



Riverside County  
Board of Education

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**DATE:** September 14, 2018

**TO:** Mrs. Susan Scott, District Superintendent  
Mr. Dean Primmer, Board President  
Desert Center Unified School District

**FROM:** Judy D. White, Ed.D., Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

**BY:** Teresa Hyden   
Chief Business Official  
(951) 826-6790

Cynthia Glover Woods   
Chief Academic Officer  
(951) 826-6648

**SUBJECT: 2018-19 ADOPTED BUDGET and LCAP – APPROVAL**

The County Superintendent of Schools is required to review and approve the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan or the annual update to an existing Local Control and Accountability Plan prior to the approval of the district's Adopted Budget [Education Code Section 42127(d)(2)].

**Adopted Local Control and Accountability Plan**

In accordance with California Education Code (EC) Section 52070, our office has completed its review of the district's 2018-19 Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) to determine whether it adheres to the guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE).

The district's adopted LCAP has been analyzed to determine whether:

- The plan adheres to the template adopted by the State Board of Education;
- The budget includes sufficient expenditures to implement the actions and strategies included in the plan, based on the projected costs included in the plan; and
- The plan adheres to the expenditure requirements for funds apportioned on the basis of the number and concentration of unduplicated pupils.

The district's adopted LCAP has been analyzed in the context of the guidance provided by the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) and the California Department of Education (CDE). Based on our analysis, the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan for the 2018-19 fiscal year has been approved by the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools. Our goal is to further enhance the performance of students by providing feedback and inquiry questions that will support your refinement of the 2018-19 Local Control and Accountability Plan to close the achievement gap in metrics that impact student preparedness for college and career.

**Student Achievement**

The purpose of the LCAP is to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills needed to be successful in both college and career. Riverside County Office of Education conducted a review of research on K-12 college readiness indicators to identify those that would align with the LCAP purpose and have greatest impact. As a result of this research, we recommend that LEAs closely monitor the metrics listed in the data table below for all student groups.

Desert Center Unified School District									
Metric	Year	State Average	District Average	White	African American	Hispanic	English Learner (EL)*	Low Income (LI)	Students w/ Disabilities (SWD)
% of Enrollment	2018			60.0	0.0	40.0	6.7	66.7	6.7
% UC A-G Completion	2017	46.8							
EAP – % ELA College Ready	2017	27.7							
EAP – % Math College Ready	2017	12.9							
CAASPP – Grade 3 ELA % Met/Exceeded	2017	43.9							
CAASPP – ELA % Met/Exceeded	2017	48.6							
CAASPP – Math % Met/Exceeded	2017	37.6							
CAASPP Distance from Level 3 – ELA	2017								
CAASPP Distance from Level 3 – Math	2017								
% Suspension ♦	2017	3.6	9.5	18.2				12.5	
% Chronic Absenteeism ♦	2017	10.8	19.0	36.4				25.0	
% EL Progress to English Proficiency**	2017								
Graduation Rate	2017	82.7							
CAASPP – California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress CTE – Career Technical Education EAP – Early Assessment Program ELA – English Language Arts UC – University of California									
*CAASPP Distance from Level 3 English Learner Student Group includes Four-Year Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) students. ♦Suspension / Chronic Absenteeism - District data excludes charter schools. Statewide data includes both charters and non-charters. **% EL Progress to English Proficiency is calculated by taking the number of ELs meeting their annual growth target and dividing by the number of ELs with the required prior CELDT scores. This data represents the final year of CELDT assessment results.									

We offer the following commendations and inquiry questions to consider for the implementation of the 2018-19 Local Control and Accountability Plan and the refinement of the plan in the years 2019-20 and 2020-21.

### **Standards Met or Exceeded in English Language Arts and Mathematics**

The district is to be commended for increasing in the percent of students that meet or exceed standards in English language arts and mathematics, close monitoring of individual student performance on interim assessments, implementing Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for continuous progress monitoring of student learning and growth, and providing small group instruction by hiring and training paraprofessionals for every class.

