

Feliza I. Ortiz-Licon, Ed.D.

The proud daughter of Mexican immigrant parents, Dr. Feliza I. Ortiz-Licon embodies the fulfillment of dreams deferred and the promise of public education as the greatest equalizer in society. With twenty-five years of dedication to the field of education, Feliza has focused on promoting educational equity, especially for Latinx, immigrant students, and multilingual learners.

A committed and equity-focused champion for all students, Feliza has worked at the local, state, and national levels to advance responsive policies and create equitable educational opportunities for underserved and underrepresented students. Her approach emphasizes asset-based programs rooted in culturally and linguistically sustaining practices. Currently, she serves as the Executive Vice President at the Campaign for College Opportunity, collaborating with the senior leadership to set the organization's vision, strategic direction, and implement a robust policy and advocacy agenda aimed at strengthening California's workforce, economy, and democracy by supporting the creation of optimal system conditions for students to access, pursue, and complete a post-secondary education.

Prior to her role at the Campaign for College Opportunity, Feliza served as the Chief of Staff for the New Teacher Center (NTC), Chief of Policy and Advocacy Officer at Latinos for Education (L4E), and Principal of Education Programs at UnidosUS (formerly the National Council of La Raza). These roles have fueled her passion for reshaping the narrative and enhancing opportunities afforded to minoritized students. Feliza's extensive work in the Latino civil rights and equity space has been laser focused on advancing policies that create equitable Latinx representation within the education sector and teaching profession, improving outcomes for Latinx students from birth to college, and ensuring that Latinx leaders are represented from the classroom to the boardroom.

In 2015, Feliza was appointed to the California State Board of Education, where she had the honor and privilege of serving 6.2 million students over five fulfilling years. During her tenure, she influenced the creation of California's accountability system, ensuring alignment between the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and the federal law, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). As part of an 11-member body, Feliza had a unique opportunity to establish state and local indicators, set interim growth targets, and championed the Equity Report to hold schools and systems accountable for the performance of all student populations. She is particularly proud of her contributions to the English Learner Roadmap, a policy and guidance document that supersedes previous English Only language and mandates set in place after the passage of Proposition 227 in 1998.

Feliza holds a bachelor's degree from the University of California, Los Angeles in Political Science and Chicana/o Studies, a master's degree from the University of California, Berkeley in City and Regional Planning, and a joint doctoral degree in Education Leadership from the

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University of California, Irvine and California State University, Los Angeles. Her dissertation, “The Symbiotic Relationship Between Cities and Schools,” explored the role of federal policies in shaping communities, the uneven implementation of large education reforms, and the impact of these federal and local policies in student educational outcomes across the Los Angeles metropolitan area.

Feliza’s love language is policy. She firmly believes in advocacy and policies to create just and equitable systems for students furthest from opportunity. Feliza is happily married to Roberto Licon, a seasoned educator in Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD), and they have two bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate children who attend LBUSD schools and play baseball and softball.