

Policy News

Topics

Preparing the LCAP Update

- » Involving stakeholder groups
- » Addressing English learners in the LCAP
- » Addressing chronic absenteeism in the LCAP

Water conservation in schools

Issues to consider when allowing alcohol on campus

New schedule for Policy Update

Golden Bell entries due June 26

New resources from CSBA

- » Measles and other infectious diseases
- » Access to drinking water in schools
- » Community Eligibility Provision for school meals
- » School climate

Preparing the LCAP Update

State law required governing boards to adopt a three-year Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) by July 1, 2014. This year, boards are required to adopt an update to the plan by July 1. CSBA's sample BP/AR 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan, as updated in April, details the LCAP development process and the content that must be included.

A template for the LCAP has been adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) and is contained in new state regulations (5 CCR 15497.5, as added by Register 2015, No. 2). The template presents guiding questions related to each state priority that must be addressed in the LCAP, and groups these state priorities into three categories of Conditions of Learning, Pupil Outcomes and Engagement.

Districts and county offices of education (COEs) should be continually monitoring progress toward each of the goals identified in their LCAP and should use the data to determine what changes are needed in updating the plan. It is important to establish a timeline for plan development that allows sufficient time before the July 1 deadline for data collection, stakeholder input, at least one public hearing in conjunction with the public hearing for the district/COE budget, and board deliberations.

Involving stakeholder groups

Districts/COEs are reminded of the requirement to consult with specified groups in the development of the LCAP or its annual update. These groups include teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, employee bargaining units, parents/guardians, and students. "Consultation" is not defined in the law, except that state regulations (5 CCR 15495, as amended by Register 2015, No. 2) now specify that consultation with students must enable "unduplicated students" (i.e., socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners and foster youth) and other numerically significant student subgroups (i.e., ethnic subgroups, students with disabilities) to review and comment on the LCAP development. State regulations also provide examples of methods that may be used to consult with students, such as surveys, student forums, student advisory committees, and meetings with student government bodies or other groups representing students.


State law also requires boards to establish a parent advisory committee to review and comment on the LCAP. In addition, when enrollment in a district includes at least 15 percent English learners, with at least 50 students who are English learners, the board must establish an English learner parent advisory committee. 5 CCR 15495, as amended, specifies that the parent advisory committee must be composed of a majority of parents/guardians, including at least one parent/guardian of unduplicated students, and that the English learner advisory committee be composed of a majority of parents/guardians of English learners.

Addressing English learners in the LCAP

English learners are among the groups of unduplicated students whose needs must be addressed in the LCAP. To assist with the provision of services to English learners, some



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districts/COEs receive additional funding through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) based on the number and concentration of English learners they serve. Such funds must be used to increase or improve services for unduplicated students pursuant to 5 CCR 15494-15496, as amended by Register 2015, No. 2. BP/AR 6174 - Education for English Language Learners was updated in April to link district programs and services for English learners with the requirements for the LCAP.

Legislation signed by the Governor in fall 2014 (SB 1174) could potentially have a significant impact on educational programs for English learners. However, because SB 1174 amends certain provisions of Proposition 227 approved by the voters in June 1998, its implementation is contingent upon voter approval in the November 2016 statewide general election. If the voters approve these provisions, BP/AR 6174 will be updated again as necessary. The proposed changes to state law include:

- » Replacing the current requirement to place identified English learners in a structured English immersion program (a program in which nearly all instruction is in English) with authority for parents/guardians to select a language acquisition program that best suits their child (e.g., dual immersion program, structured English immersion program, or transitional or development program that provides instruction in both English and a student's native language)
- » Eliminating the need for the parental exception waiver process by which parents/guardians may seek a waiver of the structured English immersion placement
- » Requiring districts/COEs to solicit input on language acquisition programs as part of the parent/guardian and community engagement process in LCAP development

At the state level, the SBE and California Department of Education (CDE) continue to work on aligning state English language development (ELD) standards, frameworks, instructional materials and assessments with the Common Core State Standards. Alignment with the English language arts standards has already been accomplished. By August 1, 2015, the SBE must either adopt or reject ELD standards which are recommended by the CDE as aligned with state standards for mathematics and science. By November 30, 2015, the SBE may adopt K-8 instructional materials aligned to the ELD standards. Until such materials are available, districts may choose to use supplementary materials approved by the SBE; see www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/eldsimr.asp.

The state California English Language Development Test (CELDT) is currently used by districts/COEs to assess the English language proficiency of English learners. However, by the 2016-17 school year, the CELDT will be replaced by a test that is aligned with the most recent ELD standards. The new English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) will include both an initial screening test to identify students who may be English learners and a summative assessment which will be used to determine their level of English proficiency and their progress in acquiring listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.


Addressing chronic absenteeism in the LCAP

State priorities for the LCAP include a requirement to create annual goals and specific actions to address student engagement, as measured by school attendance rates, chronic absenteeism rates, middle school dropout rates, high school dropout rates, and high school graduation rates, as applicable. As defined in the new state template for the LCAP adopted in Register 2015, No. 2, chronic absence refers to the percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of the school year. Absence for any reason – excused or unexcused – is included in the calculation.

