reflect the geographic, racial, ethnic, gender, and age diversity of California.



NALEO Educational Fund's activities:

- Working with MALDEF, mobilize Latinos to participate in redistricting process.
- Advocacy with the CCRC, and review of draft maps.
- Work with coalitions and unity mapping effort.

Overall Accessibility for Latinos = Accessibility for All Californians

- Latinos are California's largest population group, comprising 39% of the population.
- Overall accessibility increases participation, transparency, confidence in CCRC activities.
- Overall accessibility is a "two-way street" – CCRC communicates with public, public communicates with the CCRC.
- Access for Californians with disabilities should be addressed by CCRC in distinct and focused panels or session.



Overall Accessibility of Commission Hearings

Best practices, particularly for obtaining COI testimony:

- Robust number of public hearings, with several focusing on specific regions/areas of California.
- Meetings should be scheduled well in advance, with clear information about topics in notices and agendas.
- Diverse hearing days and times, outside of “traditional business” hours. Mix weekday evening/weekend hearings.
- Technology for virtual hearings should be accessible, consider locations for streaming.
- In-person hearings locations should be places where community members are comfortable.
- Provide some certainty about time for community members to provide testimony at each hearing; consider implementing an appointment system.
- Ensure public can share maps or other visuals with CCRC in “real time.”

Importance of Language Access for California Latinos

- Many Latinos may not be familiar with redistricting or understand its importance.
 - It happens once every ten years.
- Dialogues about redistricting use complex or unfamiliar terms: “contiguous,” “communities of interest,” “racially polarized voting.”
- Redistricting is truly democratic process; all Californians can provide input
- More than one of every four California Latinos (28%) are not yet fully proficient in English.



California Latinos are Linguistically Diverse

- California Latinos identify with at least 18 national origin or sub-groups:
 - Mexican – 83%
 - Salvadoran – 5%
 - Guatemalan – 3%
- Concentration of Central and South American Latinos is even greater in areas such as Los Angeles County:
 - Mexican – 76%
 - Salvadoran – 9%
 - Guatemalan – 6%
- Diversity by age, immigrant status, culture, region, education, employment and family networks.
- Variation in dialects, word usage, pronunciation, idioms.



California's Latin American Indigenous Communities

- A significant number of California Latinos are from Mexican or Central American indigenous groups who speak neither English nor Spanish.
- Latin American indigenous languages include:
 - Zapoteco
 - Mixteco
 - Triqui
 - Guatemalan Mayan languages
 - At least 20 other languages
- Estimated 165,000 indigenous Mexicans in California rural areas.
 - One-third of California's immigrant farmworkers are from Southern Mexico indigenous communities.
 - Many indigenous community workers are also in service industries: restaurant, maintenance workers.



Best Practices for Language Accessibility

Initial Development and Translation of Key Information

- Use professional translators for all key information; supplement with community review:
 - Post translations in a timely manner.
 - Obtain community review of translations; provide sufficient time and stipends for community reviewers.
- Establish a Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) for the CCRC:
 - The Secretary of State and many county election offices have LAACs; their materials, such as toolkits, can be a model for CCRC resources.
- Use “plain language” for initial English-language versions of key information



Best Practices for Language Accessibility

Interpreter Services at Hearings and Written Testimony

- Provide Spanish-language interpreters for all hearings.
 - Consider establishing a dedicated Spanish-language video channel for hearings.
- Permit community members to use their own interpreters, such as family members.
- Where interpreters are needed for testimony or comments, extend time limits to allow for additional interpretation time.
- Permit the submission of written comments in any language and arrange for expedited translation of the comments.

Best Practices for Language Accessibility

COI's and the Statewide Database Tool

- Statewide Database COI tool should be translated into Spanish.
- Statewide Database has reached out to language minority community groups, and is working with us on format and language used in tool (prompts, structure of questions).
- Statewide Database should continue to provide opportunities for language minority community members to beta test tool, provide feedback.
- COI tool should not be sole manner of submitting COI input to CCRC.
 - Permit submission of testimony and drawings through e-mail, and “low-tech” methods such as phone or “hard-copy” mailings.

Partner with Trusted Community Groups and Other Institutions Familiar with Diverse Latino Community Members

- Build on foundation of civic engagement efforts, including naturalization promotion, non-partisan voter engagement, and Census mobilization.
- Expand networks which may not be solely focused on civic engagement – health and education services, faith-based organizations, business sector.
- Spanish-language media are a critical partner – print, broadcast, and digital.





Thank you

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