



From Research to Action: Building a National Voice for Multilingual Learners

Protecting Opportunity Through Policy, Partnerships, and Advocacy

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Webinar Guest Speaker

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Webinar Overview

At a time of significant shifts in federal education policy, how can research, professional expertise, and community voices translate into meaningful action for multilingual learners?

This webinar explores the critical role of advocacy in protecting and expanding educational opportunities for multilingual learners across the United States. Drawing on the work of the Joint National Committee for Languages–National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS), participants will examine how national coalitions connect research, classroom realities, and community experiences to federal policymaking.

The discussion will highlight current policy challenges, opportunities for collaboration across language education communities, and strategies for communicating the value of multilingualism to decision-makers.

Participants will leave with a clearer understanding of how policy decisions shape educational opportunities—and practical ways to move beyond awareness to informed, sustained advocacy at the local, state, and national levels.

Key Insights

- **Research must inform policy and practice.** Evidence about the benefits of multilingualism and effective educational approaches is essential, but sustained advocacy is necessary to translate that knowledge into educational opportunity.
- **Multilingual learners are part of a larger national language education ecosystem.** Policies affecting English language development, dual language immersion, world language education, and teacher preparation are interconnected.
- **Effective advocacy connects local experiences to national priorities.** Educators, families, researchers, and community leaders can help policymakers understand how federal decisions affect students and schools.



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Policy Implications

- **Federal investments and protections matter.** Changes to funding, oversight, and program administration can directly affect access to multilingual education, educator preparation, and language support services.
- **State and local leadership is increasingly consequential.** As federal responsibilities shift, advocates must understand the opportunities and challenges within their own states while continuing to engage federal policymakers.
- **A coordinated national voice strengthens language education.** Collaboration across professional associations, research institutions, community organizations, and educational sectors can elevate shared priorities and influence policy decisions.

Calls to Action

- **Know the policies.** Identify federal and state decisions that affect multilingual learners, including funding, educator preparation, program access, and language services.
- **Tell the story.** Connect research and data with personal experiences that demonstrate the value of multilingualism and the consequences of policy decisions.
- **Build relationships and take action.** Engage elected officials, collaborate with advocacy organizations, and participate in coordinated efforts to protect and expand language learning opportunities..

Resources

- [JNCL-NCLIS Advocacy Resources](#) — federal policy materials, state one-pagers, legislative priorities, and research reports.
- [JNCL-NCLIS Advocacy Toolkit](#) — templates, talking points, and strategies for state and local advocacy.
- [JNCL-NCLIS Student Advocacy Academy](#) — developing student leadership and advocacy skills.
- [Language Advocacy Days 2026](#) — an example of national coalition-building and direct congressional engagement.
- [Language Advocacy Days 2027](#) - registration now open

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