



Riverside County
Board of Education

Jamie Azpeitia-Sachs

Kim J. Cousins

Ray "Coach" Curtis

Bruce N. Dennis

Barbara Hale

Ben Johnson II

Elizabeth F. Romero

DATE: August 23, 2023

TO: Mr. Michael R. McCormick, District Superintendent
Mr. Matthew Serafin, Board President
Mr. Stacy Coleman, Deputy Superintendent
Mr. Mark LeNoir, Assistant Superintendent, Education Services
Val Verde Unified School District

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

BY: Scott Price, Ph.D.  Amanda Corridan 
Chief Business Official Chief Academic Officer
(951) 826-6790 (951) 826-6648

SUBJECT: 2023-24 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 2023-24 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 and the California Department of

Education (CDE). Based on our analysis, the district’s Local Control and Accountability Plan for the 2023-24 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 the 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 necessary to be successful in both college and career. The Riverside County Office of Education conducted a review of research on TK-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 table below for all student groups.

Val Verde Unified School District Student Groups – Program Participation Status						
Indicator	LEA	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	English Learner	Foster Youth	Homeless Youth	Students with Disabilities
Enrollment Count 2022 ¹	19,216	16,217	4,358	237	617	2,276
Enrollment Percent 2022 ¹	N/A	84.4	22.7	1.2	3.2	11.8
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2022 ¹	-33.6	-40.9	-66.6	-69.0	-60.3	-119.3
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2022 ¹	-92.3	-98.7	-113.5	-127.3	-121.3	-160.6
English Learner Progress Indicator 2022 ¹	N/A	N/A	49.8	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reclassified Fluent English Proficient Rate 2022 ^{2†}	=	=	=	=	=	=
Graduation Rate 2022 ¹	93.5	93.5	79.4	75.6	87.1	84.5
College and Career Prepared Rate 2022	#	#	#	#	#	#
A-G Completion Rate 2022 ¹	54.7	53.7	22.2	11.1	36.8	21.5
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2022 ¹	38.6	39.0	21.8	8.9	22.8	21.5
Dropout Rate 2022 ²	4.7	4.7	15.1	18.2	11.9	4.7

Val Verde Unified School District Student Groups – Race/Ethnicity									
Indicator	LEA	American Indian	Asian	Black/African American	Filipino	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races
A-G Completion Rate 2022 ¹	54.7	N/A	80.0	55.2	86.7	54.2	N/A	51.4	48.6
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2022 ¹	38.6	N/A	30.0	32.3	33.3	40.4	N/A	39.2	18.9
Dropout Rate 2022 ²	4.7	*	5.0	4.7	0.0	4.3	*	7.0	10.8
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2022 ¹	35.0	40.5	17.1	35.1	9.4	35.8	69.6	32.3	32.3
Suspension Rate 2022 ¹	3.8	3.6	2.3	7.2	1.6	3.4	4.1	3.2	4.3
Expulsion Rate 2022 ²	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
¹ California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Files ² CDE Dataquest and Files † Indicator Includes Charter Schools Within the District * Data Suppressed for Student Privacy Reasons = Data Unavailable Due to California Department of Education Delay in Release # 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 2023-24 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 increasing the academic benchmark performance in literacy of students in kindergarten through second grade from 44 percent at or above benchmark to 57 percent. Similarly, the district saw a significant reduction of second grade students requiring Tier 3 interventions. Additionally, the district has strengthened the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) of academics by increasing the amount of personnel, substitutes, extra duty, professional development, professional services, materials, and supplies to train staff to meet the needs of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, Foster Youth, Students with Disabilities, and English Learner (EL) student groups.

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

- In what ways might the district consider how professional development in best first instruction for mathematics and English language arts (ELA) impact student learning for unduplicated pupils?
- How might the district systemically monitor the implementation of professional development opportunities to meet the needs of all students?
- How might partnering integrated arts with ELA programs improve outcomes for EL students in ELA and mathematics?

Student Access, Enrollment, and Success in Rigorous Coursework

The district is to be commended for increasing the A-G completion rate from 54 percent in 2018 to 59 percent in 2022. In addition, the district maintained Career Technical Education (CTE) pathway completion rates for the past two years including a growth in the completion rates of African American, White, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, and Students with Disabilities student groups which is also to be commended. Furthermore, the district increased counselors, counseling support staff, additional CTE, Dual Enrollment, A-G teachers, instructional coaches, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) programs, and Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate course offerings provided multiple pathways and opportunities for students to be successful and ready for college and career upon graduation.

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:

- How might the district measure impact and outcomes based on the increased access to rigorous coursework and CTE course pathways?
- In what ways could increased arts programming in elementary and middle school lead to greater A-G course completion in high school?
- How might the addition of increased counselor support help students select, participate, and complete CTE pathways?

Student Engagement and School Climate

The district is to be commended for increasing a variety of MTSS supports, such as counseling therapists for Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) intervention and recognizing the continued need for SEL-based services. The district is also to be commended for having a K-8th grade sports program offered through the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program. Additionally, 93 percent of parents in the district reported feeling a sense of belonging and a climate of support for learning.

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

- How might progress monitoring the participation of in-person school experiences (K-8 sports program, arts programs, etc.) help to decrease chronic absenteeism?
- How might a continuous improvement model support the district's actions to minimize chronic absenteeism?

- How might an expansion of existing arts and K-8 sports programs increase student engagement and connectedness and decrease chronic absenteeism at the elementary and middle school levels?

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 2023-24 May Revise. Subsequently, the 2023-24 State Budget was adopted, which contained differences from the May Revise. The district should update and revise its budget projections to reflect changes in available 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 17,718 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 0.02 percent decrease from the certified 2022-23 P-2 ADA. For 2024-25, the district projects a 0.7 percent increase in ADA. For 2025-26, the district projects a 1.4 percent increase in ADA. It will be important for the district to monitor enrollment in the current and subsequent years to ensure accurate LCFF revenue and plan accordingly.

Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) – The district's Adopted Budget included Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) for LCFF funding of 8.13 percent, 3.94 percent, and 3.29 percent for the 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26 fiscal years, respectively. Our office recommends a contingency plan should LCFF funding not materialize as projected in the 2023-24 State Budget.

Unrestricted Deficit Spending – The district's Adopted Budget indicates a positive ending balance for all funds in the 2023-24 fiscal year. However, for the unrestricted General Fund, the district anticipates expenditures and uses will exceed revenues and sources by \$40.9 million in 2023-24, \$18.8 million in 2024-25, and \$12.4 million in 2025-26. 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 20, 2023, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations are complete with both the certificated and classified bargaining units for the 2023-24 fiscal year.

Reserve for Economic Uncertainties – The minimum state-required reserve for a district of Val Verde Unified School District’s size is 3.0 percent. The district projects to meet the minimum-reserve requirement in the current and two subsequent fiscal years. Additionally, existing law imposes a 10 percent cap on the amount school districts can maintain in their reserves in fiscal years immediately succeeding those in which the Public School System Stabilization Account balance is at least 3 percent of TK-12 Prop. 98 funding. This condition was met with the 2022-23 deposit amount, triggering the local reserve cap for the 2023-24 fiscal year. The district projects to meet the imposed 10 percent reserve cap.

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 2023-24 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.