



Riverside County  
Board of Education

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**DATE:** August 26, 2022

**TO:** Dr. Greg Sackos, District Superintendent  
Mr. Dean Primmer, Board President  
Desert Center Unified School District

**FROM:** Edwin Gomez, Ed.D., Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

**BY:** Scott Price, Ph.D.  Amanda Corridan   
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**SUBJECT: 2022-23 LCAP and ADOPTED BUDGET – 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 2022-23 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.
- The plan adheres to the expenditure requirements for funds apportioned on the basis of the number and concentration of unduplicated pupils.
- The plan includes the calculations to determine whether there is required carryover. If applicable, the plan includes a description of the planned uses of the specified funds and a description of how the planned uses of those funds satisfy the requirements for specific actions to be considered as contributing toward meeting the increased or improved services requirement.

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 2022-23 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 future Local Control and Accountability Plans and any additional plans designed 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 the greatest impact. As a result of this research, we recommend that local education agencies (LEAs) closely monitor the metrics listed in the data tables below for all student groups.

Desert Center Unified School District Student Groups – Program Participation Status						
Indicator	LEA	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	English Learner	Foster Youth	Homeless Youth	Students with Disabilities
Enrollment Count 2021 <sup>1</sup>	20	17	5	*	5	4
Enrollment Percent 2021 <sup>1</sup>	N/A	85.0	25.0	*	25.0	20.0
English Language Arts (ELA) Achievement	#	#	#	#	#	#
Mathematics Achievement	#	#	#	#	#	#
English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) Summative Level 4 Percentage 2021 <sup>2</sup>	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reclassified Fluent English Proficient Rate 2021 <sup>3†</sup>	N/A	N/A	0.0	N/A	N/A	N/A
College and Career Prepared Rate 2021	#	#	#	#	#	#
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2021 <sup>3</sup>	46.2	50.0	*	*	*	*
Suspension Rate 2021 <sup>3</sup>	0.0	0.0	*	*	*	*
Expulsion Rate 2021 <sup>3</sup>	0.0	0.0	*	*	*	*
<sup>1</sup> California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Files						
<sup>2</sup> CAASPP (California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress)/ELPAC Reporting Website and Files						

<sup>3</sup> CDE Dataquest and Files  
 † Indicator Includes Charter Schools Within the District  
 \* Data Suppressed for Student Privacy Reasons  
 # Data Unavailable Due to CA School Dashboard Suspension Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Desert Center Unified School District Student Groups – Race/Ethnicity									
Indicator	LEA	American Indian	Asian	Black/African American	Filipino	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races
Enrollment Count 2021 <sup>1</sup>	20	1	*	*	*	12	*	5	2
Enrollment Percent 2021 <sup>1</sup>	N/A	5.0	*	*	*	60.0	*	25.0	10.0
English Language Arts (ELA) Achievement	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Mathematics Achievement	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
College and Career Prepared Rate 2021	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2021 <sup>3</sup>	46.2	*	*	*	*	50.0	*	*	*
Suspension Rate 2021 <sup>3</sup>	0.0	*	*	*	*	0.0	*	*	*
Expulsion Rate 2021 <sup>3</sup>	0.0	*	*	*	*	0.0	*	*	*
<sup>1</sup> California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Files <sup>2</sup> CAASPP/ELPAC Reporting Website and Files <sup>3</sup> CDE Dataquest and Files †Indicator Includes Charter Schools Within the District *Data Suppressed for Student Privacy Reasons # Data Unavailable Due to CA School Dashboard Suspension Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic									

We offer the following commendations and inquiry questions to consider for the implementation of the 2022-23 Local Control and Accountability Plan and the refinement of the plan in future years:

**Student Success in Academics**

The district is to be commended for implementing multiple instructional delivery models inclusive of frequent benchmarks, which provide opportunities for timely instructional adjustments. The district is also to be commended for engaging parents in the instructional delivery model.

