



ABC

Alliance for a
Better Community

2021

IMPACT REPORT



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The world felt heavy as we entered 2021 in the midst of an enduring global health crisis. So many of us and our family members, friends, and partners continued to face hardship and unexpected changes.

Despite it all, the Alliance for a Better Community (ABC) team leaned into the strength of supporting one another and our communities to push our mission and vision forward through these tough times. We truly lived out our name—building an “alliance” to achieve a “better community.” Not surprisingly, we grow more resilient and stronger together when we do. This strength helped fuel our accomplishments throughout the year.

Although difficult, 2021 was important for helping to shine a spotlight on the issues we care so deeply about like ensuring a better K-12 public education for all students, increasing college access and success, guaranteeing access to affordable healthcare, or making opportunities for economic prosperity available to all Latino/as in Los Angeles.

This made one of our biggest accomplishments have a stronger impact. In summer, we published *The*

Latino/a Scorecard Report: A Policy Roadmap for Transforming Los Angeles. Our team organized and compiled hours worth of research and community conversations and worked with three university partners to create a comprehensive report featuring 32 policy recommendations for supporting Latino/as in Los Angeles County in education, health, economic prosperity, civic engagement, and public safety—policy solutions we need more than ever as COVID-19 continues to have the deepest impact on Latino/as and people of color. The Report makes the case for the need of a Los Angeles Latino/a agenda and will inform and strengthen the movement for systems to change to have greater equity now and in the years to come.

We are honored and grateful to be able to continue to build on 20 years of history advocating for and responding to the needs of the Latino/a community in a manner in which we can address necessary systemic change. We also recognize that working to improve the Los Angeles region affords the opportunity to raise the visibility of what is possible for other Latino/a-majority regions across California and the nation.

We want to thank all those who gave their time, financial support and who worked alongside us in 2021. Our ability to respond to our communities and continue to move critical policy forward would not be possible without this support.

Together, we can celebrate the accomplishments outlined in this report and build to seize the extraordinary opportunities 2022 will bring.

With hope, gratitude, and optimism,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vanessa Aramayo".

Vanessa Aramayo
Executive Director



The Latino/a Scorecard Report: A Policy Roadmap for Transforming Los Angeles



The Latino/a Scorecard Report:

A POLICY ROADMAP FOR TRANSFORMING LOS ANGELES

A significant accomplishment for ABC in 2021 was releasing *The Latino/a Scorecard Report: A Policy Roadmap for Transforming Los Angeles*. The Report makes recommendations to advance equity in five key areas where Latino/as have made positive strides yet continue to face systemic obstacles: education, health, public safety, economic prosperity, and civic engagement.

The Report finds that while Latino/as have made tremendous gains over the last 20 years since the release of the *2003 Latino Scorecard: Grading the American Dream*, we are still facing some of the most tenuous obstacles compared to our non-Latino/a White counterparts. It establishes a grade/score in the five issue areas which are based on indicators and data collected by our university partners: USC Sol Price Center for Social Innovation, LMU’s Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Center for the Study of Los Angeles (StudyLA), and David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA.

The report was finalized at the right time as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to cause devastation showing the progress we have made can easily be reversed due to systems that continue to fail our community and deny access to opportunities. Too many are falling behind and now more are falling further behind.

What has emerged are 32 policy recommendations that capture the expertise from ABC’s Board of Directors, partners, community members, and industry experts. The Report will continue to guide our advocacy efforts and campaigns to address the opportunity gaps that have acted as barriers to our community in LA County.

We will continue to build long-term power and strategic repositioning of the Latino/a community in the Los Angeles region through the Scorecard Report to draw attention to where investments must be made to respond to our community’s unique needs. It is a guiding star for our work and an action agenda to make the necessary lasting change our community deserves.



UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine

USC Price

Sol Price School of Public Policy
Sol Price Center for Social Innovation



**Loyola Marymount
University**

StudyLA

Thomas and Dorothy Leavey
Center for the Study of Los Angeles



This Report shares findings grounded in data and in common values to grow access from ‘some’ to ‘all.’ It provides a vision for what is possible and invites us to join as partners for the strong collaboration needed to achieve more victories together, and it comes at a crucial moment in time.

