

Improving School Climate through LCAPs:
*Analysis of the School Climate Priority
in Year 2 Annual Updates of
Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAPs) for
California's 50 Largest School Districts*

An Analysis from:



Acknowledgements

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Overview

In 2015, FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS published an analysis of the school climate priority in the first Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) of the State’s 50 largest school districts. We concluded that, “While some of the report findings are encouraging, there remains significant room for improvement.”

This brief analyzes the Year 2 “Annual Update”¹ of the LCAPs for the same 50 large school districts²—to assess whether LCAPs are improving in addressing the basic requirements of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) related to the school climate priority, where there is a need for further improvement, and whether districts are truly providing an adequate “Annual Update.” Under the LCFF statute, the annual update must include a “review of the progress toward the goals included in the existing local control and accountability plan,” as well as “an assessment of the effectiveness of the specific actions described in the existing local control and accountability plan toward achieving the goals, and a description of changes to the specific actions the school district will make as a result of the review and assessment.”³

The Law

The LCFF statute, and the statutorily-authorized LCAP template approved by the State Board of Education, expressly identify “School climate” as one of eight state priorities that must be addressed by each LCAP and sets forth the requirements for addressing each of the state priorities in LCAPs.⁴

LCAP Requirements for School Climate Priority

- **Goals, actions, and expenditures** related to:
 - Suspension rates
 - Goals must address suspension rates, at a minimum
 - Expulsion rates
 - Goals must address expulsion rates, at a minimum
 - Surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness
 - Surveys must be of pupils, parents and teachers
 - Goals, etc. must address sense of safety and connectedness, at a minimum
- Goals must be **specific and measurable**

Why is School Climate Important to Public Safety?

School climate and school discipline policies are important to public safety because students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to fall behind in school, drop out, and become involved in crime. Suspensions and expulsions are sometimes necessary to prevent unsafe or violent student behavior. But especially when students are suspended or expelled for relatively minor incidents, the primary result is lost learning time and a missed opportunity to address any underlying issues contributing to the misbehavior. These students are more likely to fall behind. And putting troubled kids out on the streets without constructive adult supervision can be a recipe for greater misbehavior and crime.

The best way to help students learn and to prevent later crime is to ensure students get the support they need so they can remain in school and off the streets. In many cases, pushing students who are getting into trouble out of school and into an often unsupervised environment can exacerbate, rather than help, deal with problems.

A 2011 Council of State Governments study of Texas students found that students who are suspended or expelled are at greater risk of dropout than their peers and are more likely to repeat a grade. For students with similar profiles, those who had gotten into trouble and been suspended or expelled one or more times were twice as likely to repeat a grade than those who had no suspensions or expulsions.⁵ Among students disciplined more than 10 times, only 40 percent graduated from high school within the study period. Clearly these youth needed more effective efforts to help them succeed.

Students who are suspended or expelled are also at greater risk of involvement in the juvenile and criminal justice systems. The Texas study found that students who were suspended or expelled one or more times were nearly three times more likely to have contact with the juvenile justice system in the following year than similar students who were not suspended or expelled.⁶

Research also has established a link between high dropout rates and crime. According to researchers, a ten-percentage-point increase in graduation rates would reduce murder and assault rates by about 20%, preventing 400 murders and more than 20,000 aggravated assaults in California each year.⁷ So reducing suspension rates is also important for crime prevention.

On the flip side, positive school climate indicators such as supports, caring relationships with adults, school connectedness, and safety have been associated with good behavior and academic benefits.⁸ Utilizing the School Climate Index developed in California, a May 2013 WestEd study of 1,715 California middle and high schools found that “beating the odds” schools—schools which have significantly better test scores than predicted based on student characteristics—have substantially more positive school climates than underperforming schools and schools that perform as predicted.⁹ That indicates we can and must do better.

