



Riverside County
Board of Education

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DATE: August 23, 2023

TO: Ms. Tracie Kern, District Superintendent
Ms. Jamey Mullion, Board President
Ms. Rachel Angel, Director of Business Services
Ms. Lois Shaffer, Director of Data, Assessment, and Accountability
Palo Verde 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: 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.

Palo 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	2,809	2,006	231	34	3	358
Enrollment Percent 2022 ¹	N/A	71.4	8.2	1.2	0.1	12.7
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2022 ¹	-60.2	-72.6	-88.4	-126.2	N/A	-130.4
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2022 ¹	-109.3	-115.7	-138.4	-147.0	N/A	-167.3
English Learner Progress Indicator 2022 ¹	N/A	N/A	35.7	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reclassified Fluent English Proficient Rate 2022 ^{2†}	=	=	=	=	=	=
Graduation Rate 2022 ¹	88.1	85.7	87.0	N/A	60.0	70.7
College and Career Prepared Rate 2022	#	#	#	#	#	#
A-G Completion Rate 2022 ¹	23.0	16.4	8.7	N/A	0.0	2.4
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2022 ¹	4.7	2.1	0.0	N/A	0.0	4.9
Dropout Rate 2022 ²	9.0	10.8	10.0	*	33.3	15.4
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2022 ¹	41.9	45.9	42.9	47.1	N/A	47.5

Palo 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	23.0	N/A	N/A	6.7	N/A	22.6	N/A	27.9	N/A
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2022 ¹	4.7	N/A	N/A	0.0	N/A	3.6	N/A	9.3	N/A
Dropout Rate 2022 ²	9.0	*	*	23.1	*	7.6	*	9.5	*
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2022 ¹	41.9	50.0	N/A	52.5	N/A	41.5	N/A	35.3	46.7
Suspension Rate 2022 ¹	6.2	4.3	0.0	13.0	N/A	5.4	N/A	6.1	8.6
Expulsion Rate 2022 ²	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 11th grade Smarter Balanced Assessments Early Assessment Program (EAP) from an All Student score of 13.9 percent in 2019 to an All Student score of 32.06 percent in 2022. The district is also to be commended for investments of fiscal resources and staff time in the area of professional development to renew efforts and focus on improving direct instruction to increase student achievement.

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 measure the impact of current and future professional development on improving the delivery of engaging and rigorous best first instruction across grade levels?
- How might the district measure the impact of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) efforts to accelerate achievement (in English language arts and

mathematics) for all students generally, and specifically Foster Youth, African American, English Learner, Homeless Youth, Students with Disabilities, and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged student groups?

Student Access, Enrollment, and Success in Rigorous Coursework

The district is to be commended for the investment in lowering class size in particular subject areas and no elementary general education combined grade-level classes. Additionally, the district is to be commended for maintaining 100 percent student access to standards-based-aligned materials and 100 percent appropriately assigned teachers.

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 use early warning system data to vertically articulate programs and services to close the achievement gap at both the individual student and student group levels?
- How might the district support instructional staff efforts to diversify learning opportunities and increase meaningful student-centered learning to increase student academic engagement as measured by improved Career Technical Education (CTE) completion, increased Advanced Placement (AP) participation and pass rates, and increases in University of California/California State University (UC/CSU) course completion rates for underserved student groups, particularly English Learners and those receiving special education services?

Student Engagement and School Climate

The district is to be commended for its intense efforts in developing staffing infrastructures to implement a comprehensive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program. The building of a dedicated Child Welfare and Attendance team is instrumental in designing and guiding PBIS efforts. The district is to be commended for a zero expulsion rate for the 2022-23 school year and continuing to increase high school graduation rates. The district is also commended for the expansion of the Student Leadership course to include Junior and Senior courses as well as providing 1.5 FTE (full-time equivalent) teachers to teach the Freshman Seminar course that teaches students how to develop a 10-year life plan tied to career exploration and planning. A section of Senior Seminar was also provided to students. Additionally, the district is to be commended for enhanced collaboration and support with local law enforcement resulting in increased safety and security protocols for schools, students, and staff.

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 effectiveness of the implementation of the district's PBIS targeted professional learning opportunities, staffing, and resources be measured and used to promote a positive school environment?

- What next steps might the district consider as it continues to strengthen the connections between law enforcement, counselors, and the Prevention Specialist to improve student engagement and school climate with an intentional focus on chronic absenteeism, safety and behavior, suspension, and dropout rates for students?
- What adjustments to existing support systems or additional support systems might be considered and/or tested to improve student attendance?
- How might student survey responses be utilized to design and implement specific actions and services to address and improve school climate and student engagement?
- How might the feedback provided by educational partners be leveraged to test change ideas to increase parent engagement in ways that promote student success?

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 2,532 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 2.5 percent increase from the certified 2022-23 P-2 ADA. For 2024-25, the district projects a 3.0 percent decrease in ADA. For 2025-26, the district projects a 2.1 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 8.22 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 \$4.8 million in 2023-24.

Employee Negotiations – As of the board date, June 27, 2023, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations continue with both the certificated and classified bargaining units for the 2023-24 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 Palo 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.