- U.S. Senator Alex Padilla



THE LATINO/A SCORECARD REPORT

TWO DAY VIRTUAL LAUNCH

- ABC publicly launched the Scorecard Report over two days and drew over 350 participants for five panel discussions that included 30 prominent Latino/a experts and leaders.
- The two days showcased data and highlighted policy recommendations to an audience of influential leaders, community-based organizations, elected officials, parents, and community members.
- Opened by U.S. Senator Alex Padilla and special remarks by Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascon.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

LATINO/A VOTER ENGAGEMENT IN GUBERNATORIAL RECALL ELECTION

Latino/as make up 48% of the population in Los Angeles County; however, only 80% Latino/a citizens are registered voters. Although this is a significant majority, it’s not enough. Our community is diverse and understanding the diversity and complexity of Latino/as voters is important if we are to successfully increase turnout.

To encourage Latino/as to increase voter turnout, ABC developed a voter outreach video campaign: [LA Latino/as Vote](#). Our trusted messengers in the video included community voices, faith and clergy leaders, a teacher, a medical physician, and civil rights leader Dolores Huerta.

We also created a paid program for parent leaders who sent over 800,000 text messages and reached over 500,000 targeted Latino/a voters in Los Angeles County encouraging community members to vote.

Through our voter engagement efforts we are bridging the gap in increasing the number of voters who are eligible to vote. Every vote counts to pass progressive measures that would benefit the entire Los Angeles region!



SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS



EDUCATION

VICTORY ON EQUITY IS JUSTICE 2021 RESOLUTION

In May, we celebrated advocacy efforts when the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) School Board pledged to protect and double equity-based funding for the 2021-22 school year. Our team supported partner organizations to push for change and took the lead on a resolution letter of support to the school board that included dozens of community partners.

Investments through the Student Equity Need Index (SENI 2.0) take into account academic factors such as reading and math scores as well as neighborhood factors that impact academic success such as asthma rates, those experiencing poverty in schools, and gun violence in the community among other factors. The vote pledged an additional \$700 million to the initial \$282 million for our high and highest-need schools—more than doubling the effort to ensure COVID-19 funds are prioritized to the most impacted communities.

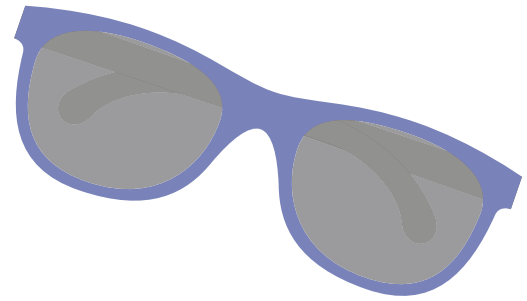
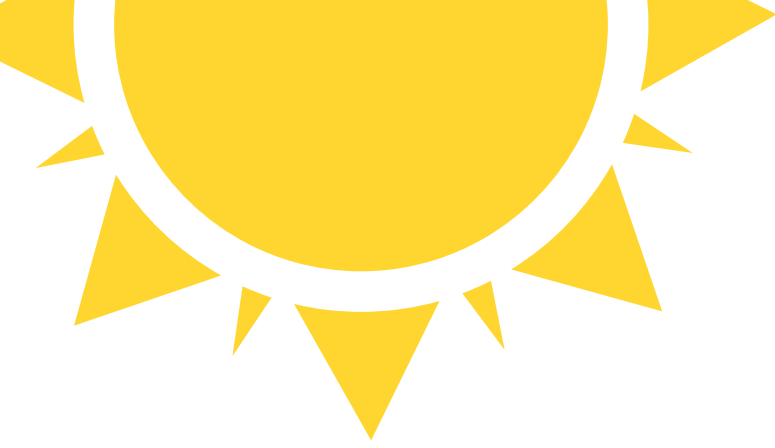
ABC applauds the Equity Alliance for their leadership on this effort and the key support of countless partners, which has resulted in this victory—a clear demonstration of the power of community! The Resolution titled Equity is Justice 2021: A New Standard for Public Education Centered on Racial Justice and Equity for the Highest-Need Students in Our Most Impacted Schools, was sponsored by Board Member Garcia and co-sponsored by Board Member Tanya Ortiz Franklin.