Summary of Key Findings*

In the Year 2 LCAP Annual Update:

- 1. Most districts fail to include current year data to measure progress.**
Only 48% of the 50 largest districts include data on suspensions for the first year of implementation of the LCAP—the 2014-15 school year.
- 2. Most districts fail to include disaggregated goals by subgroup.**
Only 36% of districts provide specific suspension goals for subgroups— although that percentage doubled compared to the first year LCAPs.
- 3. While all districts now have suspension reduction goals, districts are doing only a slightly better job identifying “specific” and “measurable” goals required for reducing suspensions.**
 - 100% of districts include suspension reduction goals, an increase from 92% in first year LCAPs.
 - Only 62% of districts have specific and measureable goals—a minor improvement compared to 54% in first year LCAPs.
- 4. Districts continue to focus on evidence-based alternatives to suspension.**
84% of districts include the evidence-based practices Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Restorative Practices and/or Social Emotional Learning—an increase from 70% in first year LCAPs.
- 5. Over half of districts fail to identify the specific amount of funding intended for evidence-based alternatives.**
An increasing percentage—over half—of districts bundle evidence-based practices with other actions under one expenditure, making it difficult if not impossible to determine how much funding is intended for implementing specific strategies.
- 6. While there is room for improvement, districts are doing a better job identifying goals related to school climate surveys on safety and connectedness.**
 - 80% of districts include climate survey-related goals on safety and connectedness—an increase from 56% in first year LCAPs.
 - Only 36% of districts have goals related to both safety and connectedness, although goals for both are required.

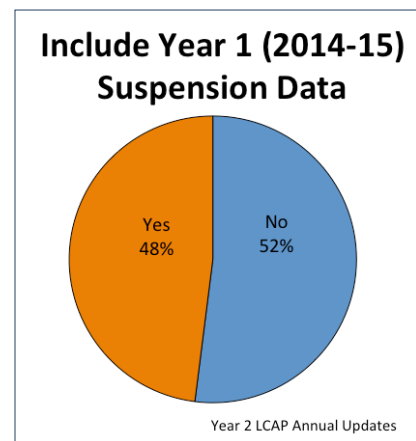
* For a district-by-district list of key findings, see Appendix on page 12.

Discussion

Our analysis finds that a majority of districts are failing to fulfill one of the most basic intended purposes of the Year 2 LCAP—to provide the “annual update” on “progress toward the goals” included in the existing LCAP. Regarding common elements in first and second year LCAPs, we find mostly improvements in second year LCAPs, but that further progress is needed. Still too many districts fall short in providing sufficient details to enable transparency and continuous improvement—and they often fail to comply with LCFF law and regulations entirely. In particular:

1. Most districts fail to include current year data to measure progress.

In Year 2 annual updates, fewer than half of the 50 largest districts (48%) include data on suspensions for the first year of implementation of the LCAP—the 2014-15 school year.¹⁰ Without this information, districts cannot provide the “annual update” required and evaluate what “progress” they are making toward reaching their goals, effectively assess actions taken in the first year of the LCAP (2014-15), or determine what changes need to be made. Alarming, several districts point to outdated data, e.g., finding reductions in suspensions between 2012-13 and 2013-14, to suggest that their 2014-15 actions achieved their 2014-15 goals.¹¹ While some districts may feel challenged by the July 1 deadline for submitting LCAPs to county offices of education, many districts have been able to find and utilize timely data. For example, Irvine, Los Angeles, and Mt. Diablo Unified School Districts all include data through May 2015, and Twin Rivers USD compares suspension data from the first semester of the 2014-15 school year with the first semester from the prior school year.



2. Most districts fail to include disaggregated goals by subgroup.

The LCFF statute and LCAP template provide that LCAPs shall include goals and actions for specific subgroups of students.¹² While in general county offices of education, districts and charters schools have the option to establish the same goal for all subgroups,¹³ distinct goals for subgroups for suspension rates are especially appropriate given wide disparities in rates between student demographic groups (particularly the disproportionate suspension rate of African-American students) which parallels wide achievement gaps.¹⁴ The appropriateness of distinct subgroup goals in this area is further supported by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act’s requirement, across indicators in state accountability systems, that interim progress targets for improving outcomes be established for each

subgroup, with subgroups that are far behind being required to make more rapid progress in order to close performance gaps.¹⁵

While the percentage of the 50 largest districts providing suspension goals expressly for subgroups doubled compared to the first year—from 18% to 36%¹⁶—more districts should establish distinct goals for subgroups facing wide disparities in suspensions.