Additional dialogue related to the questions below may support the achievement of the expected annual measurable outcomes and goals aligned to student achievement in English language arts and mathematics:

- How might a review of the alignment between the percentage of proficient students on the state assessment and student grades impact instruction?
- How might the district calibrate the level of instructional rigor in English language arts and math with the demands of the CAASPP assessments to improve student achievement?
- How might the implementation of 1:1 Chromebooks support an increase in student learning and improve data-based decision making?

### **Course Access and Student Enrollment in Rigorous Coursework and CTE Pathways**

The district is to be commended for listing a course access goal and continuing to focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) learning through Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) materials and curricula.

Additional dialogue related to the question below may support the achievement of the expected annual measurable outcomes and goals listed in the plan:

- What impact might student career exploration have on pupil achievement and course access metrics?

### **Pupil Engagement and School Climate**

The district is to be commended for providing funds for all families to participate and engage in field trips and extra-curricular activities.

Additional dialogue related to the question below may support the achievement of the expected annual measurable outcomes and goals listed in the plan:

- How might your focus on student achievement be supported through your family engagement activities?

### **Monitoring Progress**

It is recommended that the district utilize a process that continually assesses the progress of each planned action and its effectiveness in achieving the expected annual measurable outcomes related to each goal specified in the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). Identifying leading indicators for progress on goals and developing a system to monitor those indicators throughout the year is encouraged. The information received from progress monitoring can support communication with stakeholders and provide information the district will need to clearly articulate, in the *Annual Update* section of the plan, the effectiveness of the planned actions/services.

To access resources and tools that will support future LCAP development, please go to <http://www.rcoe.us/educational-services/assessment-accountability-continuous-improvement/lcap-support/>.

### ***Fiscal Recommendations***

During our review we identified opportunities to improve data accuracy between the district’s LCAP and fiscal documents. The following technical corrections were incorporated into the district’s LCAP:

- The district modified the Total General Fund Budget Expenditures For LCAP Year listed in the Budget Summary to correspond to the district’s Adopted Budget.
- The district modified the Total Projected LCFF Revenues for LCAP year listed in the Budget Summary to correspond to the district’s LCFF calculator.

### **Adopted Budget**

In accordance with California Education Code (EC) Section 42127, our office has completed its review of the district’s 2018-19 Adopted Budget to determine whether it complies with the criteria and standards adopted by the SBE and whether it allows the district to meet its financial obligations for the 2018-19 fiscal year, as well as satisfy its multi-year financial commitments.

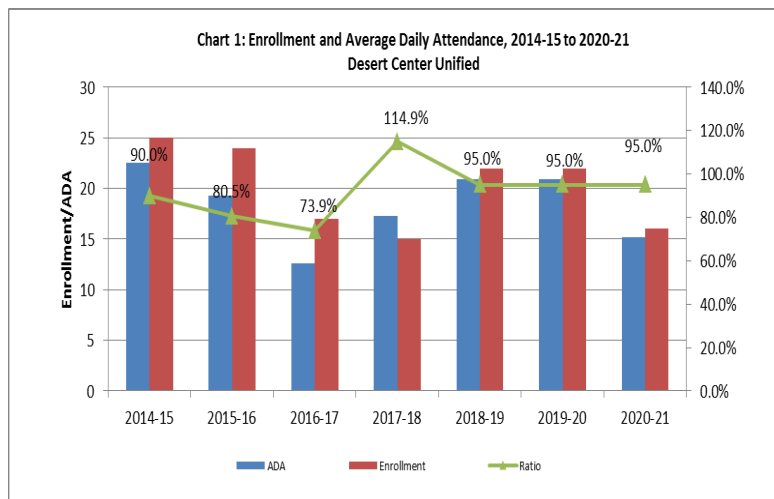
Based on our analysis of the information submitted, we approve the district’s budget, but note the following concern:

- *Enrollment* – The district’s projections indicate flat enrollment for the first subsequent fiscal year and declining enrollment for the second subsequent fiscal year.

### ***Assumptions and Other Considerations***

The district’s Adopted Budget was developed prior to adoption of the 2018-19 Adopted State Budget. Actual state budget data should be reviewed and incorporated into the district operating budget and multi-year projections during the First Interim Reporting process.

