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LCAP Checklist for Parents and Student Leaders

A quick guide to help you improve your school

Each year, your school board decides how to invest in local schools. In making its decisions, your board is required to gather input from parents and school communities. You have a pretty good idea of what's working and what isn't. Your school board needs your perspective.

We created this checklist to help you think through what's important. It gives you the background you need and questions to ask. Create a copy to share this with your school community and get people engaged.

▢ Big Question #1: Will we have more money to invest in our school?

School Funding, Radically Simplified: Your school district receives money for each student that shows up to school. It receives a bit more if it has a high proportion of students in poverty, learning English, or in foster care. Your district has considerable flexibility about how to use funds, but must make tradeoffs. There is not enough money to meet all needs of all students in all schools.

To involve parents and students in these tradeoffs, school districts are required to develop a plan (the Local Control Accountability Plan, or LCAP) and collect input about it. This checklist will help you think through the educational needs of your school and your district so that you are prepared to add your voice to the discussion.

Tip: Each January, California's leaders must make a guess about how much money will be collected in taxes, and make a decision about what portion of that money will go toward public schools. School district leaders, in turn, must try to predict how much they will have available to spend, and build a plan to invest it. Meanwhile, school costs, particularly salaries and pensions, go up each year. An increase in state spending does not necessarily translate into big money to invest in more programs and services at your school. Relative to other states, California has a long history of skimpy funding for schools.

Want a little background? **Read Ed100 Lesson 8.1 on school funding and Lesson 8.5 on LCFF, the formula for how dollars are distributed.**

▢ Big Question #2: What's the Plan?

Each school district must have a public plan for how it will spend the money it controls. Known as the *LCAP* (Local Control Accountability Plan), this three-year plan must be updated each year. *Every year you have a chance to let decision makers know what you and your school community think.* If you can't find your district's LCAP using Google, ask the district.

Tip: The plan is LONG and dense and usually written in tiny print. That's why you need to jump to the next question.

▢ How are our community's schools doing?

This is what you really want to know, right? Many school districts prepare an executive summary before meeting with parents to help them prepare for a useful discussion. Here is a short "To Do" list:

- ❏ Ask your district for a summary of the LCAP plan. (It will probably be organized into ten parts.)
- ❏ Ask them to send the summary out to all parents.
- ❏ Please, please, please let all parents know when community meetings will be held to discuss the plan.

Tip: Invite your principal and district staff to a parent meeting at your school. Or organize a community-wide PTA meeting and invite parents from all schools to attend.

▢ Questions to ask at community meetings

This is your chance to hear from school staff about what's going on. (And it's a chance for staff to hear from you, too!) You can help your district make a better plan by participating. Just so you know, districts are *required* to keep track of these meetings and report about them in their plan.

Reports can be wordy. Sometimes the words get in the way. If the LCAP is unclear, at community meetings you should ask for clear answers to questions like these:

- What are the district's top priorities?
- How much progress was made last year toward meeting those goals?
- What are the greatest needs?
- Where are the gaps in student performance? Are they getting better or worse, and why?
- How is the district delivering services for low-income students, English learners and foster youth? (Under LCFF, your district receives specific funding to support these students — it is the community's job to notice if this isn't happening.)
- Did the district use all of the money in its plan last year or are there some areas where money was not spent?
- If the plan is not working, what changes are being considered?

▢ Your turn! What ideas, questions and concerns will you bring to your district?

Creating a plan is a two-way conversation. It is your chance to tell district leaders what is working and what can be improved.

Tip: Are you taking for granted things that aren't problems? Remember to communicate things you like as well as things you have concerns about.

As homework ahead of your community meeting, consider browsing through the lessons on Ed100.org. They can help you think about the tradeoffs involved in running a school or district, keeping the big picture in mind. By doing your homework, you will have an easier time influencing the outcome of the meeting.

The table below can help you prepare. (For instructions about how to share it and use it, skip to the bottom of this document.)

LCFF Priority 1: Basic Services (Conditions of Learning)

Rate of teacher misassignment, student access to standards-aligned instructional materials, facilities in good repair

	Current Status	What Needs to Be Done? At your school | At your district
Fully Credentialed Teachers Check your School Accountability Report Card (SARC) Background: Ed100 lesson 3.2		
Staff Professional Development Check your School Accountability Report Card Ask your school or district leadership		
Instructional materials and instruction aligned to Common Core Standards Check the California School Dashboard. Background: Ed100 blog		
Safe Facilities Check your SARC Background: Ed100 lesson 5.9		
Access to a library and librarian Background: Ed100 lesson 8.2, CDE		
Counselors Background: CDE, kidsdata, Ed100 lesson 2.7		
School Nurse Background: Ed100 blog, kidsdata, Ed100 lesson 2.3		

LCFF Priority 2: Implementation of State Standards (Conditions of Learning)

Implementation of academic content and performance standards adopted by the state board for all pupils, including English learners

	Current Status	What Needs to Be Done? At your school | At your district
English language arts and literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical subjects? Background: Ed100 lesson 6.3		
Mathematics Background: Ed100 lesson 6.4		
Next-generation science standards Background: Ed100 lesson 6.4		
Visual and Performing Arts Background: Ed100 lesson 6.8		
Health Background: Ed100 lesson 6.9		
Physical Education Background: Ed100 lesson 6.9		
Career Technical Education (CTE) Background: Ed100 lesson 6.11		
Civics Background: Ed100 lesson 6.15		
Second Language Background: Ed100 lesson 6.16		
Financial Literacy Background: Ed100 lesson 6.17		