In addition, several of the districts with subgroup goals simply have the same goal (e.g., 2% decline annually) overall and for each subgroup. While circumstances vary from district to district, generally it would be more appropriate to have differentiated, accelerated goals for subgroups, in order to more effectively close disparities. One district's LCAP goals could actually result in higher disparities: it has more aggressive overall goals (2% reduction in the number of suspensions for all students) than for individual subgroups (1% for foster youth, Hispanics, English Language Learners, African-American, and special education students).

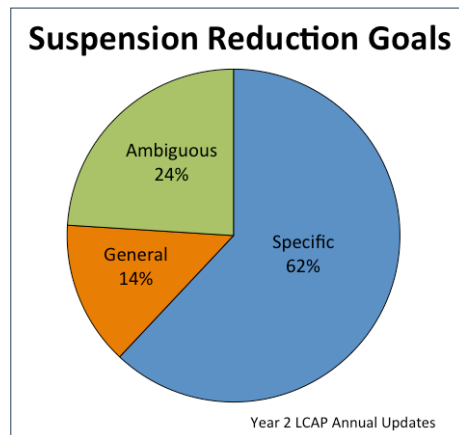
The State could do a better job facilitating the establishment of disaggregated suspension rate goals.¹⁷ While DataQuest, the Department of Education's online data source, includes substantial suspension data, it does not provide suspension rates disaggregated by subgroup. Nor does it make it easy to calculate disaggregated rates, because it does not provide subgroup enrollment and suspension data together in one table.¹⁸ Meanwhile, for many other metrics included in the LCFF statute, subgroup data for each district and school are readily available, both through DataQuest and CDE's online "LCFF State Priorities Snapshot." The LCFF-aligned State Priorities Snapshot, however, includes only overall suspension rates, not suspension rates by subgroup—despite providing subgroup data for virtually every other metric listed in the Snapshot, including test scores, graduation rates, middle and high school dropout rates, A-G course completion, CTE pathway completion, and AP scores.¹⁹

3. While all districts now have suspension reduction goals, districts are doing only a slightly better job identifying “specific” and “measurable” goals required for reducing suspensions.

The number of districts with suspension reduction goals increased from 92% in the Year 1 LCAP to 100% in Year 2.²⁰ Still, many districts are falling short of providing the “specific” and “measurable”²¹ goals that the LCAP template requires. In addition to 14% including merely general (e.g., “decrease”) goals, 24% provide ambiguous goals. One district, for example, includes goals in Years 1, 2 and 3 to reduce suspensions by 5%, but it is not clear if the goal to reduce suspension rates by 5% is intended to be 5% *overall* for the three-year LCAP or 5% *annually*, totaling approximately an expected 15% reduction. Another district has the goal of reducing suspensions by 1%, but it is ambiguous whether that is intended to

be a 1-percentage-point decline (e.g., from 6.9% to 5.9%, which is the equivalent of a 14% decline) or just a 1 percent decline (e.g., from 6.9% to 6.83%).²²

Sometimes there is also ambiguity over how suspension rates are calculated, which can make it difficult to accurately assess progress from year to year. While the LCAP template defines suspension rates as the percentage of students suspended, some districts utilize a different way of measuring rates—the total number of suspensions per 100 students, which is nearly always higher because of repeat suspensions by the same student.²³ In two districts, this is particularly problematic because they appear to compare one kind of rate one year to a different measure of suspension rates the following year, which is akin to comparing apples and oranges. For example, one district suggests that it is meeting its goal of 13 suspensions for every 100 students by pointing to its 6.6% suspension rate, which is based instead on the number of students suspended.



Districts are improving marginally in this regard: while our analysis of first year LCAPs found that only 54%²⁴ of the largest districts provided specific goals for reducing suspension rates, in second year LCAPs 62% have specific goals. That leaves many districts failing to satisfy the LCAP requirements.

