



**Riverside County  
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**DATE:** August 30, 2024

**TO:** Dr. Ryan Lewis, District Superintendent  
Ms. Heidi Matthies Dodd, Board President  
Ms. Julie Edmunds, Assistant Superintendent, Fiscal Support Services  
Dr. Sarah Ragusa, Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Support Services  
Lake Elsinore 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: 2024-25 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 2024-25 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 2024-25 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.

Lake Elsinore Unified School District Student Groups – Program Participation Status						
Indicator	LEA	English Learner	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	Students with Disabilities	Foster Youth	Homeless Youth
Enrollment Count 2023 <sup>1</sup>	20,815	2,418	14,837	2,906	173	1,979
Enrollment Percent 2023 <sup>1</sup>	N/A	11.6	71.3	14.0	0.8	9.5
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2023 <sup>2</sup>	-34.2	-81.4	-48.0	-97.3	-72.9	-57.6
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2023 <sup>2</sup>	-75.3	-111.9	-90.0	-131.4	-128.5	-92.8
English Learner Progress Indicator 2023 <sup>2</sup>	N/A	50.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate 2023 <sup>2</sup>	93.7	83.5	93.1	78.9	64.3	87.0
A-G Completion Rate 2023 <sup>2</sup>	30.9	14.8	26.1	3.8	0.0	21.9
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2023 <sup>2</sup>	14.2	5.2	11.5	8.9	14.3	9.5
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2023 <sup>2</sup>	28.4	28.9	32.8	37.4	33.7	35.8
Suspension Rate 2023 <sup>2</sup>	3.9	3.8	4.6	5.7	10.5	4.9
<sup>1</sup> 2023 California School Dashboard Downloadable Enrollment File <sup>2</sup> 2023 California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Downloadable Data Files * Data Suppressed for Student Privacy Reasons						

Lake Elsinore 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 2023 <sup>1</sup>	20,815	44	378	928	351	13,788	69	4,316	938
Enrollment Percent 2023 <sup>1</sup>	N/A	0.2	1.8	4.5	1.7	66.2	0.3	20.7	4.5
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2023 <sup>2</sup>	-34.2	-46.7	30.3	-52.9	39.1	-46.2	-29.3	-9.3	-7.0
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2023 <sup>2</sup>	-75.3	-96.1	-3.2	-101.2	3.8	-88.6	-67.9	-45.8	-46.3
English Learner Progress Indicator 2023 <sup>2</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate 2023 <sup>2</sup>	93.7	*	94.7	89.8	100.0	93.8	*	93.1	96.4
A-G Completion Rate 2023 <sup>2</sup>	30.9	*	57.9	25.0	58.3	27.2	*	34.9	44.0
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2023 <sup>2</sup>	14.2	*	15.8	11.4	19.4	11.6	*	18.7	29.8
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2023 <sup>2</sup>	28.4	30.0	16.9	28.5	12.8	29.7	42.6	26.7	26.5
Suspension Rate 2023 <sup>2</sup>	3.9	2.0	2.3	7.3	0.8	4.1	2.6	3.0	4.2
<sup>1</sup> California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Files <sup>2</sup> CDE Dataquest and Files * Data Suppressed for Student Privacy Reasons									

We offer the following commendations and inquiry questions to consider for the implementation of the 2024-25 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 their continued focus on English Learner (EL) progress, particularly in the implementation of the newly adopted Title III master plan focused on professional development in designated English Language Development (dELD), and integrated English Language Development (iELD). Commendations are also in order for expanding college readiness options through dual enrollment courses. Further, the district is to be commended for making a concerted effort to provide extended learning opportunities to its youngest

learners by engaging them in an elementary camp designed to accelerate learning in English and mathematics.

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 plan to sustain and expand initiatives that promote academic excellence and post-secondary readiness, such as A-G completion and CTE pathway participation, while addressing challenges faced by low-performing student groups and effectively monitoring the impact of data-driven interventions on student success?
- How could the district ensure that targeted support and interventions at Equity Multiplier identified schools are effectively implemented, result in measurable improvements in ELA and mathematics performance, and incorporate feedback to refine strategies for prioritized student groups to enhance academic success?

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

The district is to be commended for a continued commitment of support for the Foster Youth student group as evidenced by a strategically deployed network of counselors, academic and engagement specialists, and social workers that not only provide a myriad of supports, but also work with classified and certificated staff to develop their understanding of trauma-informed practices. Commendations are also in order for the district modeling Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) best practices by housing several AVID National Demonstration Schools.

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:

- In what manner might the district build upon the successful strategies used to maintain high graduation rates to further target the Students with Disabilities (SWD), Homeless Youth, African American, and Asian student groups?
- What would it look like if the district systematized the analysis and actions that are a result of data collected from Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and the district's data dashboards to strategically increase the percentage of pupils who have completed both A-G requirements and Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways, and expanded access to rigorous English and mathematics content for all students?
- How might the district better leverage evidence-based best practices utilized at AVID National Demonstration Schools to support districtwide initiatives designed to improve the college and career readiness of all pupils, including greater access and monitoring of success indicators for historically marginalized student groups?

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

The district is to be commended for comprehensive action taken to determine root causes of chronic absenteeism among all student groups. Commendations are also in order for the district maintaining a high graduation rate, and for dramatically increasing participation in the

annual climate survey. Further, allocating funding to employ a network of support staff that provide mental health services to high need students is commendable.

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

- To better align mental health supports impacting student well-being, how might the district progress monitor the implementation and effectiveness of various programs, structures, and processes carried out by social-emotional support providers, elementary counselors, academic and engagement specialists, social workers, drug crisis counselors, and assistant principals?
- What would it look like for the district to utilize qualitative data gathered from students, families, caregivers, and educational partners to create and implement a plan of action that further mitigates chronic absenteeism, decreases suspensions, and promotes positive student engagement, climate, and culture?
- How might the district best implement an evidence-based inclusion plan that ensures the students with disabilities (SWD) student group participate fully in core curriculum, while actively monitoring student progress on strategically identified success criteria?

To access resources and tools that will support future LCAP development, please go to <https://www.rcoe.us/lcap-support>.

### **Adopted Budget**

In accordance with California Education Code (EC) Section 42127, our office has completed its review of the district's 2024-25 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 2024-25 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 would like to highlight the following:

*Enrollment and Average Daily Attendance (ADA)* – The district estimates 18,998 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 1.1 percent decrease from the certified 2023-24 P-2 ADA. For 2025-26, the district projects a 0.5 percent decrease in ADA. For 2026-27, the district projects a 0.2 percent decrease 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 0.00 percent, 2.73 percent, and 3.11 percent for the 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27 fiscal years, respectively. Our office recommends a contingency plan should LCFF funding not materialize as projected in the 2024-25 State Budget. The 2024-25 Enacted State Budget included COLAs of 1.07 percent, 2.93 percent, and 3.08 percent for the 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27 fiscal years, respectively. We recommend the district

incorporate the enacted COLA for 2024-25 in its operating budget and consider these projections at First Interim for the subsequent years.

*Unrestricted Deficit Spending* – The district’s Adopted Budget indicates a positive ending balance for all funds in the 2024-25 fiscal year. For the unrestricted General Fund, the district anticipates expenditures and uses will not exceed revenues and sources in the current or two subsequent fiscal years.

*Employee Negotiations* – As of the board date, June 13, 2024, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations continue with both the certificated and classified bargaining units for the 2024-25 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 Lake Elsinore 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.

*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 2024-25 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.