It has long been necessary to track unexcused absences for the purpose of imposing specified interventions for truancy, but monitoring of chronic absence had been at the discretion of the district/COE. CSBA's sample BP 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy was updated in April to reflect the inclusion of chronic absence in the LCAP. As revised, BP 5113.1 also strengthens the



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strategies for tracking student attendance in order to identify and provide assistance to individual students who are chronic absentees and truants and to identify patterns of absence throughout the district.

“Monitoring and addressing chronic absence is an invaluable but often overlooked tool for improving student achievement,” says Hedy Chang, director of Attendance Works, a national and state level initiative aimed at advancing student success by addressing chronic absence. “We know investments in improving curriculum and instruction, including adoption of the Common Core, only make a difference if students are in the classroom. By tracking chronic absence, we can identify students at risk of poor attendance and intervene before they miss so much school they require remediation.”

Individual student attendance is not currently reported to the CDE for the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) and so CDE does not provide these statistics for districts. However, districts can obtain the data needed to produce their own chronic absence analysis through a student information system that reports the total days of absence for each student.

To assist with attendance tracking, Attendance Works has introduced free data tools designed specifically for California districts and schools to track chronic absence. The California versions of the district and school absence tracking tools (CalDATT and CalSATT) produce lists of individual students who have irregular attendance. They also detect patterns of chronic absence by grade, school, race/ethnicity, gender, special needs status, English learner status, free and reduced-price lunch status, and zip code. A new California Truancy Supplement to the CalDATT and CalSATT offers insights into the relationship between chronic absence, suspension and truancy as defined by California law. The CalDATT and CalSATT are compatible with any student information system, and feature an especially easy interface for Aeries users due to a cooperative effort with the software creator and the California Attorney General’s Office.

See the Attendance Works website at www.attendanceworks.org for information about these attendance tracking tools and other resources on chronic absence, including *Accountable for Attendance: Addressing Chronic Student Absence in Your Local Control and Accountability Plan* and *Frequently Asked Questions About Calculating and Monitoring Chronic Absence for LCFF*.

In addition, the California Attorney General’s Office has developed a sample LCAP to help districts prepare the portion of their LCAP related to attendance and chronic absence; see <https://oag.ca.gov>. The publication includes recommendations for the types of stakeholders to involve in LCAP development as well as sample needs statements, metrics to measure progress, specific actions/services, responsibilities of the school attendance team, district infrastructure necessary to increase attendance rates, and infrastructure to address the needs of foster youth, English learners, redesignated fluent English proficient students, and low-income students.


Water conservation in schools

With California facing one of the most severe droughts on record, Governor Brown declared a state of emergency in January and directed state officials to take all necessary actions to prepare for water shortages. He signed legislation providing \$1 billion in funding for drought relief and critical water infrastructure projects, and has called on all Californians to reduce their water use and prevent water waste.

In a letter to school officials, state architect Chester A. Widom asked school districts “to lead by example in water conservation and water efficiency efforts, wherever possible.” Schools were supplied with a water conservation best practices guide developed by the California Department of General Services and the Department of Water Resources.



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An executive order issued by the Governor on April 1 includes the following directives to state agencies which will impact schools:

- » Achieve a 25% statewide reduction in water use, or a proportionately higher reduction in areas with relatively high per capita use
- » Restrict potable water use for institutional properties
- » Prohibit irrigation of ornamental turf on public street medians and outside of newly constructed buildings that is not delivered by drip or microspray systems
- » Increase water efficiency standards for new and existing landscapes through more efficient irrigation systems, gray water use, onsite storm water capture and limitations on turf coverage
- » Improve water efficiency standards for water appliances (e.g., toilets, faucets) for installation in new and existing buildings

Emergency regulations are expected to be adopted soon to implement some of these provisions.

Districts are encouraged to review their local policies and regulations pertaining to water conservation (BP/AR 3511 - Energy and Water Management) for strategies for developing a comprehensive resource management program. Also see the Department of Water Resources' website at www.water.ca.gov.

Issues to consider when allowing alcohol on campus

Business and Professions Code 25608 provides that it is a misdemeanor to possess, consume, sell, give away or deliver any alcoholic beverage in public school facilities or grounds unless a listed exception applies. New law (AB 2073, 2014) provides an exception authorizing districts to allow the use of their facilities or grounds for events that involve the acquisition, possession, use or consumption of alcohol, provided that the entity using the facilities obtains and provides to the district a special event permit or license under the Alcohol Beverage Control Act and the event will occur at a time when students are not generally present on school grounds.

For those districts that may wish to exercise this authority, AR 1330 - Use of School Facilities has been revised to reflect the new law. AR 1330 also provides that the district may set limitations in order to reduce risks to the district and ensure the safety of participants and that any such limitations will be clearly stated in the facility use agreement.