4. Districts continue to focus on evidence-based alternatives to suspension.

It is a positive sign that districts are increasingly adopting evidence-based alternatives to suspension, such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Restorative Practices and Social Emotional Learning. Seventy percent of the 50 largest districts included these approaches in their first year LCAPs, and that increased to 84% in the second year LCAP annual updates.

It is often unclear, however, how aggressively districts are implementing these strategies. Several districts, for example, include no funding in their LCAPs for these approaches. On the other hand, some districts provide extra details in terms of goals, planned and completed actions, and expenditures that can be used to help assess the extent of implementation.

For example, Irvine USD establishes goals to increase the number of schools achieving 80% scores on PBIS site assessments. Several districts identify the number of schools that are expected to implement, or are implementing, these approaches. For example, San Diego USD provides that “six new middle and K-8 schools [are] beginning the Positive Behavioral

Intervention and Support (PBIS) professional development process with five additional middle schools scheduled to participate in a future cohort. An additional 23 middle schools and 20 elementary schools that have previously participated in PBIS are participating in re-tooling sessions.” Others identify the number of staff receiving related training.

Stockton USD identifies a series of planned actions, each with a corresponding expenditure level and funding source, related to “Continue Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) framework,” including a classroom management trainer for trainers (\$105,000), training for school sites (\$25,000), supplies and duplicating (\$50,000), curriculum (\$100,000), an executive functions pilot (\$25,000), a PBIS Student Assistance Program Chair Counselor position (\$124,000), and employing an on-track PBIS progress monitoring system (\$15,000)—as well as additional funding for a behavioral intervention team.

Including these kinds of extra details should be a model for other districts to follow in their LCAPs. Of course, listing particular goals, actions and/or expenditures is no guarantee that programs are actually being implemented effectively, but they can be ways to help monitor progress in implementation.

5. Most districts fail to identify the specific amount of funding intended for evidence-based alternatives.

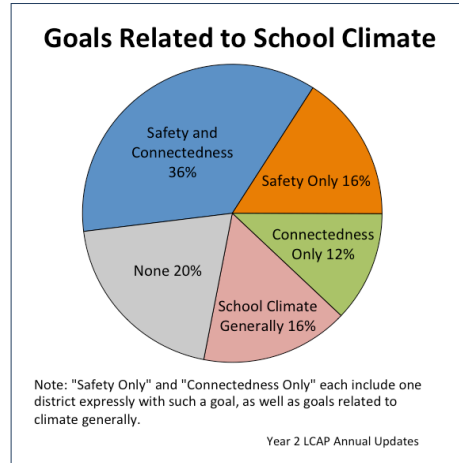
Too many LCAPs, in school climate as well as other priorities, bundle several actions together under one expenditure, making it difficult if not impossible to determine how much funding is intended for implementing specific strategies. For example, in many district LCAPs it is impossible to determine the extent of investments in PBIS, Restorative Practices, and Social Emotional Learning due to the bundling of these with other actions, all under one broad expenditure. This problem actually worsened in second year LCAPs, with over half (52%) of districts (22 of 42) relying on these approaches bundling them with other actions under one expenditure—compared to 43% (15 of 35) in first year LCAPs.

For LCAP annual updates, understanding specific funding levels for each individual action is essential to determine, consistent with the LCFF statute, what “changes to the specific actions the school district will make” if the actions are not meeting the intended goals.

6. While there is room for improvement, districts are doing a better job identifying goals related to school climate surveys on safety and connectedness.

LCAP annual updates should include school climate survey-related goals on sense of safety and connectedness, which are expressly referenced in, and we believe clearly required by, the LCFF statute.²⁵ In second year LCAPs, 80% of the 50 largest districts include such climate survey-related goals, compared to just 56% in first year LCAPs. But that still leaves

too many without these required goals. In addition, only 36% of districts have goals related to both sense of safety and connectedness in their Year 2 LCAPs, although goals for both are required. While that percentage doubled compared to Year 1, it is still too few. Furthermore, only 22% of districts in the Year 2 LCAPs (compared to 12% in Year 1 LCAPs) include goals related to student, teacher, and parent surveys, although surveys of all three are included in the LCFF statute. Finally, only one district (2%) includes two years of comparable data from school climate surveys to enable an assessment of year-to-year program improvements.



