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DATE: August 29, 2025
TO: Ms. Dalia GadElMawla, District Superintendent
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Ms. Melissa Elwood, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services
Dr. Jeremy Goins, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services
Corona-Norco 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.

Corona-Norco 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 ¹	50,256	35,783	7,092	N/A	235	434	6,740
Enrollment Percent 2024 ¹	N/A	71.2	14.1	N/A	0.5	0.9	13.4
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2024 ²	8.5	-2.2	-46.8	-111.3	-84.2	-58.7	-83.9
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-30.7	-42.7	-75.0	-168.5	-123.0	-109.8	-116.9
Science Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-10.4	-12.5	-22.5	-32.7	-26.1	-21.1	-26.3
English Learner Progress Indicator 2024 ²	N/A	N/A	50.1	52.0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate 2024 ²	96.3	96.0	90.7	91.1	80.6	91.1	89.3
College/Career Indicator Rate 2024 ²	48.5	45.3	10.7	8.0	5.6	18.6	8.3
A-G Completion Rate 2024 ²	51.4	47.8	15.7	13.2	13.9	18.5	10.7
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2024 ²	16.5	15.8	9.7	10.5	11.1	8.1	16.5
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2024 ²	12.6	14.3	13.4	20.4	27.8	36.7	19.0
Suspension Rate 2024 ²	4.2	4.8	5.6	12.6	14.8	10.9	7.3

¹2024 California School Dashboard Downloadable Enrollment File (No LTEL Data Available)

²2024 California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Downloadable Data Files

* Data Suppressed for Student Privacy Reasons

Corona-Norco 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 ¹	50,256	148	6,695	2,719	1,541	26,728	170	10,333	1,195	
Enrollment Percent 2024 ¹	N/A	0.3	13.3	5.4	3.1	53.2	0.3	20.6	2.4	
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2024 ²	8.5	13.3	68.5	-9.1	68.6	-15.4	23.6	22.6	41.9	
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-30.7	-42.6	51.8	-59.7	37.7	-61.5	-20.4	-12.3	3.6	
Science Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-10.4	-8.8	2.8	-16.4	2.1	-15.5	-8.3	-6.5	-4.0	
English Learner Progress Indicator 2024 ²	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Graduation Rate 2024 ²	96.3	100.0	96.5	95.7	98.0	96.2	100.0	96.4	98.7	
College/Career Indicator Rate 2024 ²	48.5	63.6	77.5	42.0	75.7	38.7	27.3	55.4	54.5	
A-G Completion Rate 2024 ²	51.4	63.6	76.5	51.1	79.7	41.5	54.5	58.6	61.5	
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2024 ²	16.5	36.4	27.4	11.2	20.9	13.9	0.0	18.9	11.5	
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2024 ²	12.6	22.6	5.3	19.5	3.0	14.9	19.3	10.7	13.5	
Suspension Rate 2024 ²	4.2	6.5	1.8	7.8	1.0	5.0	4.2	3.4	3.2	

¹ California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Files² 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 implementing a comprehensive academic improvement strategy that includes sustained professional development, targeted intervention through

Teachers on Special Assignment (TSAs), and a robust Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). These efforts have led to notable academic growth, including a strong overall performance in English language arts (ELA), with three high schools significantly above standard. The district's rising four-year cohort graduation rate with sizable gains among English Learners, Homeless Youth, and Students with Disabilities, further reflects the impact of these strategies.

Additionally, many schools in the district have earned recognition as California Distinguished Schools, and the district was recently awarded a Golden Bell Award, underscoring its commitment to excellence in education and student achievement.

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

- What would it look like to refine the supports that are working best for other groups to close ELA gaps for Foster Youth, Long-Term English Learners, and Students with Disabilities?
- How might formative assessments further enhance universal screeners and unit assessments to adjust tiered instruction, and what specific thresholds may signal changes in student support?

Student Access, Enrollment, and Success in Rigorous Coursework

The district is to be commended for its comprehensive and strategic approach to expanding access to rigorous academic and career pathways. With over 60 Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways, robust Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB) offerings, Dual Enrollment through Norco College, and Advanced Via Individual Determination (AVID) and Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs, the district provides students with diverse, high-quality opportunities aligned to college and career readiness. Notable gains include increased AP participation—particularly among African American students—and a significant rise in AP exam pass rates across student groups, including a 100 percent pass rate for Foster Youth. The district's strong graduation rate and effective integration of Equity Multiplier funds to support high-need school sites further reflect its commitment to access and postsecondary success for all students.

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:

- What might it look like to strategically leverage existing programs to strengthen academic and postsecondary outcomes for English Learners?
- In what ways might the district strengthen alignment between its academic pathways (AP/IB, Dual Enrollment, CTE) and student readiness supports to ensure favorable outcomes across all schools and student groups?

Student Engagement and School Climate

The district is to be commended for its comprehensive, student-centered approach to fostering a positive school climate. Through expanded mental health services, restorative practices, and strong community partnerships, the district has created environments where students feel safe,

supported, and connected. These efforts have contributed to increased engagement, improved attendance, and strengthened relationships that help ensure all students are ready to learn.

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 assess the long-term impact of mental health services (e.g., Wellness Together, Rescue a Generation) on both academic outcomes and social-emotional development, particularly for Foster Youth and Homeless students?
- What systems might be installed to ensure counselors, psychologists, and wellness partners have a cohesive approach to ensuring services are not only available but timely, culturally responsive, and well-utilized by students most in need?
- What might it look like to more intentionally leverage attendance strategies within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to strengthen student engagement and well-being?

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 in the context of the Governor's 2025-26 May Revise. Subsequently, the 2025-26 State Budget was adopted, which contained differences from the May Revise. The district should update and revise its budget projections to reflect changes in available funding.

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 46,157 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 1.5 percent decrease from the certified 2024-25 P-2 ADA. For 2026-27 and 2027-28, the district projects a 1.5 percent decrease in ADA each year. 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, 3.02 percent, and 3.42 percent for the 2025-26, 2026-27, and 2027-28 fiscal years, respectively. Our office recommends a contingency plan should LCFF funding not materialize as projected in 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 district anticipates expenditures and uses will exceed revenues and sources by \$2.6 million in 2025-26, \$4.6 million in 2026-27, and \$5.3 million in 2027-28. Our office strongly discourages districts from committing to additional ongoing expenditures without offsetting reductions and stresses the need to continue identifying solutions to reduce any potential structural deficit.

Employee Negotiations – As of the board date, June 17, 2025, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations continue with both the certificated and classified bargaining units for the 2025-26 fiscal year. Prior to entering into a written agreement, California Government Code (GC) Section 3547.5 requires a public school employer to publicly disclose the major provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, including but not limited to, the costs incurred in the current and subsequent fiscal years. The disclosure must include a written certification signed by the district superintendent and chief business official that the district can meet the costs incurred by the district during the term of the agreement. Therefore, please make available to the public and submit a disclosure to our office at least ten (10) working days prior to the date on which the governing board is to take action on a proposed agreement.

Reserve for Economic Uncertainties – The minimum state-required reserve for a district of Corona-Norco Unified School District’s size is 2.0 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.