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**DATE:** August 29, 2025  
**TO:** Dr. Ryan Lewis, District Superintendent  
Ms. Heidi Matthies Dodd, Board President  
Ms. Julie Edmunds, Assistant Superintendent, Fiscal Support Services  
Dr. Sarah Ragusa, Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Support Services  
Lake Elsinore Unified School District  
**FROM:** Edwin Gomez, Ed.D., Riverside County Superintendent of Schools  
**BY:** Scott Price, Ph.D. *SP* Amanda Corridan *AC*  
Associate Superintendent Chief Academic Officer  
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**SUBJECT: 2025-26 LCAP and ADOPTED BUDGET – APPROVAL**

The County Superintendent of Schools is required to review and approve the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) before the approval of the district's Adopted Budget [Education Code Section 42127(d)(2)].

#### Adopted Local Control and Accountability Plan

In accordance with California Education Code (EC) Section 52070, our office has completed its review of the district's 2025-26 LCAP to determine whether it adheres to the guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE).

The district's adopted LCAP has been analyzed to determine whether:

- The plan adheres to the template adopted by the State Board of Education.
- The budget includes sufficient expenditures to implement the actions and strategies included in the plan, based on the projected costs included in the plan.
- The plan adheres to the expenditure requirements for funds apportioned on the basis of the number and concentration of unduplicated pupils.
- The plan includes the calculations to determine whether there is required carryover. If applicable, the plan includes a description of the planned uses of the specified funds and a description of how the planned uses of those funds satisfy the requirements for specific actions to be considered as contributing toward meeting the increased or improved services requirement.

The district's adopted LCAP has been analyzed in the context of the guidance provided by the California County Superintendents and the California Department of Education (CDE). Based on our analysis, the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan for the 2025-26 fiscal year has been **approved** by the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools. Our goal is to further enhance the performance

of students by providing feedback and inquiry questions that will support the refinement of future Local Control and Accountability Plans, and any additional plans designed to close the achievement gap in metrics that impact student preparedness for college and career.

### **Student Achievement**

The purpose of the LCAP is to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills necessary to be successful in both college and career. The Riverside County Office of Education conducted a review of research on TK-12 college readiness indicators to identify those that would align with the LCAP purpose and have the greatest impact. As a result of this research, we recommend that local education agencies (LEAs) closely monitor the metrics listed in the data table below for all student groups.

Lake Elsinore Unified School District Student Groups – Program Participation Status							
Indicator	LEA	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED)	English Learner (EL)	Long-Term English Learner (LTEL)	Foster Youth (FY)	Homeless Youth (HY)	Students with Disabilities (SWD)
Enrollment Count 2024 <sup>1</sup>	20,769	14,912	2,487	N/A	157	1,739	3,100
Enrollment Percent 2024 <sup>1</sup>	N/A	71.8	12.0	N/A	0.8	8.4	14.9
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2024 <sup>2</sup>	-35.4	-48.4	-86.9	-130.4	-86.6	-58.5	-106.1
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2024 <sup>2</sup>	-75.3	-88.9	-115.9	-179.4	-142.0	-90.3	-137.3
Science Distance from Standard 2024 <sup>2</sup>	-17.7	-20.3	-28.7	-35.8	-30.7	-21.6	-27.9
English Learner Progress Indicator 2024 <sup>2</sup>	N/A	N/A	44.9	50.2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	93.6	93.1	86.6	92.2	82.4	86.2	87.3
College/Career Indicator Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	35.1	28.9	4.1	5.6	11.8	19.1	10.6
A-G Completion Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	30.5	25.0	6.0	8.9	5.9	19.1	8.5
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	15.2	12.6	2.0	2.2	11.8	6.4	7.6
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	22.9	26.9	23.1	26.5	33.3	31.4	31.5
Suspension Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	3.1	3.6	3.2	9.5	5.9	4.6	5.1

<sup>1</sup>2024 California School Dashboard Downloadable Enrollment File (No LTEL Data Available)