Some limitations that districts may want to include in their administrative regulation and/or facility use agreement include, but are not limited to:

- » Requiring security guards or law enforcement at the event
- » Requiring additional insurance
- » Limiting the presence of alcohol to designated areas (e.g., a single building or outside location where security guards can observe those persons drinking alcohol)
- » Limiting the types of alcoholic beverages to be served to wine and/or beer
- » Limiting each adult to a maximum of two drinks per event
- » Setting specific times when alcoholic beverages may be served (e.g., not after midnight)

It is recommended that districts consult their legal counsel and/or risk management personnel before adopting a policy or regulation that allows alcohol to be served on district property.



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New schedule for Policy Update

In order to more timely address legislative changes and other critical issues, CSBA's Policy Update packets will be released more frequently beginning July 2015. Each fiscal year, CSBA will provide five update packets — July, October, December, March and May — instead of three packets.

Each edition will continue to include a guidesheet and *Policy News* to provide further information about the policies, administrative regulations and board bylaws being updated in that edition as well as other policy-related resources such as policy briefs and fact sheets when available.

For further information about CSBA's policy services, see www.csba.org/ProductsAndServices/PolicyServices.aspx or call (800) 266-3382.

Golden Bell entries due June 26

CSBA's Golden Bell awards program highlights best practices in education in all areas of operations, instruction and support services. Districts/COEs are encouraged to submit their outstanding programs and governance practices to the Golden Bell awards program by June 26.

Eligible programs must be operating in a CSBA-member district/COE, must have started at least two years prior to June 26, 2015, and must currently be in existence. A maximum of three entries will be accepted from each district/COE.

Entries will be accepted in the categories of accountability/assessment, career technical education, closing the achievement gap, co-curricular programs, Common Core, community schools through partnerships and collaboration, COE services, curriculum and instruction in specific subject areas, early childhood education, English language acquisition, Juanita Haugen memorial award for civic education, parent/community involvement, professional development and teacher recruitment/retention, school climate, special education, student services, sustainable/green programs, technology and wellness.

For further information, see gb.csba.org.

New resources from CSBA

The following fact sheets and governance briefs are available at www.csba.org/GovernanceBriefs.

Measles and other infectious diseases

The recent measles outbreak in California has generated heightened awareness and interest regarding the risks of infectious disease outbreaks in schools. *Measles (and Other Infectious Diseases)*, a governance brief issued by CSBA in March, reviews legal requirements related to immunizations, exemptions from immunizations, exclusions from attendance and conditional enrollment. It also describes the role that districts can play in keeping communities healthy and presents a case study of Huntington Beach Union High School District's response to the recent measles outbreak.

Districts should also be aware that Health and Safety Code 120375 and 17 CCR 6075 require all schools to report annually the immunization status of their students. It is expected that immunization records for any school that fails to report in 2015-16 will be audited.

Related policies and administrative regulations include BP/AR 5141.22 - Infectious Diseases, BP 5141.31 - Immunizations, AR 5112.1 - Exclusions from Attendance and BP 4119.41/4219.41/4319.41 - Employees with Infectious Disease.



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Access to drinking water in schools

CSBA has issued a new fact sheet, *Drinking Water Access in Schools* (April 2015), which provides updated information on requirements and best practices related to the provision of drinking water to students. The fact sheet summarizes the health benefits of water consumption, state and federal requirements to provide free and safe drinking water to students where food is served, issues related to water quality, ways to increase water access and consumption, possible board actions and questions to consider.

Also see CSBA's sample AR 3550 - Food Service/Child Nutrition Program and BP 5030 - Student Wellness for language implementing the drinking water requirement. A 2013 policy brief, *Increasing Access to Drinking Water in Schools*, is available at www.csba.org/pnb.

Community Eligibility Provision for school meals

A new federal option, the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), simplifies administration of the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs for districts that serve a high percentage of students from low-income families. It allows schools to forego the collection of school meal applications and to offer breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students. In addition, schools that utilize the CEP count the total number of meals served rather than tracking meals by eligibility category.

Information about the CEP is available in a new fact sheet jointly published by CSBA, Food Research and Action Center, and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. *Creating Hunger-Free Schools Through the Community Eligibility Provision* (March 2015) discusses the benefits of CEP, school and district eligibility, how the CEP works, implementation options, LCFF requirements to collect household income information, and the role of the board.

School climate

CSBA has launched a series of governance briefs (*Climate for Achievement*) designed to help school boards and superintendents explore issues surrounding school climate, one of the state priority areas that every district and county office must address in its LCAP.

Issue 1, "How Research Defines School Climate" (March 2015), summarizes current requirements for school climate in the LCAP, provides an overview of the research that defines school climate, and identifies the various components of school climate (e.g., safety, relationships, teaching and learning, institutional environment, professional leadership).

Issue 2, "Why School Climate Matters" (April 2015), describes the link between school climate and academic achievement. The brief cites evidence of positive correlations between school climate and state achievement test results, long-term achievement, and achievement of at-risk student populations. The impact of school climate on other student outcomes is also examined, including the positive effect on students' safety, social/emotional health, physical health and motivation to learn as well as its effect on teacher morale and school reform efforts.

Future issues are expected to focus on methods and tools for measuring school climate and actions that school boards can take to improve school climate.



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