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This vote will go down in history as one of the biggest equitable investments made by any school district in the country. This is a necessary first step to ensure we are responding to our students who, along with their families, have not only been hit the hardest by the pandemic, but who also attend schools that have been underfunded and overlooked well before the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Vanessa Aramayo,
Executive Director

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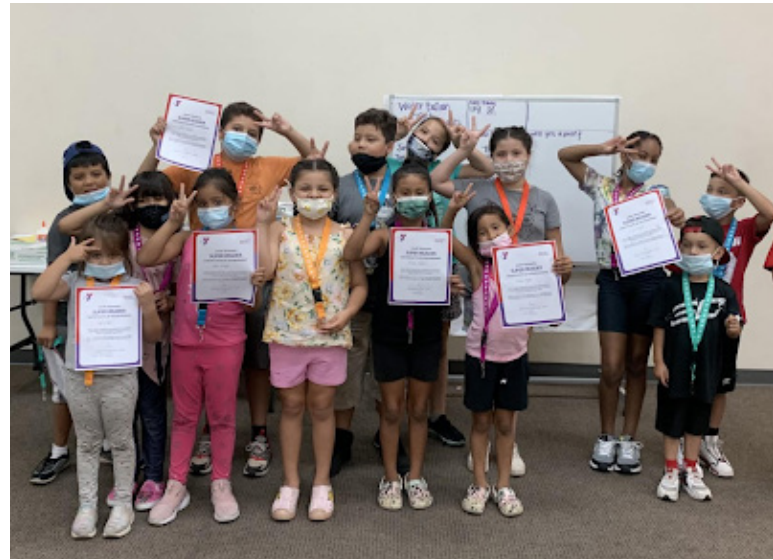


SUMMER LEARNING INITIATIVE

Thanks to the support of the California Community Foundation (CCF) and Ballmer Group, ABC was able to convene and sub-grant a robust group of community partners to provide an academic and enrichment summer program to students and families in chronically underserved Southeast Los Angeles. The program was developed in response to addressing the setbacks in education experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The eight-week Summer Learning Initiative (SLI) program provided tutoring, digital literacy, and mental health support workshops. The program provided two daily no-cost meals for students and their families. Our goal was to better equip students socially, emotionally, and academically as they prepared to go back to in-person learning in the fall of 2021.

- Nearly 500 parents and students served
- Over 7,000 free meals provided five days a week
- Sixteen virtual workshops were tailored for parents



VERANO DE APRENDIZAJE FAMILIAR

CAPACITACIÓN PARA PADRES DE FAMILIA

Martes 20 de julio a las 4 p.m.:
Taller Virtual de IEP
(Programa de Educación Individualizada)

Importante: Traiga su IEP al taller. Vamos a enseñarles a leer bien su IEP.

ENLACE PARA LA REUNIÓN:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81519315273>

Thank you to our partners for their support:



VICTORY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

In October, ABC joined our leading advocacy partner, The Campaign for College Opportunity, at the historic signing of Assembly Bills 928, 1111, and 469. After years of working towards this goal, this is a huge victory for higher education. All Bills fundamentally transformed the way community college students transfer to a university in California. These along with four others were signed by Governor Newsom and allocated \$47.1 billion in funding for higher education in California!

AB 928 creates a general education transfer pathway for students to become eligible to the UC and CSU; establishes a committee representing K-12 schools, community colleges and public and private universities dedicated to simplifying transfer; and places community college students onto the Associate Degree for Transfer pathway to increase their likelihood of transferring successfully.

AB 1111 requires the 116 community colleges to adopt a common course numbering system that would be accessible and easy to understand for students and increase transfer rates for students. This is a necessary change that positively affects students of color who make up the majority of students at community colleges.

AB 469 requires all students, by September 2022, to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or a California Dream Act application.

Together, these student-centered bills address the dismal community college transfer rates that have persisted for decades; less than 3% of students transfer after two years and less than half after six years. This historic legislation will streamline the transfer process for millions of students by increasing collaboration between our state public colleges and universities. Numerous organizations contributed to this success.

ABC is a proud member of the Community Engagement for College Success Network (CECSN), a collective of K-12 public education advocates and community organizations working to increase college access and success throughout our state. Thanks in large part to the support from the College Futures Foundation, our work in building and strengthening the advocacy pipeline between K-12 and higher education is growing and responding to the immediate and long-term needs of our students. We know this work can drastically change the trajectory of our students' lives and for that we are proud and grateful for the collective work leading up to this victory!



Vanessa Aramayo, ABC Executive Director, and Rosie Arroyo, Senior Program Officer at California Community Foundation and ABC Vice Chair, together with California Governor Gavin Newsom.



