

EDUCATION EQUITY

August 2016 Update

Shaping CA's New School Accountability System

PA continues to lead the Technical Working Group of the LCFF Equity Coalition to build consensus in comments from nearly two dozen advocacy and grassroots groups to the State Board of Education on the design of a new statewide school accountability system (to be known as "Evaluation Rubrics"). The coalition's goals for the new system are that it closes achievement gaps, promotes transparency and engages parents and students. With the looming deadline of October 1, 2016, it appears our hard work is paying off. At the July meeting of the Board, we spent most of our time thanking the Board and staff for design elements in the Evaluation Rubrics that our coalition considers big wins, including:

- A summary top-level display with an Equity Report flagging subgroup underperformance, where present;
- Inclusion of all 8 state priorities in the Evaluation Rubrics, even if the non-testing indicators are not robust yet. This 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 in the near future;
- Requiring all districts to conduct annual school climate surveys;
- Including a college and career readiness indicator (where before there was only a graduation indicator, i.e., valuing only diplomas even if students are not substantively prepared for college or work).

John Affeldt joined parents, students and equity advocacy allies in defending the inclusion of these indicators in the face of lobbyists for school districts and superintendents who pushed back on what they see as burdensome state mandates and not true local control. He also urged the Board to set deadlines for themselves to strengthen some of these indicators. **Liz Guillen** spoke at a youth rally on the sidewalk outside the Board's meeting led by Californians for Justice youth leaders who asked Governor Brown to believe in them and the goal of closing the achievement gap.

CA Dept. of Education Reaffirms that Los Angeles Unified Shortchanged High-need Students by Hundreds Millions of Dollars

In our last update, we reported that the California Department of Education (CDE) sided with us in April on our administrative complaint against Los Angeles Unified for grossly underfunding educational services for low-income students, English learners and foster youth enrolled in the district. The complaint is directly related to our lawsuit, *Community Coalition of South Los Angeles and Reyna Frias v. LAUSD*. The CDE agreed with us on the merits that the district miscalculated its LCFF spending obligation for high-need students by improperly crediting \$450 million in special education expenses towards its obligation. In response, it ordered the district to recalculate its LCFF spending obligation to increase or improve services for such students beginning in 2016-17.

Since then, LAUSD appealed CDE's decision and our plaintiffs cross-appealed because CDE's ruling failed to require LAUSD to make up for the combined \$422 million it denied high-need students in 2014-15 and 2015-16 as a result of its flawed calculation. On August 5th, the CDE reaffirmed its original order, but also said it would allow LAUSD to put off any significant budget adjustments until 2017-18. While we applaud CDE for reaffirming that LAUSD violated LCFF legal requirements, our legal team is now considering its options to address both the delay in budget adjustments granted LAUSD for 2016-17 as well as CDE's failure to provide a retroactive remedy for the students who were denied \$422 million in educational services.

Student and Parent Plaintiffs Decry CA Supreme Court's Refusal to Hear Appeal in Campaign for Quality Education v. California

In a disappointing 4-3 vote, the California Court Justices denied plaintiff's petition for review in our state school funding case. The decision leaves in place a court of appeal ruling saying there is no state constitutional guarantee of any level of educational quality or minimum funding to support education. Justices Goodwin Liu and Mariano-Florentino Cuellar wrote lengthy [dissents](#) that foreshadow the likelihood this issue will return to the California Supreme Court in a few years' time if conditions do not improve. Read our Aug. 22nd [press release](#).

Winning New and Improved Services for High-need Students in West Contra Costa County

This potential lawsuit was resolved in a settlement agreement signed on June 14, 2016. The district agreed to amend its Local Control Accountability Plan to disclose additional LCFF funds it received from the state to increase or improve services for low-income students, English language learners and foster youth. The agreement was in response to the administrative complaint Public Advocates and Mayer Brown LLP filed with the California Department of Education (CDE) on behalf of WCCUSD parents on March 28th.

Our novel complaint challenged the district's failure to include and justify the use of \$4.3 million in supplemental and concentration funds in its spending plan. The CDE agreed that WCCUSD officials had not complied with their duty to include all supplemental and

concentration funds in its LCAP and to engage stakeholders in the process and transparently display all funding for high-need students. As a result of the parents' complaint, the district greatly improved transparency in its 2016-2017 LCAP concerning how it spends most of its funds, above and beyond the funding targeted on high need students. See the [press release](#), and the [agreement](#) itself.

Making Real the Equity Provisions in California's Public School Spending Reform

Each school district is required to develop a Local Control Accountability Plan that describes how it intends to use state education funds received under the Local Control Funding Formula. The template for the LCAP was adopted as part of LCFF regulations in 2014. Now that districts, parents, students and community stakeholders have been using it for three years, the State Board of Education and California Department of Education are revising the LCAP template. **John Affeldt, Liz Guillen, Angelica Jongco and Rigel Massaro** contributed to the LCFF Equity Coalition's input to CDE staff leading the revision. PA does not oppose the proposed changes but we believe they do not sufficiently address the vagueness and lack of transparency in the current LCAP template, particularly around whether and how districts are increasing or improving services for high need students and explaining the use of their base funds. This concern was reinforced in our recent [review](#) of local spending and education plans conducted by **Angelica, Rigel and former volunteer attorney Roxanne Alejandre**.

Regarding local LCFF implementation, our staff continued supporting community partners in Sacramento, Fresno, Oakland, Antioch, West Contra Costa (see above) and San José as they engaged in their districts' processes to develop their LCFF spending plans for the next three years and report to the communities on implementation of those plans.

PA Helps Strengthen Teacher Preparation & Support

In budget and policy advocacy, PA continued to urge the State to invest in addressing teacher shortage and preparation. After nearly two years of stakeholder conversations, **Rigel Massaro** supported the creation of a new teaching permit that would allow substitutes to serve longer than the 20 day maximum in special education classrooms (called the Teaching Permit for Statutory Leaves). Because of Rigel's advocacy, this new permit has more robust preparation and mentoring requirements than any other temporary teaching permit.

In addition, our joint advocacy efforts with our partners have resulted in substantial wins:

- \$20 million in one-time Proposition 98 funding to reestablish the Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program to provide grants for classified employees to get their teaching credential.
- \$10 million in one-time General Fund funding to provide grants to postsecondary institutions to develop four-year integrated teacher credential programs.
- \$5 million in one-time Proposition 98 funding to create the California Center on Teaching Careers, to strengthen statewide recruitment of individuals into the teaching profession.

- One-time \$200 million college readiness block grant to all high schools with unduplicated students for activities that directly support students' access to college readiness. Specifically, the funds will support professional development of teachers, administrators and counselors to improve A-G course completion rates and for developing honors and AP courses.

We also advocated for the establishment of a state pilot teacher residency program in SB 933 (Allen) and the refunding of the student loan forgiveness program for teachers (Assumption Program of Loans for Education (APLE)) in SB 62 (Pavley) but neither program was funded in the state budget.