<sup>2</sup>2024 California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Downloadable Data Files

\* Data Suppressed for Student Privacy Reasons

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Lake Elsinore Unified School District Student Groups – Race/Ethnicity										
Indicator	LEA	American Indian	Asian	Black/African American	Filipino	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races	
Enrollment Count 2024 <sup>1</sup>	20,769	39	362	931	342	14,009	63	4,133	890	
Enrollment Percent 2024 <sup>1</sup>	N/A	0.2	1.7	4.5	1.6	67.5	0.3	19.9	4.3	
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2024 <sup>2</sup>	-35.4	-85.2	24.3	-46.0	32.9	-47.4	-48.6	-10.5	-0.7	
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2024 <sup>2</sup>	-75.3	-139.9	-7.2	-98.2	-6.8	-88.3	-97.2	-45.4	-36.8	
Science Distance from Standard 2024 <sup>2</sup>	-17.7	-28.9	-4.6	-19.8	-5.2	-20.3	-25.3	-12.3	-8.9	
English Learner Progress Indicator 2024 <sup>2</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Graduation Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	93.6	*	88.9	93.7	97.1	94.0	*	92.4	93.6	
College/Career Indicator Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	35.1	*	55.6	21.5	88.2	31.2	*	44.3	37.2	
A-G Completion Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	30.5	*	58.3	24.1	79.4	26.3	*	35.8	41.0	
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	15.2	*	8.3	12.7	32.4	13.6	*	20.2	16.7	
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	22.9	23.1	11.9	22.3	9.1	24.2	36.6	20.5	23.7	
Suspension Rate 2024 <sup>2</sup>	3.1	6.4	1.3	5.3	0.5	3.2	6.1	2.6	3.2	

<sup>1</sup> California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Files

<sup>2</sup> CDE Dataquest and Files

\* Data Suppressed for Student Privacy Reasons

We offer the following commendations and inquiry questions to consider for the implementation of the 2025-26 Local Control and Accountability Plan and the refinement of the plan in future years:

**Student Success in Academics**

The district is to be commended for its continued investment in early literacy professional development, and the use of instructional coaches and content specialists which have been

deployed in an effort to improve English language arts (ELA) and mathematics achievement. The district is also to be commended for its focused support for English Learners through designated and integrated English Language Development (ELD), which has led to increased reclassification rates. Additionally, commendations are in order for the district's efforts to implement a variety of expanded credit recovery and accelerated learning opportunities to support students with additional needs.

Additional dialogue related to the questions below may support achievement of the goals and desired outcomes aligned to student academic achievement:

- In what ways could the district strengthen the coherence and impact of professional development cycles to ensure consistent implementation of high-leverage instructional strategies across all schools?
- How might the district best monitor progress and improve the academic performance of all learners by utilizing a myriad of formative and summative assessment results?

#### **Student Access, Enrollment, and Success in Rigorous Coursework**

The district is to be commended for its intentional efforts to increase student access to rigorous coursework through expanding Advanced Placement, Career Technical Education (CTE), and dual enrollment course offerings. Further commendations are in order for the district's equity-driven approach to providing support at Equity Multiplier schools through facilitating hybrid learning environments and trauma-informed transitions.

Additional dialogue related to the questions below may support achievement of the goals and desired outcomes aligned to student access, enrollment, and success in rigorous coursework:

- How might the district best coordinate all actions, services, and certificated and classified staff to close the achievement gap and further increase access to rigorous courses for all student groups?
- How might the district better leverage evidence-based best practices utilized at Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) National Demonstration Schools to support districtwide initiatives designed to improve the college and career readiness of all pupils?

#### **Student Engagement and School Climate**

The district is to be commended for its notable improvements in Average Daily Attendance, chronic absenteeism, and suspension rates across all student groups. Significant gains in graduation rates for English Learners, Long-Term English Learners, Foster Youth, Students with Disabilities, and Black/African American students are also to be commended. Additionally, efforts by the district markedly decreased the suspension rate of Foster Youth. Coordinated efforts of dedicated wellness personnel, including Social Emotional Learning Support Providers (SELSP) teams, social workers, counselors, and prevention staff underscore a strong commitment to student well-being and engagement.