From left to right: Vanessa Spagnoli, Policy Director at Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE); Rosie Arroyo, Senior Program Officer at California Community Foundation and ABC Vice Chair; Alison De Lucca, Executive Director at SoCal CAN; Michele Siqueiros, President for The Campaign for College Opportunity; Vanessa Aramayo, Executive Director at Alliance for a Better Community; Jessie Ryan, Executive Vice President at The Campaign for College Opportunity; Audrey Dow, Senior Vice President at The Campaign for College Opportunity and ABC Vice Chair



ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

COVID-19 ECONOMIC RELIEF

Nearly \$1 million dollars in COVID-19 relief cash assistance grants was dispersed to over 500 families from the hardest hit areas of Los Angeles County. This effort was supported by 13 organizations who helped us identify families in Los Angeles County with the highest needs. ABC also participated in helping to disperse an additional \$3 million led by our partners.

Our team not only provided financial support, but provided consistent additional key resources of support for recipients. Many recipients joined ABC's parent and civic engagement programs including voter outreach and vaccine education programs.



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MARCELA'S STORY

When the pandemic hit, I lost my job and my daughter had just been accepted into college. I have been applying for jobs but due to my immigration status the opportunities are very limited. The assistance I have received has reduced my stress and has encouraged my daughter to stick with her dream of going to college.

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KATY'S STORY

I am a single parent and live with my 16 and 8 year old sons. I gradually started to lose jobs cleaning houses since people were concerned about getting infected with the virus. Eventually, I stopped working completely. When schools switched to distance learning, we did not have internet service at home. The school provided hotspots but ours was unreliable. The internet was necessary for my children to continue their education at home. Fortunately, having a monthly grant helped me cover critical expenses, support my kids, and have internet access so my kids can continue learning.

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HEALTH

SELA COVID-19 VACCINE OUTREACH PROGRAM

The Southeast Los Angeles (SELA) Collaborative received funding from the state, administered through the Public Health Institute for the SELA community to have access to and knowledge of state vaccine efforts.

Through this initiative and as a member of the SELA Collaborative, ABC developed and implemented a peer-to-peer vaccine education and outreach program, the SELA Vaccine Outreach Program. Led by parents, the program was created to increase awareness of vaccines and disseminate information about existing and emerging vaccine clinics in the region.

The SELA region was the epicenter of COVID-19 cases and deaths and also had the lowest vaccination rates across the county. The peer-to-peer approach to sharing credible and reliable vaccine information is another way ABC maximizes existing relationships in communities to deliver important messages and increase trust with agencies and other partners. This coordinated and effective effort could not have happened without the partnership of the SELA Collaborative and locally-based partner organizations.

#ThisIsOurShot
#SELAPresente



CONSORTIUM FOR

ENGLISH LEARNER SUCCESS

The Consortium for English Learner Success Advisory Committee is a group made up of nine nonprofit organizations that advocate for the success of English learners (ELs) and dual language learners (DLLs) within Los Angeles County. ABC has co-chaired this committee with Californians Together since 2018.

In 2020, the Consortium for English Learner Success released the 2020-21 Policy Agenda which highlights the needs and assets of DLL and EL students in California as a framework for advocacy to improve their educational access, quality, and outcomes in Los Angeles and across the state.

In 2021, quarterly consortium convenings were held to give timely updates on local, state, and federal policies related to ELs and DLLs. The Consortium newsletter also launched to share information and grow support on issues related to ELs and DLLs within our extended networks. Additional communications strategies will be implemented to continue to expand support for our agenda and collective goals.

ABC is committed to advocating for an education system that fully supports the needs of ELs and DLLs to ensure success while uplifting, honoring and cultivating their native language, cultures, and identities.



ABC REBRANDED!

ABC launched our new look in tandem with the release of The Latino/a Scorecard Report. Our staff engaged the ABC Board of Directors, founding members, and community partners to make our vision come to life for a refreshed brand which included a new logo, marketing collateral, and website.



The new logo is defined by three elements:

- **Speech marks** represent ABC's advocacy work as well as the importance of making Latino/a voices heard.
- **The converging lines pattern** represents alliance, engagement, and our roots in the community.
- **City of Los Angeles skyline** represents the community we are all part of.

These three elements are arranged to form a bright landscape alluding to a promise of a better future for the Latino/a community and the Los Angeles region.





Alliance for a Better Community is advancing social, economic, racial equity and justice for the Latino community and the Los Angeles region through power building and policy advocacy.

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JOIN US IN OUR MISSION



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ABC also thanks outgoing Board Member Helen Iris Torres for her nine years of service

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