Recommendations

School districts, and other local educational agencies, should:

- Include current year data on suspension rates and other school climate measures, in order to measure the impact of actions implemented that school year and to assess progress towards meeting goals for that year;
- Provide specific and measurable goals on suspension rates and other school climate measures;
- Disaggregate suspension rate goals by subgroup, and include different, accelerated goals for subgroups facing disparities;
- Include support for evidence-based alternatives to suspension, including clear funding levels dedicated to those strategies and details regarding how the funding will be spent; and
- Include school climate survey-related goals on, at a minimum, safety and connectedness, and those goals should relate to surveys of students, teachers and parents.

The State Board of Education should:

- Include suspension rates as a key indicator in the LCFF evaluation rubrics and state accountability system, to ensure that school climate is a high priority for districts; and
- Support the inclusion of school climate surveys in the LCFF evaluation rubrics and state accountability system.

The California Department of Education should:

- Provide suspension rates disaggregated by subgroup in DataQuest, as well as cumulative enrollment by subgroup within the suspension data set; and
- Add disaggregated suspension rates data to the online LCFF State Priorities Snapshot for every district and every school.

The State Legislature and the Governor should:

- Support additional funding for implementation of school climate surveys, including the California Healthy Kids Survey and related parent and staff surveys; and
- Require the State Superintendent to establish uniform LCAP-aligned school climate survey questions, including on student safety and connectedness, to promote district use of school climate surveys, enable comparison across districts to facilitate sharing of best practices, and enable the establishment of state standards for performance and expectations for improvement.

Appendix – Breakdown of Findings for Each of California’s 50 Largest School Districts

District	County	2014-15 Suspension Data	Suspension Goal	Disaggregated Suspension Goal	PBIS/RP/SEL	Funding for PBIS/RP/SEL	School Climate Survey Goal
Anaheim Union HSD	Orange	No	Ambiguous c	No	PBIS RP	Bundled Bundled i	Safety/ Climate Generally
Antelope Valley Union HSD	Los Angeles	No	Ambiguous a	No	PBIS	No \$	Connectedness
Bakersfield City SD	Kern	Yes	Specific	No	PBIS RP	Dedicated	Climate Generally
Capistrano USD	Orange	No	General	No	SEL	Dedicated	No
Chaffey Joint Union HSD	San Bernardino	No	Specific	Yes	PBIS & RP	No \$	No
Chino Valley USD	San Bernardino	Yes	Ambiguous b	No	No	N/A	Safety/ Connectedness
Chula Vista EUSD	San Diego	Yes	Specific	No	No	N/A	No
Clovis USD	Fresno	Yes	Specific	Yes	No	N/A	Safety
Corona-Norco USD	Riverside	No	General e	No	PBIS RP	Dedicated	Climate Generally
Desert Sands USD	Riverside	No	Specific	No	PBIS RP	No \$ i	Safety
East Side Union HSD	Santa Clara	No	General f	No p	PBIS & RP	Dedicated	No
Elk Grove USD	Sacramento	No	Specific	Yes	PBIS	Dedicated	Connectedness/ Climate Generally
Fontana USD	San Bernardino	Yes	Ambiguous b e	Yes	PBIS RP & SEL	Dedicated	Climate Generally
Fremont USD	Alameda	No	Specific	No	No h	N/A	Safety/ Connectedness
Fresno USD	Fresno	Yes	General	No	RP SEL	Dedicated Bundled	Safety/ Connectedness
Garden Grove USD	Orange	No	Specific	No	PBIS SEL	Bundled Bundled	Safety/ Connectedness
Glendale USD	Los Angeles	No	Ambiguous b	No	PBIS	Dedicated	Safety/ Connectedness
Irvine USD	Orange	Yes	Specific	No	PBIS	Bundled i	Safety/ Connectedness
Kern Union HSD	Kern	Yes	Ambiguous c	Yes	PBIS RP	Dedicated Bundled	Safety/ Connectedness
Lodi USD	San Joaquin	Yes	Ambiguous c	No	No	N/A	Safety/ Connectedness
Long Beach USD	Los Angeles	Yes	Specific	No	PBIS RP	Bundled Bundled i	Climate Generally
Los Angeles USD	Los Angeles	Yes	Specific	Yes	PBIS RP	Bundled Dedicated	Safety