Additional dialogue related to the questions below may support achievement of the goals and desired outcomes aligned to student engagement and school climate:

- How might the district systematically measure the effectiveness of each school climate and student engagement initiative to scale the highest-impact practices across all campuses to maximize student success?
- What strategies could the district use to expand its elementary Tier 1 and Tier 2 Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) interventions and supports to impact learners in secondary settings?
- What additional targeted actions might the district operationalize to decrease chronic absenteeism and make a positive impact on student attendance, particularly for Foster Youth?

To access resources and tools that will support future LCAP development, please go to <https://www.rcoe.us/lcap-support>.

### **Adopted Budget**

In accordance with California Education Code (EC) Section 42127, our office has completed its review of the district's 2025-26 Adopted Budget to determine whether it complies with the criteria and standards adopted by the SBE and whether it allows the district to meet its financial obligations for the 2025-26 fiscal year, as well as satisfy its multi-year financial commitments.

The district's Adopted Budget was developed without fully incorporating the assumptions provided in the Governor's 2025-26 May Revision. Since that time, the 2025-26 State Budget has been enacted, which includes updates and changes from the May Revision. The district is encouraged to review and revise its budget projections as needed to align with the enacted State Budget and reflect any material changes in funding or assumptions.

Based on our analysis of the information submitted, and our assessment of revenue changes in the enacted State Budget, we approve the district's budget, but would like to highlight the following:

*Enrollment and Average Daily Attendance (ADA)* – The district estimates 18,768 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 1.5 percent decrease from the certified 2024-25 P-2 ADA. For 2026-27 the district projects a 0.5 percent decrease in ADA. For 2027-28 the district projects to remain flat in ADA. It will be important for the district to monitor enrollment in the current and subsequent years to ensure accurate LCFF revenue and plan accordingly.

*Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)* – The district's Adopted Budget included Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) for LCFF funding of 2.30 percent, 3.52 percent, and 3.63 percent for the 2025-26, 2026-27, and 2027-28 fiscal years, respectively. The COLA assumptions for the out-years do not reflect the lower, revised figures proposed in the 2025-26 Governor's May Revise. Our office recommends a contingency plan should LCFF funding not materialize as projected in the district's Multi-Year Projection (MYP) or the 2025-26 State Budget.

*Unrestricted Deficit Spending* – The district's Adopted Budget indicates a positive ending balance for all funds in the 2025-26 fiscal year. However, for the unrestricted General Fund, the

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district anticipates expenditures and uses will exceed revenues and sources by \$10.1 million in 2025-26.

*Employee Negotiations* – As of the board date, June 12, 2025, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations are complete with both the certificated and classified bargaining units for the 2025-26 fiscal year.

*Reserve for Economic Uncertainties* – The minimum state-required reserve for a district of Lake Elsinore Unified School District's size is 3.0 percent. The district projects to meet the minimum-reserve requirement in the current and two subsequent fiscal years.

*Cash Management* – Attention to cash solvency remains a critical fiscal practice and should continue to be prioritized in the coming year. The district projects sufficient cash balances to cover projected expenditures during the 2025-26 fiscal year. Should the district identify the need for temporary borrowing options, our office strongly advises districts to consult with legal counsel and independent auditors prior to using Cafeteria Special Revenue Fund (Fund 13) and Building Fund (Fund 21) for temporary interfund borrowing purposes to remedy cash shortfalls.

*Fiscal Distress Documentation* – Education Code Section 42127.6 requires the County Superintendent of Schools to review and consider any studies, reports, evaluations, or audits that may indicate a school district is experiencing fiscal distress. Our office did not receive any such reports for the district.

**Conclusion**

Our office commends the district for its efforts thus far to preserve its fiscal solvency and maintain a quality education program for its students. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office.