

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

DECEMBER 2023

Next education budget includes changes to LCFF

This article summarizes the information in a [report](#) by John Fensterwald at EdSource.org.

California's education budget for the 2024-25 year includes changes to the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) that were required by Gov. Newsom. The changes are intended to assure that funding is used effectively to assist the lowest-performing student groups. School district administrators say the new rules will create burdensome paperwork and add to already-lengthy local plans.

LCFF is California's system for allocating education dollars to school districts. Every school district receives a per-pupil base grant, with differing amounts for the grade levels of the students served. Districts receive supplemental grants for each student who is an English learner, homeless, low-income, or in foster care. (Children in more than one category are counted once.) Districts with more than 55 percent of students in those at-risk categories receive an additional concentration grant amount for each student over the 55 percent threshold.

School districts decide how to spend the funding, but they must describe their plans by developing Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) with input from parents, staff, students and the community. The LCAP must show how the district will provide services for at-risk students.

The changes included in this year's education budget will require districts and charter schools to specify how individual schools will address the needs of student groups in the lowest performance ranks according to the California School Dashboard. The LCAP must set specific goals, determine actions and spending to achieve them, decide how to measure effectiveness after three years and decide what to do if the measures aren't effective.

School district superintendents say the new requirements will create an additional burden, especially for small districts with few resources, and will result in LCAPs that are longer and more cumbersome.

While the state as a whole has seen rising graduation rates, there continue to be large achievement gaps among

student groups. Research has shown that LCFF succeeded in creating a more equitable finance system and that additional funding in high-poverty districts produced significant increases in math and reading scores.

What is the School Dashboard?



The California School [Dashboard](#) is the state's online school accountability system. It uses multiple criteria such as graduation rates, chronic absenteeism, and college and career readiness, along with academic achievement, to measure school success. It also indicates

whether schools have improved or declined in each area.

The information is provided through a color-coded pie charts. Users can flip performance measure 'cards' to see details.

The Dashboard is a great way for parents to get information they can use to work on priorities for their school district Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

During the COVID pandemic standardized tests were not given and school information was limited. In December, the California Department of Education will release the 2023 Dashboard, with color ratings for the first time since 2020.

Fourth District PTA Sacramento Safari February 26 and 27



Why should you go to Sacramento Safari?

- ★ Hear from key speakers on issues that affect children and youth
- ★ Learn about the inner workings of state government
- ★ Advocate directly to our legislators
- ★ Network and learn from other PTA leaders
- ★ It's awesome!

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Friday, January 19**

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Forum

OC School Board withdraws its request, but will resubmit

The Orange County Board of Education (OCBE) has withdrawn its request to assume the responsibilities of a county-wide committee that approves its trustee areas. The request to take over the duties of the Orange County Committee on School District Organization was submitted to the state Board of Education in August.

In a November 3 letter, OCBE's attorney Gregory J. Rolan said the state Department of Education had not received certain documents and materials in time to prepare its report for the state board.

"It is the intent of the Board of Education to resubmit the petition in the future following further attempts to meet and confer with the Orange County Committee on School District Organization," Rolan wrote.

The County Committee is composed of 11 members, many of whom are current or former school district trustees. The members are elected to four-year terms by a Nomination Committee consisting of one school board member from each of Orange County's 31 school districts and community college districts.

Statewide tests show little improvement, but OC results are better

After two years back to in-person schooling, California students made only small improvements in math test scores and declined a bit in English language arts test scores, according to results released by the state Department of Education in October.

The results are for the Smarter Balanced assessments that students in grades 3-8 and 11 took in the spring of 2023. Student scores are categorized in four achievement levels indicating whether a student has exceeded, met, nearly met, or did not meet grade-level standards.

Statewide, 34.6 percent of students met or exceeded standards in math, an increase of 1.2 percentage points from last year. In English language arts, 46.7 percent met or exceeded standards, a drop of less than 1 percent from last year.

Test results in Orange County were generally better. In several school districts, more than 60 percent of students met or exceeded math standards and in six districts 70 percent of students did well in English language arts. Fullerton Joint Union High School District showed the biggest improvement, with both math and English scores going up more than 5 percentage points.

For a detailed analysis of the testing results, see this EdSource [article](#).

To see results for individual school districts and schools, go [here](#). You can see year-to-year comparisons, demographic statistics and other details by clicking on the name of your school.

In addition to establishing the OCBE trustee areas after each 10-year National Census, the County Committee approves changes in school district trustee areas, approves changes in the number of trustees in a district, adopts alternative methods of electing board members, and considers petitions to transfer territory from one school district to another.

At an Association Meeting in September, Fourth District PTA members voted to send a letter urging the state Board of Education to deny OCBE's request. (See the [article](#) in the October Communicator.)

The County Committee last drew lines for the OCBE trustee areas after the 2020 National Census. The OCBE objected to the map the committee approved and took the matter to court. The Superior Court upheld the committee's authority, but the OCBE has appealed this decision.

Information on California state tests

State tests are an objective way of showing how well students meet the expectations of the grade level. They are only one of many measures and aren't meant to tell the whole story of student's performance. They should be combined with other information, such as report card grades, classwork and teacher observations to give families a more complete picture of their child's academic performance.

The Smarter Balanced state assessment is focused on grade level material and is aligned to the state standards. The test questions match what students do and learn in the classroom, which are the skills that are most important for students to learn in order to move on to more challenging content.

Learn more about California's state tests in this family [guide](#) from National PTA.

California State PTA Legislation Conference

January 22-23
Embassy Suites, Sacramento

Open to PTA members and chaperoned high school students (or over age 18).

Attendees will hear from engaging speakers, influential legislators, and insightful experts. Network and share ideas with advocates from around the state. See the Capitol and meet with lawmakers about your key issues.

For more information, go to CAPTA.org