District	County	2014-15 Suspension Data	Suspension Goal	Disaggregated Suspension Goal	PBIS/RP/SEL	Funding for PBIS/RP/SEL	School Climate Survey Goal
Montebello USD	Los Angeles	No	Specific	No	PBIS & RP	Bundled	Connectedness
Moreno Valley USD	Riverside	Yes d	Specific	Yes	PBIS	Dedicated	No
Mt. Diablo USD	Contra Costa	Yes	Specific g	No	PBIS	Bundled	Safety/ Connectedness
					RP	Bundled	
Oakland USD	Alameda	No	Specific	Yes	PBIS & RP & SEL	Dedicated	No j
Orange USD	Orange	Yes	General	No	PBIS	Dedicated	Safety/ Connectedness
Placentia-Yorba Linda USD	Orange	No	General	No	PBIS	Bundled	Safety/ Connectedness
Pomona USD	Los Angeles	Yes	Specific	No	PBIS	Bundled	Connectedness
Poway USD	San Diego	No	Specific g	Yes	PBIS & RP	Bundled	Safety
Rialto USD	San Bernardino	No	Specific	No	PBIS	Dedicated	No j
Riverside USD	Riverside	No	Specific	Yes	PBIS	Bundled i	Climate Generally o
Sacramento City USD	Sacramento	No	Specific	No	PBIS	Dedicated	Safety/ Connectedness
					RP & SEL	Dedicated	
Saddleback Valley USD	Orange	No	Ambiguous b	No	No	N/A	No
San Bernardino City USD	San Bernardino	Yes	Specific	No	No	N/A	No j l
San Diego USD	San Diego	No	Specific	No	PBIS & RP	Bundled	Safety/ Connectedness m
San Francisco USD	San Francisco	Yes	Specific	Yes	PBIS	Bundled	Safety/ Connectedness m
					RP	Bundled i	
San Jose USD	Santa Clara	Yes	Specific	Yes	PBIS	Bundled	Safety
San Juan USD	Sacramento	Yes	Specific	Yes	PBIS & RP	Dedicated	Safety/ Connectedness
San Ramon Valley USD	Contra Costa	No	General	Yes	PBIS	Dedicated	Safety/ Connectedness
					RP	No \$	
Santa Ana USD	Orange	No	Ambiguous b e	No	PBIS & RP	Bundled	Safety
					SEL	Bundled	
Stockton USD	San Joaquin	No	Specific	Yes	PBIS	Dedicated	Safety/ Connectedness
					SEL	Dedicated	
					RP	Bundled	
Sweetwater Union HSD	San Diego	Yes	Specific	Yes	PBIS & RP	No \$	Connectedness
Temecula Valley USD	Riverside	No	Ambiguous b	No	PBIS	Dedicated	Connectedness
Torrance USD	Los Angeles	Yes	Specific	No	PBIS q	Bundled	Climate Generally




District	County	2014-15 Suspension Data	Suspension Goal	Disaggregated Suspension Goal	PBIS/RP/SEL	Funding for PBIS/RP/SEL	School Climate Survey Goal
Twin Rivers USD	Sacramento	Yes	Specific	Yes	RP	Bundled	Safety/ Connectedness
					SEL	Dedicated	
Visalia USD	Tulare	No	Ambiguous b	No	PBIS	Bundled	Climate Generally
Vista USD	San Diego	Yes	Specific	No	No	N/A	Climate Generally
West Contra Costa USD	Contra Costa	No	Ambiguous b	Yes	RP	Bundled k	No j n
William S. Hart Union HSD	Los Angeles	Yes	Specific	No	PBIS	Dedicated	Safety

