



California's New Local Control Funding Formula

FOSTER YOUTH PROVISIONS: NEXT STEPS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The State has a unique legal responsibility to ensure the well-being of foster youth, yet their educational outcomes have historically been tragically poor. With the passage of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), California became the first state to commit to improving the educational outcomes of students in foster care.

The potential of the landmark foster youth provisions of the Local Control Funding Formula depends upon school districts developing and implementing Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) that contain goals and actions unique to foster youth and specific to their educational needs. Specifically:

1 Determine the district staff responsible for developing and implementing the portion of the LCAP specific to foster youth.

Developing meaningful goals and actions for foster youth will require a multi-disciplinary team. Team members may include the district's foster youth liaison, staff with expertise in data-sharing, budgeting, curriculum and instruction, and specialized supports, and at least one member of the school district's leadership team.

Recommendation: School districts should form multi-disciplinary teams responsible for developing goals specific to foster youth, the actions the district will take to accomplish their goals, and the associated budget.

2 Collaborate with county agencies when developing and implementing the portion of the LCAP specific to foster youth.

A multitude of agencies are involved with foster youth and provide services and supports related to their educational success. For example, the county child welfare agency is responsible for their well-being while the county office of education's foster youth services program provides educational case management and support. Many foster children are also served by the county mental health agency. Developing goals, programs and services in close collaboration with these agencies is critical to prevent duplication of services.

Recommendation: School districts should work closely with the county child welfare agency, county office of education, and others to provide well-coordinated services to students in foster care.

3 Identify programs that meet the unique educational needs of foster youth, both within the district and elsewhere.

School districts are likely to have existing programs from which foster youth would benefit if provided increased access. Moreover, over the past decade, a number of school districts, individual schools and community-based organizations have developed programs where students in foster care have “beat the odds” and succeeded in school.

Recommendation: School districts should research and make available to foster youth an array of programmatic supports that have proven successful.

4 Provide individual foster youth the unique set of educational supports and services she or he needs to succeed in school.

Different foster youth need different educational supports. Some have suffered multiple traumatic experiences, others suffer from residential and school instability, many lack an educational champion. Ensuring that foster youth succeed in school requires providing each student a tailored set of educational services that build upon their individual strengths and address their specific needs.

Recommendation: Ensure services and supports are tailored to the educational strengths and needs of each individual foster youth.

5 Allocate the resources necessary to support the portion of the LCAP specific to foster youth.

Districts are receiving supplemental and concentration funds in proportion to the number of low-income, English-learner and foster youth enrolled. EC §§ 42238.02, 42238.03. These funds must be used to provide new or enhanced educational services to these sub-groups of students. EC § 42238.07. School districts should allocate a portion of their supplemental and concentration funds to providing foster youth increased or improved educational services designed to improve their educational outcomes.

Recommendation: School districts should use supplemental and concentration funds to provide foster youth the unique educational services and supports they need to succeed in school.