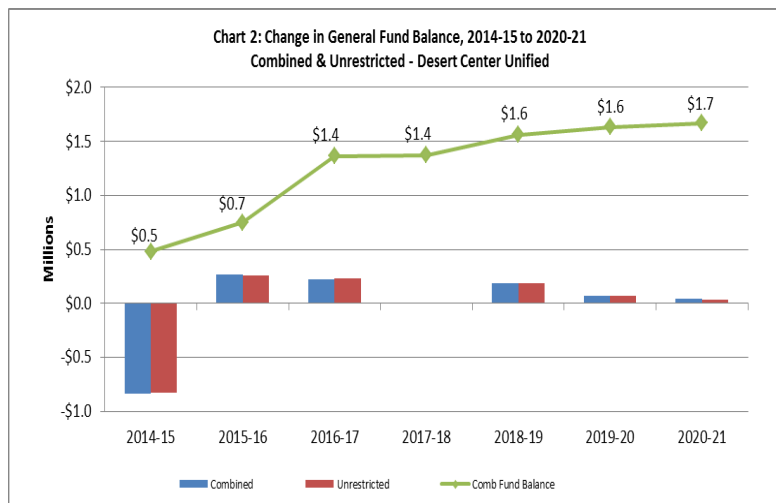
*Enrollment and Average Daily Attendance (ADA)* – The district estimates 20.90 ADA for the current fiscal year. The district projects 20.90 ADA for the 2019-20 fiscal year and 15.20 ADA for the 2020-21 fiscal year.



**Unduplicated Pupil Percentage** – The district reports an unduplicated pupil percentage of 66.67 percent for 2018-19, 67.80 percent for 2019-20, and 68.33 percent for 2020-21. The district’s unduplicated pupil percentage included in the 2017-18 P-2 certification by the California Department of Education was 71.43 percent.

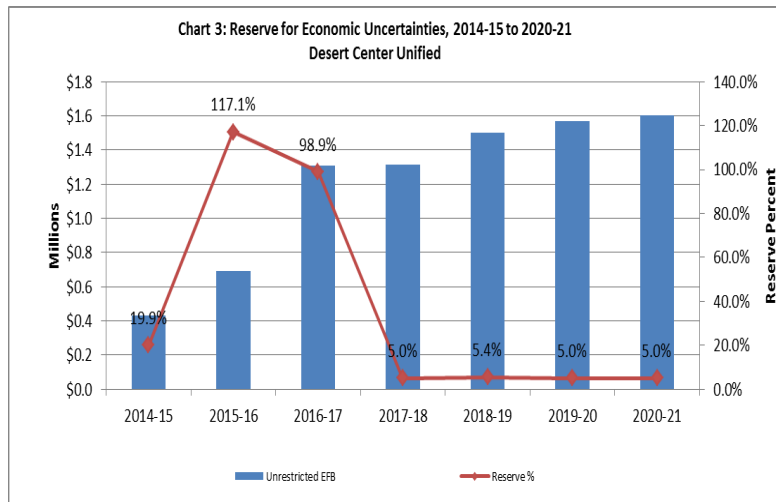
**Property Taxes** – As a “basic aid” district, the district’s primary revenue source is property taxes. Our office recommends the district closely monitor actual property tax receipts throughout the year and revise its budget and multi-year financial projections accordingly.

**Fund Balance** – The district’s Adopted Budget indicates a positive ending balance for all funds in the 2018-19 fiscal year. Chart 2 shows the district’s historical spending trends and projections.