Definition of Terms:

- Disaggregated Suspension Goal – Goal established for individual subgroup(s)
- PBIS – Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
- RP – Restorative Practices
- SEL – Social Emotional Learning
- Bundled – Funding for several actions listed under one expenditure, making it impossible to determine how much funding is intended for individual action
- Dedicated – Funding level identified for individual action

Coding Guide to Findings:

Bold reflects change from Year 1
 **Orange Shading** reflects improvements from Year 1

- (a) Unclear if proposed reductions are compared to prior year or baseline year
- (b) Unclear if proposed reductions are one-time or annual (proposing ongoing reductions each year)
- (c) Unclear if proposed reductions are by percent or percentage point
- (d) Unclear, while counting as Yes. Refers to “current rate” but appears more likely to be 13/14 than 14/15
- (e) Not improved: Change from Specific
- (f) Not improved: Change from Ambiguous
- (g) Re-characterized Year 1 LCAP goal as Specific
- (h) No longer pursuing PBIS
- (i) Not improved: Change from Dedicated
- (j) No survey-related goals on safety/connectedness/climate generally, although other survey-related goals listed
- (k) Re-characterized Year 1 LCAP as Bundled
- (l) Re-characterized Year 1 LCAP as No
- (m) Count welcoming culture as Connectedness
- (n) Not improved: Change from Safety/Connectedness, which is referenced in progress but not in new actions
- (o) Count hope, engagement, and well-being as climate generally
- (p) Not improved: Change from Yes
- (q) Restorative Practices included in Year 1 only

Citations

- ¹ The permanent LCAP template is entitled “Local Control and Accountability Plan and Annual Update Template” and the LCFF statute (Cal. Ed. Code § 52061) requires an “annual update.”
- ² These 50 districts represent 41% of students across the state.
- ³ Cal. Ed. Code § 52061(a)(2).
- ⁴ LCAP annual updates utilize the permanent LCAP template approved by the State Board in November 2014. LCAPs are for three years and must be updated annually. Cal. Ed. Code § 52060(b).
- ⁵ Fabelo, T., Thompson, M., Plotkin, M., Carmichael, D., Marchbanks, M.P., & Booth, E.A. (2011). *Breaking Schools’ Rules: A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates to Students’ Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement*. Council of State Governments Justice Center.
- ⁶ Id.
- ⁷ Lochner, L. & Moretti, E. (2004). “The effect of education on crime: Evidence from prison inmates, arrests, and self reports.” *The American Economic Review*, 94(1), 155-189; Criminal Justice Statistics Center, Office of the Attorney General. (n.d). *California criminal justice profiles 2008, 2009, 2010*. Table 11. Retrieved on February 7, 2013 from <http://ag.ca.gov/cjsc/publications/profiles/pub.php>. Based on annual average of reported homicides and aggravated assaults from 2008–2010.
- ⁸ Nader, Kathleen. (2012). *Violence Prevention and School Climate Reform*. National School Climate Center, School Climate Brief Number 5. Retrieved on January 13, 2015 from <http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/documents/policy/sc-brief-v5.pdf>; Gambone, M., Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2002). *Finding out what matters for youth: Testing key links in a community action framework for youth development*. Retrieved on January 13, 2015 from <http://www.ydsi.org/YDSI/pdf/WhatMatters.pdf>
- ⁹ Voight, A., Austin, G., and Hanson, T. (2013). *A climate for academic success: How school climate distinguishes schools that are beating the achievement odds* (Full Report). San Francisco: WestEd. Retrieved on January 13, 2015 from http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/hd-13-10.pdf
- ¹⁰ The Attorney General’s survey of 200 randomly-selected district second year LCAPs found that only 38% clearly included 2014-15 suspension data in their annual updates.
- ¹¹ Three districts expressly declared they “met” their goal by comparing 2012-13 and 2013-14 suspension data and four districts compared suspension data from the same years in the template section assessing progress on achieving the goal, without expressly declaring whether they met their goal.
- ¹² Cal. Ed. Code § 52060(c)(1) (LCAP shall include “A description of the annual goals, for all pupils and each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved for each of the state priorities...”).
- ¹³ LCFF Regulations § 15497.5. Local Control and Accountability Plan and Annual Update Template, Section 2 Instructions (“Identify the pupil subgroups as defined in Education Code section 52052 to which the goal applies, or indicate ‘all’ for all pupils”).
- ¹⁴ Losen, D., Martinez, T., Gillespie, J. (2012). *Suspended Education in California*. Los Angeles, CA: The Center for Civil Rights Remedies.
- ¹⁵ Every Student Succeeds Act, Section 1111(c)(4)(A) (The State shall “[e]stablish ambitious State-designed long-term goals, which shall include measurements of interim progress toward meeting such goals ... that, for subgroups of students who are behind ..., take into account the improvement necessary ... to make significant progress in closing statewide proficiency and graduation rate gaps ...”).
- ¹⁶ The Attorney General’s survey of 200 randomly-selected district second year LCAPs found that only 16% had disaggregated suspension goals.
- ¹⁷ While data on the number of suspensions are available by subgroup, suspension rates are the only suspension-related metric specifically mentioned in the LCFF statute.
- ¹⁸ To calculate suspension rates using DataQuest, one would have to conduct separate data searches for suspension and for enrollment. In addition, through DataQuest it is not yet possible to calculate subgroup suspension rates that are consistent with the methodology for calculating overall suspension rates, because overall suspension rates are based on cumulative enrollment over the course of the year, while subgroup

