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New LCFF Funding Targets

The Problem

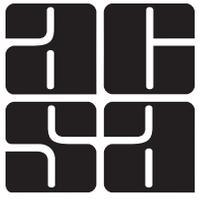
The funding level currently allocated to California schools is too low to provide the comprehensive and constitutionally required education that all students deserve. The funding goals set within the LCFF should be adjusted to reflect current and future funding needs, and AB 39 provides an avenue to achieve those objectives. ACSA is co-sponsoring AB 39 (Muratsuchi), which establishes higher Local Control Funding Formula targets, funded by growth within Proposition 98 or additional funding committed to LCFF beyond Proposition 98, either by statute or initiative. Assembly Bill 39 increases the LCFF base grant, with corresponding increases to the supplemental and concentration grant amounts through the existing formula structure that would set California closer to achieving a per-pupil funding rate at the national average.

Educate, then advocate.

In 2013, Governor Jerry Brown successfully accomplished historic school finance reform by eliminating the majority of categorical programs, and established the LCFF. At the core of Brown's education funding reform are four guiding principles: Local Control, equity, transparency and accountability. The overarching goal of LCFF is to improve academic outcomes by directing additional funding to school districts that serve high-need students. The intent was for individual school districts to have more authority over their spending decisions, while also holding each district accountable for their student results.

Since its inception, the LCFF was solely intended to be a funding distribution method. The creation and implementation of the LCFF was not meant to and does not address the deficiency in overall funding that is needed to educate California's diverse students. While the state has invested more than \$20 billion in public education through the distribution model that is LCFF, this funding has largely been a restoration of the significant reductions that were made during the Great Recession.

California is one of the most diverse and multicultural states in the nation, with more than 6 million students from myriad backgrounds attending public schools. The majority of California students live in poverty, with 59 percent of students eligible for free- or reduced-priced meals. In 2016, there were approximately 2.7 million students speaking a language other than English in their home. California's public education system also serves more than 700,000 special education students on an annual basis – making special education students about 11.5% of the total student population in California. While the LCFF was created with the intent of directing additional resources to students who have more educational needs, California's budget does not allocate enough resources within Prop. 98 to provide the constitutionally prescribed free and appropriate education to all children in California.



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ACSA's Position

We urge the Legislature and Governor Newsom to establish new aspirational LCFF targets through the budget process or the enactment of Assembly Bill 39.

LCFF has been embraced by communities across California over the past six years, and we believe infusing increased Proposition 98 funding through the existing formula will enable school districts to meet the needs of their local communities. Additionally, some members of the legislature support the reassessment of LCFF. In fact, the Joint Legislative Audit Committee recently approved an audit request that will examine the extent to which a sample of school districts spent funds on its low income, English learners and foster youth students.

We encourage all ACSA members to be ready to answer questions related to the effectiveness of LCFF. Please utilize the following examples:

- Describe what your school or district has done to increase transparency of the supplemental and concentration grant funding provided for improved or increased services for low-income, English learners and foster youth.
- Explain how your district has used the LCAP annual process to assess student performance, determine needs and allocate resources to the students with the greatest challenges.
- Explain why additional resources through the LCFF formula are needed, instead of the creation of new statewide categorical programs.
- Describe the additional services and/or supports you would be able to offer to students if you had more resources.
- Provide examples of increased parent and stakeholder engagement in local decision-making.