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OFFICE OF EDUCATION
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DATE: August 29, 2025
TO: Mr. Terrence Davis, District Superintendent
Ms. Shelly Ruiz, Board President
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Dr. Tonia Causey-Bush, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services
Banning Unified School District
FROM: Edwin Gomez, Ed.D., Riverside County Superintendent of Schools
BY: Scott Price, Ph.D. *MP* Amanda Corridan *OK*
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.

Banning 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	4,316	3,818	777	N/A	57	364	692
Enrollment Percent 2024 ¹	N/A	88.5	18.0	N/A	1.3	8.4	16.0
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-70.3	-72.4	-93.9	-146.0	-107.5	-85.4	-125.3
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-108.8	-110.6	-123.8	-194.4	-156.2	-127.6	-161.8
Science Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-23.5	-24.0	-29.3	-33.6	-32.0	-24.9	-31.8
English Learner Progress Indicator 2024 ²	N/A	N/A	32.1	31.0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate 2024 ²	86.0	86.4	75.9	76.6	*	76.9	82.4
College/Career Indicator Rate 2024 ²	19.6	19.4	6.9	8.5	*	11.5	4.5
A-G Completion Rate 2024 ²	28.0	28.5	20.7	25.5	*	21.8	7.4
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2024 ²	4.9	4.7	5.2	6.4	*	2.6	5.9
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2024 ²	27.8	28.9	20.7	23.0	36.7	41.7	35.6
Suspension Rate 2024 ²	5.7	5.8	4.6	8.1	13.3	8.3	9.7

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

Banning 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	4,316	80	152	283	36	3,237	2	387	139
Enrollment Percent 2024 ¹	N/A	1.9	3.5	6.6	0.8	75.0	0.0	9.0	3.2
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-70.3	-117.5	-50.1	-81.3	3.0	-71.6	*	-62.6	-55.1
Mathematics Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-108.8	-164.5	-93.0	-125.2	-39.0	-109.8	*	-96.2	-90.1
Science Distance from Standard 2024 ²	-23.5	-33.3	-16.7	-27.8	*	-24.1	*	-20.6	-19.1
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	86.0	*	90.9	88.2	*	85.5	*	81.0	83.3
College/Career Indicator Rate 2024 ²	19.6	*	45.5	17.6	*	18.8	*	15.8	8.3
A-G Completion Rate 2024 ²	28.0	*	54.5	41.2	*	26.7	*	23.8	16.7
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2024 ²	4.9	*	0.0	0.0	*	5.9	*	0.0	0.0
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2024 ²	27.8	40.4	12.0	26.4	14.3	28.5	*	26.1	35.7
Suspension Rate 2024 ²	5.7	12.0	2.5	11.0	0.0	5.3	*	6.5	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 commended for its ongoing efforts to improve student academic outcomes through data-driven instruction and robust support systems. Increases in graduation rates as

well as college and career readiness reflect a districtwide commitment to equity and achievement. Notable gains were seen among several student groups, including Foster Youth, Black/African American students, students of Two or More Races, and Filipino students, who demonstrated strong progress in both English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students also showed steady improvement in ELA and mathematics, indicating a broad impact at scale. Encouraging trends in science performance among Homeless Youth and Students with Disabilities suggest growing success in supporting learners who often face the greatest challenges.

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

- How might the Profile of a Learner be used to intentionally drive instructional practices and schoolwide systems to support improved academic outcomes for all students?
- How might the district identify and scale the instructional practices and learning conditions that contributed to recent academic gains among key student groups, so that all students across the district can thrive?
- How might the district identify and implement research-based strategies that meet the unique academic, social-emotional, and language development needs of Long-Term English Learners and how will the district monitor their effectiveness over time?

Student Access, Enrollment, and Success in Rigorous Coursework

The district is commended for its intentional efforts to expand access to rigorous academic and career pathways through a comprehensive, K-12 implementation of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), which supports college readiness for all students. The district's focus on equity is further reflected in its targeted support for Long-Term English Learners, ensuring these students are better positioned to access and persist in advanced coursework. Additionally, improvement in chronic absenteeism across the district supports greater participation and continuity in rigorous programs, particularly for students who have historically faced barriers to consistent engagement.

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 identify and evaluate strategies that not only increase enrollment in rigorous, career-aligned coursework, but also support sustained success, especially for students accessing these pathways for the first time?
- In what ways can collaboration among counselors, Career Technical Education (CTE) leads, academic staff, and instructional coaches be strengthened to increase A–G / CTE course completion and improve long-term outcomes for all student groups?

Student Engagement and School Climate

The district is commended for its comprehensive investment in cultivating a positive and inclusive school climate, particularly for its unduplicated student populations. The district has made measurable gains, including a 6.9 percent drop in chronic absenteeism and a 2.2 percent

reduction in suspensions, with notable improvements at Banning High and Cabazon Elementary. Proactive efforts, such as implementing tiered supports, expanding mental health services, launching Alternatives to Suspension, and increasing access to enrichment activities, reflect a strong commitment to student engagement and wellness. The use of the Panorama survey to assess school connectedness, combined with rising sports participation and parent volunteerism, highlights growing community involvement. Additionally, strategic staffing and site-based funding empower educators and support culturally-responsive, whole-child practices across the district.

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 measure the impact of specific initiatives, such as mental health supports, a Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN), or Alternative to Suspension programs, on student outcomes such as belonging, connectedness, and attendance?
- How might input from students, families, and the community, particularly those representing unduplicated youth, be gathered through both quantitative and qualitative methods to inform the root causes of chronic absenteeism and suspension, and to co-design strategies that strengthen school climate and engagement?

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 3,917 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 0.3 percent decrease from the certified 2024-25 P-2 ADA. For 2026-27, the district projects a 0.7 percent decrease in ADA. For 2027-28, the district projects a 0.3 percent decrease 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, 3.02 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 \$1.4 million in 2025-26, \$1.5 million in 2026-27, and \$1.0 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 30, 2025, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations continue with the classified bargaining unit 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.

Subsequent to the district’s Adopted Budget reporting, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations are complete with the certificated bargaining unit for the 2025-26 fiscal year.

Reserve for Economic Uncertainties – The minimum state-required reserve for a district of Banning Unified School District’s size is 3.0 percent; however the governing board requires the district maintain a 4.5 percent reserve for economic uncertainties. In light of the current fiscal environment, our office recommends districts maintain reserves higher than the minimum and commends the district’s board for this fiscally prudent practice. The district projects to meet the minimum-reserve requirement, and board-required reserve, 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

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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.