enrollment data is only available based on census enrollment, which is the attendance on particular days and is lower than the cumulative enrollment.

¹⁹ Retrieved from <http://ias.cde.ca.gov/lcffreports/>.

²⁰ The Attorney General’s survey of 200 randomly-selected district second year LCAPs found that 87% included suspension reduction goals.

²¹ Permanent LCAP template (“identify and describe specific expected measurable outcomes” in Instructions, and “Expected Annual Measurable Outcomes” in template).

²² Several districts clearly establish goals in the 1 to 2 percent (as opposed to percentage point) range, so it would not be unusual to intend the smaller (percent rather than percentage-point) goal.

²³ Compared to Year 1 LCAPs, in Year 2 significantly more districts (86% vs. 36%) included goals based on suspension rates as defined in the LCAP template (percentage of students suspended). Other districts included measures such as number of suspensions per 100 students, number of suspensions, and number of days lost due to suspensions.

²⁴ As a clarification of our first year LCAP analysis, we have recharacterized two districts —Mt. Diablo USD and Poway USD—as having specific rather than ambiguous goals. While there was some ambiguity in each of these districts’ goals, regardless of how the goals were interpreted the ambiguity had minimal impact on the amount of reduction proposed.

²⁵ The LCAP should include goals for each of the metrics that the LCFF statute explicitly references within the state priorities. See Permanent Template (“[T]he goal tables must address all required metrics for every state priority in each LCAP year. The required metrics are the specified measures and objectives for each state priority as set forth in Education Code sections 52060(d) and 52066(d)”). That includes, within school climate, “other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness.” We believe that a plain reading of the statute clearly requires school climate surveys of pupils, parents and teachers because the use of “including” is a statutory directive, rather than merely identifying surveys as an optional example of other local measures. If surveys were not required, other terminology like “such as” or “for example” would have been used rather than “including.”

Interpreting “including” as directive is consistent with other uses of the term “including” in the LCFF statute. For example, LCAPs are required to address specific metrics for parental involvement (efforts to seek input in parental decisionmaking and promotion of parent participation in programs for unduplicated pupils and special need subgroups), which are also preceded by the term “including” in the LCFF statute. The LCAP template specifically highlights these parental involvement metrics in its list of required metrics, without even referencing the term “including.”