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DATE: August 29, 2025
TO: Dr. Gordon Amerson, District Superintendent
Ms. Marla Kirkland, Board President
Mr. Garrick Owen, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services
Mr. Mark LeNoir, Deputy Superintendent, Education Services
Val Verde Unified School District
FROM: Edwin Gomez, Ed.D., Riverside County Superintendent of Schools
BY: Scott Price, Ph.D. *MP* Amanda Corridan *OK*
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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.

Val Verde Unified School District Student Groups – Program Participation Status							
Indicator	LEA	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED)	English Learner (EL)	Long-Term English Learner (LTTEL)	Foster Youth (FY)	Homeless Youth (HY)	Students with Disabilities (SWD)
Enrollment Count 2024 ¹	19,361	16,927	4,125	N/A	192	699	2,506
Enrollment Percent 2024 ¹	N/A	87.4	21.3	N/A	1.0	3.6	12.9
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-34.2	-39.5	-69.4	-116.0	-81.8	-62.5	-124.2
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-88.6	-93.8	-111.3	-178.0	-112.5	-110.7	-162.7
Science Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-18.8	-19.9	-26.0	-33.2	-29.5	-28.6	-32.1
English Learner Progress Indicator 2024 ²	N/A	N/A	43.6	42.2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate 2024 ²	94.0	93.9	86.5	89.5	73.8	88.1	84.0
College/Career Indicator Rate 2024 ²	48.4	46.9	21.8	23.7	12.2	30.3	14.5
A-G Completion Rate 2024 ²	54.9	53.6	28.8	30.8	19.0	31.1	20.6
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2024 ²	47.6	47.7	37.8	43.5	19.0	32.8	35.3
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2024 ²	23.9	25.0	21.5	23.5	20.3	34.1	31.0
Suspension Rate 2024 ²	2.6	2.8	2.0	5.1	9.6	2.1	4.3

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

²2024 California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Downloadable Data Files

* Data Suppressed for Student Privacy Reasons

Val Verde 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	19,361	46	297	2,079	204	15,511	44	681	366
Enrollment Percent 2024 ¹	N/A	0.2	1.5	10.7	1.1	80.1	0.2	3.5	1.9
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-34.2	-53.4	34.8	-42.6	62.1	-36.1	11.0	-32.6	-24.3
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-88.6	-111.7	-8.6	-101.5	-1.1	-90.7	-48.5	-72.1	-75.1
Science Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-18.8	-24.6	-2.6	-21.8	0.5	-19.2	-12.7	-15.1	-18.6
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	94.0	*	100.0	94.2	94.4	94.1	*	90.8	91.3
College/Career Indicator Rate 2024 ²	48.4	*	71.0	40.3	77.8	48.6	*	55.3	39.1
A-G Completion Rate 2024 ²	54.9	*	90.3	55.8	88.9	53.7	*	59.2	52.2
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2024 ²	47.6	*	19.4	35.6	44.4	50.1	*	39.5	52.2
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2024 ²	23.9	25.9	10.3	25.2	2.9	24.0	51.7	23.4	30.8
Suspension Rate 2024 ²	2.6	2.1	1.0	5.9	0.5	2.2	11.3	2.3	2.5

¹ California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Files

² 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 improving academic outcomes in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics overall and for several student groups, resulting in a Yellow performance level on the California School Dashboard. Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students improved in the

Academic Indicator, reducing the Distance from Standard by 4.9 points in ELA and by 6.2 points in mathematics. The district is also to be commended for the prioritized focus on literacy with strategic investments in Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), the Science of Reading, Keys to Content Literacy, and other professional learning opportunities and student supports resulting in improvements on district benchmarks for Kindergarten through Grade 2.

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

- How might successes in overall academic improvement inform how the district supports English Learners, including Long-Term English Learners, in language acquisition as measured by the English Learner Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) on the English Learner Progress Indicator and in reclassification rates?
- In what additional ways can the district prioritize efforts to improve academic outcomes for vulnerable student populations, including Foster Youth and Students with Disabilities?

Student Access, Enrollment, and Success in Rigorous Coursework

The district is to be commended for increasing the percentage of students who completed Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways, with the majority of student groups increasing in the number of CTE completers. Additionally, the district is to be commended for a seven-percentage point increase overall in the percentage of students passing Advanced Placement (AP) exams with a score of 3 or higher.

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 improvements in the percentage of students passing AP exams with a score of 3 or higher inform how the district supports AP success for specific student groups, including Foster Youth and Students with Disabilities, to close access and achievement gaps?
- What additional opportunities might be provided to students to enable them to demonstrate success in college and career readiness courses and programs to positively impact the College/Career Indicator (CCI) overall and for all student groups?

Student Engagement and School Climate

The district is to be commended for decreasing the suspension rate overall and for nearly every student group. Eleven student groups are in the Green or Blue performance level on the Suspension rate indicator according to the California School Dashboard. Suspension rates for Foster Youth decreased by 2.6 percentage points, and Students with Disabilities decreased by 2.2 percentage points. The chronic absenteeism rate for all student groups decreased, with ten student groups decreasing significantly between the 2022-23 to 2023-24 school years. Climate surveys about school connectedness also showed improvements for nearly all student groups.

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 successes in the implementation of programs to decrease suspension rates, such as counseling and mental health services through the MTSS framework, inform how the district reinforces the implementation of other programmatic investments included in the LCAP, such as restorative practices, in a systemic manner?
- How might student voice, school climate surveys, and other qualitative sources be utilized to enhance student connectedness and belonging, specifically for student groups that did not improve in school connectedness according to 2024 survey data?

To access resources and tools that will support future LCAP development, please go to

<https://www.rcoe.us/lcap-support>.

Fiscal Recommendations

During our review we identified opportunities to improve data accuracy between the district's LCAP and fiscal documents. After board adoption, the district revised certain items which had no material impact on the implementation of the district's plan.

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 17,711 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 0.3 percent increase from the certified 2024-25 P-2 ADA. For 2026-27, the district projects a 0.2 percent decrease in ADA. For 2027-28, the district projects a 0.5 percent increase 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 2.43 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 district anticipates expenditures and uses will exceed revenues and sources by \$25.9 million in 2025-26, \$14.5 million in 2026-27, and \$12.2 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 Val Verde 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.