EDUCATIONSUMMIT 2016

New Education Reforms Panel

Panelists: Michael Kirst, *California Board of Education*, Ted Lempert, *Children Now*, Carrie Hahnel, *The Education Trust-West,* Anne Campbell, *San Mateo County Office of Education*
Moderator: John Fensterwald, *EdSource Today*

In 2013, California overhauled its funding structure for schools. The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) eliminated many of California's categorical funding programs in favor of a tiered system. Funding is divided into four categories: K-3, 4-6, 7-8, and 9-12. **Each group has a base rate for each child, counted from the average daily attendance (ADA): in 2013 — $6,845, $6,947, $7,154, and $8,289**, respectively. In addition, K-3 and 9-12 receive adjustments to encourage lower class sizes for K-3 and CTE programs for 9-12, bringing their totals up to $7,557 and $8,505, respectively. The target base rates for each grade span will be updated every year to account for cost-of-living adjustments[1].

In order to ensure that more money goes to students who need it the most, **supplemental funding is given for students that are English Learners (EL) or Low-Income (LI) or foster youth**. This supplement generates an additional 20% of the base rate for the student's grade span. For example, a 9th grader who qualifies as an English Learner would generate $10,206 for the district. Additionally, in districts with more than 55% of students in these designated categories, each student above the threshold will receive an additional 50% of the base rate. The same 9th grader as above would instead generate $14,459, if they were above the 55% threshold[2]. Under the law, **each district is guaranteed to receive no less than they did in 2012-2013**; although approximately 15% of schools will not receive additional funding, a **vast majority will see a significant increase in funding**[3].

To hold the districts accountable for their spending, every 3 years they must create a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), and revise it every year. The LCAP sets annual goals in 8 specific areas: student achievement, student engagement, other student outcomes, parental involvement, course access, implementation of common core standards, basic services, and school climate. Based on each district's LCAP, the district must also complete a report card on their progress towards their annual goals. Explicitly, they must demonstrate that **additional funding for low-income students, foster youth and English learners is proportionally targeted to those students**. Through the LCAP, which must be posted publicly, the community is able to keep their district accountable. However, LCAPs average 145 pages in length[4] – far too long for any community member to read through in a timely manner. Additionally, the County Office of Education and the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence should monitor the effectiveness of these spending plans.

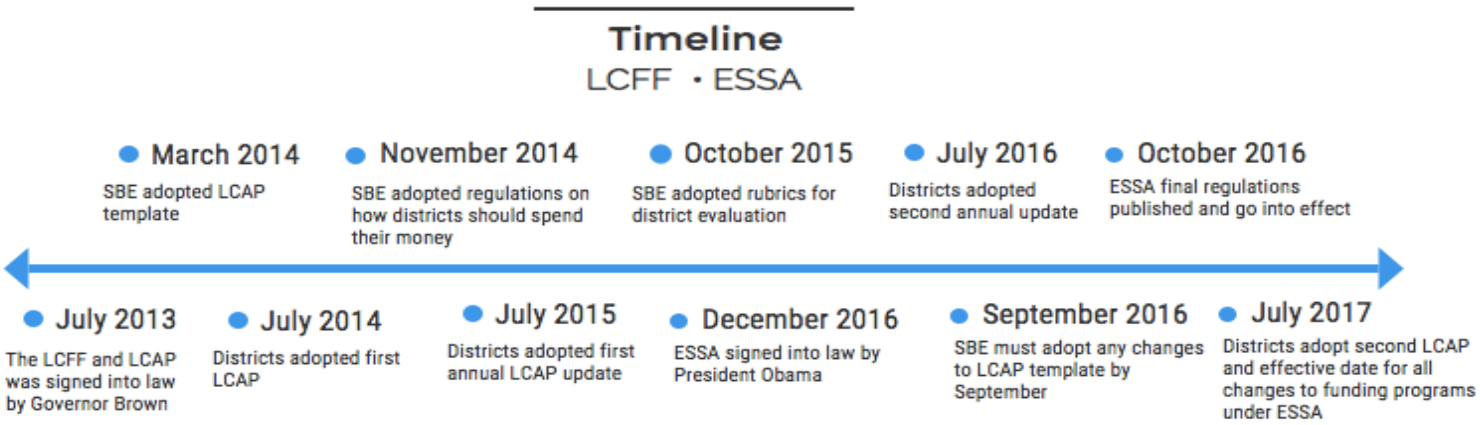
The Bear Valley Unified School District created an infographic to condense the long LCAP report into a more accessible format. Increasingly, schools are looking to more creative ways to disseminate their LCAP information to the community.

Just as California was initiating the first couple years of the LCFF, the U.S. Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015. This act also **focuses on equity, accountability, and providing more information to local community members**. Each state must adopt consistent standards for all students that will prepare them for a postsecondary education and provide fair assessments to match these standards. These assessments and subsequent rating will be a part of a report card

that will be made public, which will also include an indicator of school quality and at least one other academic indicator[5].

The Every Student Succeeds Act and the Local Control Funding Formula share many common goals; **both aim to increase educational equity through funding and local accountability by disseminating more information to community members and families**. The next step is accountability. With increased local control, how do we make sure that funding is being used to promote student success? How will California's proposed accountability system align with regulations under ESSA?

Before ESSA and LCFF, California used different state and federal accountability systems, the state Academic Performance Index (API) and the federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). California is now designing a new, streamlined, accountability system. The state now must align state laws with the new requirements of the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to replace the API and the AYP with one single system.



Glossary

LCFF – Local Control Funding Formula dictates the amount of money that the state will give to each school district.
LCAP – Local Control and Accountability Plan creates a system for districts and community members to communicate about how the LCFF funds are spent.
ESSA – Every Student Succeeds Act replaces No Child Left Behind as federal guidelines to ensure states are sharing information with the public and are using fair assessments.
API – Academic Performance Index was part of the Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999 and measured the academic performance and growth of schools using standardized test scores.
AYP – Adequate Yearly Progress is the federal measure by which schools, districts and states were held accountable for yearly progress. The California State Board of Education has proposed and is currently refining an accountability measure to replace both the API and AYP.

[1] http://www.lao.ca.gov/reports/2013/edu/lcff/lcff-072913.pdf
[2] https://edsource.org/2016/local-control-funding-formula-guide-lcff/89272#
[3] http://www.lao.ca.gov/reports/2013/edu/lcff/lcff-072913.pdf
[4] https://edsource.org/2016/local-control-funding-formula-guide-lcff/89272
[5] https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/What-is-in-ESSA.pdf

SILICON VALLEY LEADERSHIP GROUP