Initial Questions to Consider in Developing a Local Control and Accountability Plan[1]

Given the flexibility offered through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) development process, educators and community leaders can reflect on and continuously improve local practice. The challenging and hopefully invigorating work to develop and implement a coherent, effective, locally based educational strategy under the new funding system may be informed by some initial questions as districts and communities consider this important work.

Vision and priorities

The Local Control and Accountability Plans required under the new funding system ask districts (in consultation with the community) to articulate a vision and priorities for improving student outcomes:

- What is the vision (of teachers, principals, district officials and community leaders) for educating students? How do state and local priorities, under the local accountability plan, fit into that vision?
- What data should be reviewed to assess progress on each of the state and local priority areas?
- What is the evidence that particular approaches will have a measurable, positive impact on the state and local priorities that have been identified?
- What strategies could be put into place to ensure district and school site goals are aligned?

Making community-wide commitments

LCFF represents an opportunity to further build and strengthen commitments between districts and the community on behalf of students.

- Who are the local leaders that can help be a voice for students and represent diverse perspectives, including youth, parents, educators, business leaders, underserved populations, faith-based communities, elected officials, civic and community organizations and the media?
- What commitments are these leaders willing to make to help support student success and what support do they need to allow them to effectively engage?
- What type of commitments is the district willing to make to maintain and strengthen these partnerships on behalf of student success (e.g., holding regular forums, ensuring materials are presented in a way that supports effective community engagement, identifying staff liaisons)?

Assessing resources

Coming off of years of dramatic cuts in public education, it is important to begin rebuilding. Making strategic, transparent investments with the resources under the new finance system will be critical to building and maintaining public trust and restoring and improving services and infrastructure:

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[1] EdSource: Local Control Funding Formula: Is there a new rulebook?

- Do the district's existing expenditures align with the state priorities, and any local priorities, outlined in the local accountability plan? How will one-time Common Core funding for technology, professional development and instructional materials be spent? How do these investments align with the local accountability plan?
- Once the State Budget proposal for 2014-15 is released in January 2014, what additional resources does the district expect to receive from the state in the form of base funding for all students and additional supplemental and concentration dollars generated by low-income students, English learners and foster youth?
- What portion of the funding that would be received for the 2014-15 budget year is already obligated (e.g., reserve levels, collective bargaining agreements, addressing structural deficits, restricted routine maintenance)? This is important to know so it is clear how much money is actually available for other purposes.
- What is the cost for providing new, or augmenting existing, programs, services and strategies? Which student populations will benefit from these approaches?

Process for community engagement

The new funding system requires districts to engage the community in the creation of their local accountability plans, which can help support effective planning and partnerships between districts and community leaders.

- What process will be put in place to solicit feedback from community members at the district and individual school site levels?
- What is the timeline for this process?