LCFF Priority 3: Parent Involvement (Engagement)

Efforts to seek parent input in decision making, promotion of parent participation in programs for unduplicated pupils and special need subgroups

	Current Status	What Needs to Be Done? At your school | At your district
Families feel welcomed, valued and connected at school Background: Ed100 lessons 2.4, 2.9		
There is effective communication with parents, including in their language Background: Ed100 lessons 2.4, 2.1		
Families and school staff collaborate with community resources Background: Ed100 lesson 5.7		
Families are partners in decisions that affect all children and policies at the school and district. Background: Ed100 lesson 7.10		
School community discusses site and district needs and development, implementation, alignment of LCAP goals Background: Ed100 lesson 7.10		

LCFF Priority 4: Student Achievement (Pupil Outcomes)

Test performance, getting college and career ready, English learners and reclassification, advanced placement exams and preparing for college by the Early Assessment Program.

	Current Status	What Needs to Be Done? At your school | At your district
Test scores and school rankings Check your school's Dashboard Check your SARC Check the Ed-Data site Background: Ed100 lesson 9.3, 9.7		
English proficiency Background: Ed100 lesson 6.3		
Access to Advanced Placement courses and tests Background: Ed100 lesson 9.2		
College and Career Readiness Check your school's Dashboard Background: Ed100 lesson 9.4		
Other Measures Background: Ed100 lessons 9.1, 1.6		

LCFF Priority 5: Student Engagement (Engagement)

School attendance rates, chronic absenteeism rates, middle school dropout rates, high school dropout rates, high school graduations.

	Current Status	What Needs to Be Done? At your school | At your district
The school responds effectively to chronic absences Check your school's Dashboard for data Background: Ed100 lesson 4.8 Blog: Attendance and Absenteeism		

College and Career Readiness Check your school's Dashboard Background: Ed100 lesson 9.4		
Discipline is consistent and effective Check the Dashboard for suspension rates as well as graduation rates. Background: Ed100 lesson 5.13		
School leadership is effective Background: Ed100 lesson 5.8		

LCFF Priority 6: School Climate (Engagement)

Pupil suspension rates, pupil expulsion rates, other local measures including surveys of pupils, parents and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness

	Current Status	**What Needs to Be Done?** At your school | At your district
Students feel safe, respected and welcomed Background: Ed100 lessons 2.3 2.6, 2.10, 5.13, 5.10, 5.11 6.13		

LCFF Priority 7: Course Access (Conditions of Learning)

Pupil enrollment in a broad course of study that includes all of the subject areas described in Education Code. See Priority 2

	Current Status	**What Needs to Be Done?** At your school | At your district
Support for English Learners Background: CA Dashboard, Ed100 lesson 6.3		
Support for Children with Special Needs Background: Ed100 lesson 2.7		

blog Schools should include everyone. The Next Big Thing: Fix Special Education		
Support for Foster Youth Background: CA Dashboard, Ed100 lesson 2.8 Check with your County Office of Education		
Support for Gifted Students Background: What do gifted students need?		
Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Background: Ed100 lesson 4.5		
Equity Background: Ed100 lessons 2.1, 2.2 Blog: How to Turn Around a Middle School Blog: To Improve Education, Address Poverty Blog: Racism, Hate and Public Education Blog: Teaching Civics Has Never Mattered More		
Support for Students in Low-Income Contexts Background: Ed100 lesson 2.2		
Support for Diverse Students Background: CA Dashboard, Ed100 lesson 2.1		
Undocumented Students Background: Ed100 lesson 2.9		

LCFF Priority 8: Student Outcomes (Pupil Outcomes)

Pupil outcomes in the subject areas

	Current Status	**What Needs to Be Done?** At your school | At your district
Assessments Background: Ed100 lessons 6.5, 9.7		

Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Background: Ed100 lessons 4.7, 4.5 Blog: Community Schools Blog: Defining Student Success		
Visual and Performing Arts Background: Ed100 lesson 6.8		
Second Language Support Background: Ed100 lesson 6.16		

LCFF Priority 9: Expelled Youth (Conditions of Learning - County offices of education only)

	Current Status	**What Needs to Be Done?** At your school | At your district
Support for Expelled Students Check with your County Office of Education Ed100 lessons 6.13, 6.14 Blogs The California Dashboard for Suspensions 5.13 Discipline and Safety: Who Rules the School? 5.4 At Risk: When Regular School Doesn't Cut It 7.4 Thinking Regionally about Education: County Offices, and Crossing Boundaries		

LCFF Priority 10: Foster Youth (Conditions of Learning - County offices of education only)

	Current Status	**What Needs to Be Done?** At your school | At your district
Foster Youth Background: Ed100 lessons 2.8, 9.7		

Instructions for using and sharing this checklist

1. Make a copy of this Google document. Don't ask to edit it, please!:
   Choose "Make a Copy" from the File menu at the top left (above the print icon).
   Rename your copy, reflecting your school or district.
   Tip: Click here for Spanish.

2. Share your copy with others to work together:

   In your COPY of this Google document, click the blue Share button in the upper-right corner of the screen. (It looks like this: 

)
   Enter email addresses to invite people to work together on your copy the document.
   Use sharing settings in your COPY to choose the options you want. Learn more

3. Use it to help get everyone "on the same page" about the facts in your school or district.
   As you work together, you are creating documentation for your LCAP!
   Have your team members sign in with Ed100 (it's free) to create evidence of parent engagement as they learn.