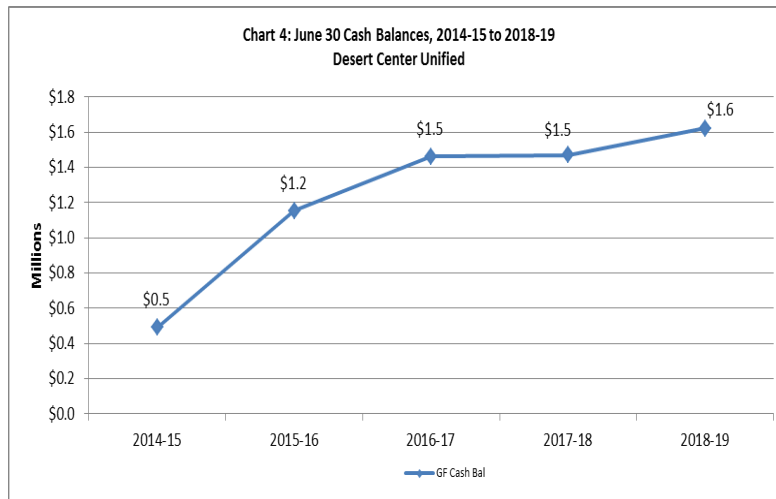


**Employee Negotiations** – As of the board date, June 19, 2018, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations continue with both the certificated and classified bargaining units for the 2018-19 fiscal year. Prior to entering into a written agreement, California Government Code (GC) Section 3547.5 requires a public school employer to publicly disclose the major provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, including but not limited to, the costs incurred in the current and subsequent fiscal years. The disclosure must include a written certification signed by the district superintendent and chief business official that the district can meet the costs incurred by the district during the term of the agreement. Therefore, please make available to the public and submit a disclosure to our office at least ten (10) working days prior to the date on which the governing board is to take action on a proposed agreement.

**Reserve for Economic Uncertainties** – The minimum state-required reserve for a district of Desert Center Unified’s size is the greater of \$67,000 or 5.0 percent of total expenditures. Chart 3 displays a summary of the district’s actual and projected unrestricted General Fund balance and reserves. The district projects to meet the minimum reserve requirement in the current and subsequent fiscal years.

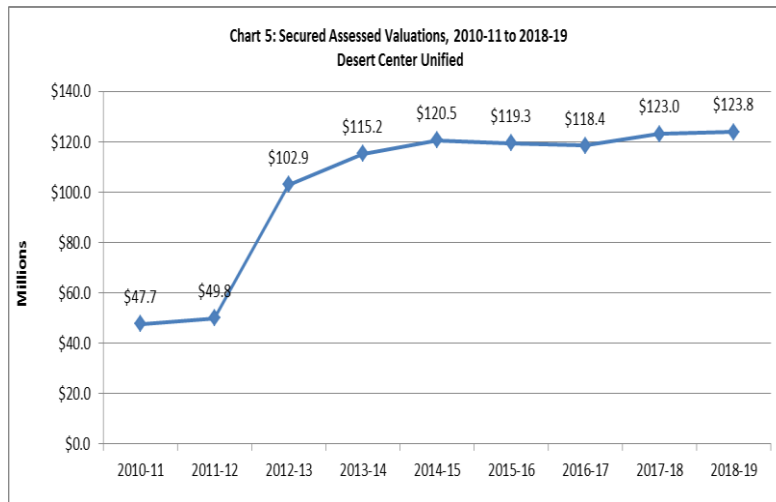


*Cash Management* – Chart 4 provides a historical summary of the district’s June 30<sup>th</sup> General Fund cash balance. Based on the budget’s cash flow analysis, the district projects a positive General Fund cash balance of \$1.6 million as of June 30, 2019. This balance does not include any temporary borrowings, and the district’s internal cash resources appear sufficient to address cash flow needs in the current year.



*AB 2756* – Current law, as enacted through AB 2756 (Chapter 52, Statutes of 2004), requires the County Superintendent to review and consider any studies, reports, evaluations, or audits that may contain evidence a district is showing fiscal distress. Our office did not receive any such reports for the district.

*Assessed Valuations* – The Riverside County Assessor’s Office has estimated secured assessed valuations will increase by 6.26 percent countywide in 2019-20. Chart 5 displays a historical summary of the district’s secured property tax assessed valuations.



**Conclusion**

As we enter a new era in California school finance, it is crucial that districts maintain prudent budget practices. Changes in State and Federal legislation, which remain uncertain, could lead to significant changes in future funding levels and compliance requirements. Additionally, there is increasing pressure for public agencies to provide additional layers of spending transparency. We encourage districts to begin assessing program contributions and reducing any structural deficits so that fiscal solvency can be preserved through changes in the operational landscape. Our office is committed to supporting districts in maintaining quality educational programs, while preserving fiscal solvency. If we can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office.