



**Riverside County
Board of Education**

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DATE: August 30, 2024

TO: Dr. Ward Andrus, District Superintendent
Mr. Paul F. Diffley, Board President
Mr. Darren Daniel, Deputy Superintendent
Mr. James Whittington, Chief Financial Officer
Ms. Faythe Mutchnick-Jayx, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services
Murrieta Valley Unified School District

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

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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.

Murrieta Valley Unified School District Student Groups – Program Participation Status						
Indicator	LEA	English Learner	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	Students with Disabilities	Foster Youth	Homeless Youth
Enrollment Count 2023 ¹	22,365	1,131	10,923	3,904	91	211
Enrollment Percent 2023 ¹	N/A	5.1	48.8	17.5	0.4	0.9
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2023 ²	16.1	-35.7	-3.8	-63.7	-77.0	-17.9
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2023 ²	-22.2	-63.9	-41.3	-102.1	-119.6	-60.7
English Learner Progress Indicator 2023 ²	N/A	50.8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate 2023 ²	96.7	93.1	95.6	86.7	*	97.3
A-G Completion Rate 2023 ²	57.0	31.0	48.3	13.0	*	38.4
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2023 ²	9.1	6.9	7.0	3.8	*	5.5
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2023 ²	23.4	26.8	29.3	30.8	40.2	40.6
Suspension Rate 2023 ²	2.9	2.9	3.8	5.2	13.2	3.6
¹ 2023 California School Dashboard Downloadable Enrollment File						
² 2023 California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Downloadable Data Files						
* Data Suppressed for Student Privacy Reasons						

Murrieta Valley 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 ¹	22,365	59	863	1,239	828	9,415	123	7,620	1,879
Enrollment Percent 2023 ¹	N/A	0.3	3.9	5.5	3.7	42.1	0.5	34.1	8.4
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2023 ²	16.1	5.7	52.5	-16.9	53.6	1.2	23.6	28.3	29.9
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2023 ²	-22.2	-56.6	32.4	-66.4	17.4	-39.7	-36.8	-6.6	-11.2
English Learner Progress Indicator 2023 ²	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate 2023 ²	96.7	*	96.1	97.7	95.3	96.0	92.3	97.4	96.7
A-G Completion Rate 2023 ²	57.0	*	70.6	55.0	67.1	50.9	46.2	60.1	61.4
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2023 ²	9.1	*	9.8	7.8	5.9	7.8	7.7	11.5	7.8
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2023 ²	23.4	46.2	15.7	23.4	15.9	26.4	35.1	21.3	22.3
Suspension Rate 2023 ²	2.9	4.9	0.9	4.8	1.1	2.9	4.7	2.6	4.0
¹ California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Files ² 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 achieved a remarkable feat by no longer being eligible for Differentiated Assistance, a distinction shared by only one other district in Riverside County. The district has demonstrated progress across multiple domains: graduation rate exceeded the state average by 10 percentage points, significant reductions in chronic absenteeism, high school "F" rates and suspension rates were noted districtwide and specifically among Foster Youth. To further support student achievement, the district implemented smaller K-3 class sizes, deployed

elementary intervention teachers, and established professional learning teams for data-driven instructional improvement. Notably, the district outperformed the state average on the California Science Test, with 41.62 percent of students meeting or exceeding standards compared to the state's 30.18 percent. Additionally, an English Learner Master Plan is under development to enhance support for newcomer students and families, reflecting the district's ongoing commitment to addressing diverse student needs and improving overall academic outcomes.

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

- How can the district build on its current strengths and resources to decrease the drop-out rate and increase the graduation rate for Students with Disabilities?
- How might the action of monitoring instructional practices as a result of the English Learner professional development plan increase the ELA/Math California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) scores, reclassification, and graduation rates of Long-Term English Learners and dually identified students (English Learners with Disabilities) particularly at the secondary level?
- Although there is overall math performance progress, Murrieta Canyon Academy and several student groups remain in Red. How will the implemented professional learning teams, professional development, coaching, and new materials be strategically aligned and monitored to ensure progress for underperforming groups?

Student Access, Enrollment, and Success in Rigorous Coursework

The district is to be commended for expanding its educational offerings to support students' academic and career development. Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways have been broadened, with efforts underway to increase student participation. Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) programs are now present in all secondary schools and one elementary school, aiming to enhance college readiness. To promote equitable access to advanced academic opportunities, the district provides funding for Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exam fee waivers. College and Career Readiness initiatives such as CTE college credits, AP course enrollment, and exam participation rates are increasing among some student groups. These initiatives reflect the district's focus on providing diverse educational pathways and supporting students' post-secondary preparation.

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 further increase enrollment of underrepresented students, including English Learners and Foster Youth, in AP/IB courses and examinations, and AVID?
- How might the district strengthen support systems to ensure students are successful once enrolled in advanced coursework?

- How might exploring scheduling options allow English Learners and Students with Disabilities greater opportunities to enroll in A-G courses?

Student Engagement and School Climate

The district is to be commended for its coordinated approach to student support and engagement, exemplified by the implementation of counselors across all grade levels and universal staff participation in equity training. A focus on Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), coupled with additional counselors for social-emotional and academic support, demonstrates a proactive stance towards student well-being. Furthermore, the district's prioritization of family engagement through advisory groups and initiatives such as parent liaisons and the development of a family center underscores its commitment to fostering a collaborative educational environment.

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 the district measure the implementation and impact of equity initiatives to guide next steps?
- How might the district continue to build on its current strengths and resources to decrease the high chronic absenteeism rates, particularly for Foster Youth?
- How might the district continue to expand MTSS professional learning opportunities for Tier 1 behavior support in the effort to increase student engagement and reduce suspension rates, especially for Foster Youth and Students with Disabilities?

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 20,778 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 0.2 percent decrease from the certified 2023-24 P-2 ADA. For 2025-26, the district projects a 1.3 percent increase in ADA. For 2026-27, the district projects a 2.6 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. The district's attendance projections for the two subsequent fiscal years appear optimistic based on historical trends. It will be important for the district to monitor attendance in the current and subsequent years to ensure accurate LCFF revenue and plan accordingly. Our office

recommends the district develop a contingency plan should attendance not materialize as planned.

Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) – The district’s Adopted Budget included Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) for LCFF funding of 1.07 percent, 2.93 percent, and 3.08 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.

Unrestricted Deficit Spending – The district’s Adopted Budget indicates a positive ending balance for all funds in the 2024-25 fiscal year. However, for the unrestricted General Fund, the district anticipates expenditures and uses will exceed revenues and sources by \$21.1 million in 2024-25, \$23.0 million in 2025-26, and \$14.9 million in 2026-27. 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 13, 2024, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations are complete with both the certificated and classified bargaining units for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Reserve for Economic Uncertainties – The minimum state-required reserve for a district of Murrieta Valley 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.