

AGENDA

ASSEMBLY BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE No. 2 ON EDUCATION FINANCE

ASSEMBLYMEMBER KEVIN McCARTY, CHAIR

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2021

2:30 P.M. OR UPON ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION
STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 4202

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 safety considerations, including guidance on physical distancing, seating for this hearing will be very limited for the press and for the public. All are encouraged to watch the hearing from its live stream on the Assembly's website at <https://assembly.ca.gov/todayevents>.

We encourage the public to provide written testimony before the hearing. Please send your written testimony to: BudgetSub2@asm.ca.gov. Please note that any written testimony submitted to the committee is considered public comment and may be read into the record or reprinted.

A moderated telephone line will be available to assist with public participation. The public may provide comment by calling the following toll-free number: 877-692-8957, access code: 131 54 202.

INFORMATIONAL HEARING TK-12 GOVERNOR'S BUDGET PROPOSALS

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- Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, Chair
- Committee Members

II. State of Student Outcomes & Education Systems Change

- Dr. Heather Hough, PACE
- Dr. Thomas Armelino, The California Collaborative for Education Excellence

III. Items to Be Heard: 6100 California Department of Education

- Issue One: Distance Learning Implementation
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IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

ITEMS TO BE HEARD

6100 CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic-related recession, school closures, and trauma has had a marked impact on California's students, and these impacts are at the forefront of many significant one-time proposals for TK-12 public education in the Governor's January Budget. This hearing will provide an overview of the one-time proposals intended to improve student outcomes and wellbeing.

ISSUE 1: DISTANCE LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION

The 2020-21 Budget Act, and its education trailer bills (SB 98, SB 820) authorized the minimum standards for schools providing Distance Learning during pandemic school closures. These standards and authority for Distance Learning sunset June 2021. This panel will review the implementation of Distance Learning standards to date.

PANEL

The following individuals will participate virtually in the discussion of this issue:

- Amber Alexander, DOF
- Amy Li, LAO
- Elly Garner, CDE

BACKGROUND

2020-21 Budget Act Oversight

Significant policy was included in the Budget deal to support short-term distance learning and the safe re-opening of school campuses for small student cohorts, hybrid instructional models (a combination of in-person and distance learning), and comprehensive in-person instruction.

Major 2020-21 items relevant to the larger Proposition 98 discussion in the Budget Year included:

- \$5.53 billion in one-time discretionary federal funds and General Fund for one-time COVID closure impacts on schools and children:
 - \$1.5B to all local educational agencies (LEAs), based on Special Education enrollment for Learning Loss

- \$2.9B to all LEAs, based on Local Control funding formula (LCFF) Supplemental and Concentration grant formulas for Learning Loss
 - \$980 million to all LEAs, based on the total LCFF formula
 - \$6m for professional development via the UC Subject Matter projects.
- \$1.4B in one-time federal ESSER funds directly to LEAs based on mandatory Title I allocation.
- Maintained instructional day requirements but allowed flexibility for instructional minutes in 2020-21 School Year, including a minimum day standard for instructional minutes.
- Defined Distance Learning and created 2020-21 Continuity of Learning and Attendance plans, as part of annual Local Control Accountability Plan process.
- Adopted short-term fiscal flexibilities, including: increased LEA inter-fund borrowing allowances, sale of surplus LEA property for one-time spending purposes, exclusion of on-behalf pension payments from the Routine Restricted Maintenance Account requirements, and extended audit timelines.

Distance Learning Standards

The Budget Act defined Distance Learning and allowed it to replace in-person instruction LEA-wide as a result public health guidance, or based on an individual student's health needs.

Distance Learning is required to have the following:

- Confirmation or provision of all materials students need to access Distance Learning program.
- Content aligned to grade level standards and substantially equivalent to in-person instruction.
- Academic and other supports designed to address the needs of pupils who are not performing at grade level, or need support in other areas.
- Special education, related services, and any other services required by a pupil's individualized education program.
- Designated and integrated instruction in English language development for English language learners.
- Daily live interaction between students and certificated employees and peers.
- Nutritionally adequate meals for pupils who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals, whether engaged in in-person instruction or distance learning.
- An adopted Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan.
- Compulsory education requirements.
- In-person instruction to the greatest extent possible.

- Minimum instructional days.
- Documented daily pupil participation, absences, and chronic absences.
- A weekly pupil engagement record.
- A written procedure for re-engaging chronically absent pupils, including pupil contact information, daily parent notification, plans for determining pupil needs, and transitioning pupils to in-person instruction.
- Communication regularly with parents/guardians on pupil academic progress.

Learning Continuity and Attendance Plans

The Budget Act required LEAs utilizing Distance Learning in 2020-21 to adopt a Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan that demonstrates how the LEA will:

- Provide continuity of instruction during the school year to ensure pupils have access to a full curriculum of substantially similar quality regardless of the method of delivery.
- Ensure access to devices and connectivity for all pupils to support distance learning whenever it occurs.
- Measure participation and assess pupil progress through live contacts and synchronous instructional minutes, as well as how the time value of pupil work will be measured.
- Provide professional development and resources to staff to support the provision of distance learning, including technological support.
- Explain, to the extent that staff roles and responsibilities change because of COVID-19, what the new roles and responsibilities of affected staff will be.
- Provide additional supports for pupils with unique needs, including for English learners, pupils with exceptional needs, pupils in foster care, and homeless pupils.
- Address pupil learning loss that results from COVID-19 during the 2019–20 and 2020–21 school years.
- Monitor and support the mental health and social and emotional well-being of pupils and staff during the school year.
- Provide professional development to staff, and supports to pupils and staff to address trauma and other impacts of COVID-19 on the school community.
- Provide pupil engagement and outreach, including the procedures of the LEA for tiered reengagement strategies, for compulsory education requirements, and when the LEA determines a pupil is not engaging in instruction and is at risk of learning loss.
- Provide meals for pupils who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, for pupils participating in both in-person instruction and distance learning.