Additional dialogue related to the questions below may support achievement of the goals and desired outcomes aligned to student academic achievement:

- How might the district ensure appropriate staff training and support to meet the needs of fully inclusive classrooms through in-person or virtual opportunities?
- What other resources could be utilized to provide and monitor effective staff training for inclusivity and Academic Language Development (ALD) to ensure academic achievement and student success?
- How might the district develop and monitor the effectiveness of the new Health curriculum?

### **Student Access, Enrollment, and Success in Rigorous Coursework**

The district is to be commended for their focus to promote literacy skills in reading and writing. A remarkable note is the high percentage of student engagement and progression through the Footsteps2Brilliance initiative.

Additional dialogue related to the questions below may support achievement of the goals and desired outcomes aligned to student access, enrollment, and success in rigorous coursework:

- As the district continues to prepare students for college and career readiness, how might the district collaborate with the partnering district to backward design coherent and rigorous elementary and middle school programs that will prepare students for college and career readiness?
- How might the district surround students with adults, professionals, and resources to build and support college-going aspirations and financial aid awareness through in-person and virtual opportunities?

### **Student Engagement and School Climate**

The district is to be commended for involving educational partners in the decision regarding the adoption of a new Health and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum. The district is also to be recognized for participating in the Science Fair as well as offering a variety of after school and community activities to further engage families.

Additional dialogue related to the questions below may support achievement of the goals and desired outcomes aligned to student engagement and school climate:

- In what ways might the district monitor and evaluate the impact of the SEL curriculum on the school climate?
- How might the district measure the impact of the Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) program options on student engagement and school climate?

### **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 *Desired Outcomes* related to each goal specified in the 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 *Goal Analysis* 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 <https://www.rcoe.us/lcap-support>.

### ***Fiscal Recommendations***

During our review, we identified opportunities to improve data accuracy between the district's LCAP and fiscal documents. After board adoption, the district revised certain items, which had no material impact on the implementation of the district's plan.

### **Adopted Budget**

The district's Adopted Budget was developed in the context of the Governor's 2022-23 May Revise. Subsequently, the 2022-23 State Budget was adopted, which contained significant differences from the May Revise. The district should update and revise its budget projections to reflect changes in available funding along with updating LCAP contributing actions and services to incorporate the associated increased funding.

Based on our analysis of the information submitted, and our assessment of revenue changes in the enacted State Budget, we approve the district's budget, but would like to highlight the following:

*Enrollment and Average Daily Attendance (ADA)* – The district estimates 27 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 9.8 percent increase from the certified 2021-22 P-2 ADA. For 2023-24, the district projects a 3.6 percent increase in ADA and for 2024-25 the district projects a 6.9 percent decrease in ADA.

*Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)* – 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.

*Unrestricted Deficit Spending* – The district's Adopted Budget indicates a positive ending balance for all funds in the 2022-23 fiscal year. However, for the unrestricted General Fund, the district anticipates expenditures and uses will exceed revenues and sources by \$0.2 million in 2022-23, \$0.3 million in 2023-24, and \$0.3 million in 2024-25. Our office strongly discourages districts from committing to additional ongoing expenditures without offsetting reductions and stresses the need to continue identifying solutions to reduce any potential structural deficit.

*Employee Negotiations* – As of the board date, June 15, 2022, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations are complete with both the certificated and classified bargaining units for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

*Reserve for Economic Uncertainties* – The minimum state-required reserve for a district of Desert Center Unified’s size is the greater of 5.0 percent or \$76,000. The district projects to meet the minimum reserve requirement in the current and two subsequent fiscal years.

*Cash Management* – Attention to cash solvency remains a critical fiscal practice and should continue to be prioritized in the coming year. The district projects sufficient cash balances to cover projected expenditures during the 2022-23 fiscal year. Should the district identify the need for temporary borrowing options, our office strongly advises districts to consult with legal counsel and independent auditors prior to using Cafeteria Special Revenue Fund (Fund 13) and Building Fund (Fund 21) for temporary interfund borrowing purposes to remedy cash shortfalls.

*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.

**Conclusion**

Our office commends the district for its efforts thus far to preserve its fiscal solvency and maintain a quality education program for its students. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office.