

EDUCATION EQUITY

November 2016 Update

LCFF Lawsuit Against LAUSD Moves Forward

In our last update, we reported on our recent victory on the administrative complaint filed in *Community Coalition of South Los Angeles and Reyna Frias v. LAUSD*. In August, the California Department of Education (CDE) agreed with us that LA Unified miscalculated its LCFF spending for high-need students by improperly crediting \$450 million in special education expenses towards its obligation. The CDE ordered the LAUSD to recalculate what it's obligated to spend under LCFF to increase or improve services for such students by removing the unlawful special ed credit from its annual calculation. In late August, the legal complaint was amended to reflect that plaintiffs had exhausted administrative remedies available to them. The parties to the lawsuit have agreed to delay LAUSD's response to the CDE's order while they engage in possible settlement discussions. The Superior Court in Los Angeles has set a trial setting conference for January 5, 2017.

Equity Coalition Shapes California's New School Accountability System

In August we reported on a tentative success with the inclusion of key accountability standards promoted by Public Advocates and the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Equity Coalition in a draft of the state's new school accountability standards. We're pleased to report that in September, the State Board of Education formally adopted these standards. The Evaluation Rubrics will include:

- A summary top-level display with an Equity Report flagging subgroup under-performance, where present
- The inclusion of all 8 state priorities, not just testing indicators, as areas that can trigger intervention—which is critical for establishing a true multiple measures accountability system that has both quantitative and qualitative features
- A commitment to form a working group to study how to use school surveys or other tools to make the non-quantitative indicators more robust

- A requirement that all districts conduct periodic school climate surveys at all grade levels
- A college and career readiness indicator, where before there was only a graduation indicator (i.e., reporting diplomas obtained even if students were not substantively prepared for college or career)

Accountability for Continuous Improvement

The Local Control Funding Formula also established the California Collaborative on Education Excellence (CCEE), a new state agency to help school districts implement the new accountability system. CCEE has the mandate of building capacity for the public school system to use data, information, and community input for continuous improvement. Our education staff collaborated closely with CCEE staff as it developed and gathered input for its capacity building workshops, submitting comments, participating in curriculum design sessions and mock workshops. CCEE asked Public Advocates for help reaching out to local stakeholders to engage in its continuous improvement efforts.

New Report on Illegal Admissions Practices by Charter Schools

In August, Public Advocates and the ACLU of Southern California released a report, [*Unequal Access: How Some California Charter Schools Illegally Restrict Enrollment*](#). Our education staff performed much of the factual research, legal analysis and follow up with charter schools after the report's release. Since then, 83 of the 253 charters found to have illegal admissions practices have fixed their policies. The report received considerable press, including articles or reports in the [San Diego Union Tribune](#), Southern California public radio [KPCC](#), [EdSource](#), Los Angeles Times [OpEd](#) and [Editorial](#), [Washington Post](#), and the [Cabinet Report](#).

Local Control Funding Formula: Implementation Update

Our education attorneys have continued to support community partners in Sacramento, Fresno, Salinas, Oakland, Antioch, West Contra Costa, Long Beach and San Jose as they gear up for the 2016-17 school year. All of our partners are interested in seeing their local districts begin the Local Control Accountability Plan engagement process earlier, and many are also participating in CCEE's capacity building workshops.

Staff Attorney Rigel Massaro filed complaints in August against four districts that were noncompliant with the LCFF regulations: Mt. Diablo Unified School District, Oak Grove Elementary School District, Santa Barbara Unified School District, and Santa Rosa High School District. These districts first came to our attention through the report we authored back in May 2016, [*Keeping the Promise of LCFF in Districts Serving Fewer than 55% High-Need Students*](#).

Since we filed the complaints, three of the four districts have made measurable improvements to their LCAPs, and we are currently exploring our options with the fourth (Santa Barbara USD).

Strengthening Teacher Preparation & Support

Rigel testified at the September Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) meeting in support of improved data sharing between the Commission and the California State University (CSU) system to support better research into quality teacher preparation. We are investigating supporting a possible partnership between the CTC, CSU, and the California Department of Education as a means to help the CSU system better assess how well its graduates are prepared for the rigors of teaching.

Blogs

Back to (Underfunded) School. President & CEO Guillermo Mayer provides a personal account of his son's school in Oakland and how the California Supreme Court's decision in *Campaign for Quality Education v. California* turns a deaf ear on the urgent need to adequately fund our public schools. Read [Guillermo's blog](#).