Distance Learning Fiscal Accountability. In addition to the average daily attendance (ADA) hold harmless, LEA ADA was impacted in the Budget Act for non-compliance with pandemic-related policy in the Budget Act to create the state's Distance Learning standards. Comprehensive Distance Learning standards included minimum instructional minutes and days, daily live interaction, digital/technology provision, grade-level content, academic and other supports for pupils not performing at grade level, special education services as required, meals,

weekly instructional engagement records, communication with parents regarding academic progress, absence reporting, and tiered re-engagement for chronic absentees. Per statute, the 2020-21 Audit Guide will provide accountability via apportionment penalties for the following new requirements:

- Compulsory education requirements.
- Offering in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible.
- Offering minimum instructional days.
- Documenting daily pupil participation, absences, and chronic absences.
- Completing a weekly pupil engagement record.
- Developing a written procedure for re-engaging chronically absent pupils, including pupil contact information, daily parent notification, plans for determining pupil needs, and transitioning pupils to in-person instruction.
- Communicating regularly with parents/guardians on pupil academic progress.

The 2020-21 Audit Guide provisions for Distance Learning have not yet been finalized.

Governor's 2021-22 January Budget

The January Budget assumes in-person instruction will be the default for the 2021-22 school year, and does not include new or extended proposals for Distance Learning fiscal or programmatic policy. All existing Distance Learning education code will expire July 1, 2021.

STAFF COMMENTS & QUESTIONS

Distance Learning in 2021-22 and beyond? The Administration is not proposing to extend the statutory authority and flexibilities for Distance Learning in the January Budget, but has expressed a commitment to working with the Legislature on the need to adopt frameworks for out-of-classroom instruction beyond the Distance Learning sunset.

To the extent Distance Learning authority could be beneficial for LEAs facing a crisis beyond the current sunset, for calamities including wildfires, earthquakes, or pandemics, action will be necessary in the current year to prevent a gap in authority and standards. This authority may need to go beyond instructional standards and also consider fiscal flexibilities.

Additionally, while the nation hopes for a near-term end to the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to support individual fragile or quarantined students' access to their public education via Distance Learning may remain in the Budget Year and beyond.

Questions:

- What happens if all Distance Learning standards expire at the end of the 2020-21 FY and individual student quarantine or school campus closures remain an intermittent reality in the 2021-22 school year?
- What provisions of Distance Learning standards need clarification or strengthening, if authority were to continue into the 2021-22 school year?
- How is the Audit Guide going to examine whether LEAs offered “in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible” as required in statute?

Staff Recommendation: Anticipate revisiting this issue following May Revision.

ISSUE 2: TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN PROPOSALS

The January Budget proposes significant one-time investments to support LEAs in the expansion of Universal Transitional Kindergarten (TK) across the state. This panel will review the proposals for TK and kindergarten facilities, workforce development, and TK access expansion.

PANEL

The following individuals will participate virtually in the discussion of this issue:

- Sarah Burtner, DOF
- Jennifer Kaku, DOF
- Sara Cortez, LAO
- Elly Garner, CDE
- Sarah Neville-Morgan, CDE

BACKGROUND**Transitional Kindergarten**

Transitional Kindergarten (TK). SB 1381 (Simitian, 2010) enacted the “Kindergarten Readiness Act” and established the transitional kindergarten (TK) program, beginning phased implementation in 2012-13, for children who turn five between September 2 and December 2. TK is defined in statute as the first year of a two-year kindergarten program that uses a modified, age and developmentally appropriate curriculum. It is intended to be aligned with California Preschool Learning Foundations developed by the California Department of Education. Each elementary or unified school district must offer TK and kindergarten for all eligible children. TK is funded based on ADA through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) allocation. In 2018-19, 91,000 students in California were enrolled in TK. In addition to an elementary teaching credential, starting August 2021, TK teachers are required to have either 24 units in early childhood education and/or child development, a child development permit, or comparable experience in a classroom setting.

Early Transitional Kindergarten. Starting in the 2015-16 school year, local education agencies (LEAs) were allowed to enroll children in TK that do not meet the age criteria if they will turn five by the end of the school year. However, these students do not generate state funding until they turn five. LEAs are not required to provide early TK, and if they do, they are allowed to set their own age criteria. Uptake of this optional program varies widely, and CalPADS does not capture this enrollment data.

Preschool for four-year-olds. Currently, four-year-olds are served by a mixture of State Preschool (for income-eligible students) and early TK (if provided). In 2018-19, 143,000 three- and four-year-olds were enrolled in State Preschool. Four-year-olds make up approximately 63 percent of that enrollment. Aside from income eligibility, these programs vary in other ways, including teacher credentialing requirements and length of school day (see table below). Income-eligible four-year-olds may enroll in either preschool or TK due to a combination of factors, including availability of early TK in their area, and available State Preschool slots.

	Transitional Kindergarten	State Preschool
Age	Four-year olds with birthdays between September 2 and December 2, with option to serve some younger students.	Three- and four-year olds.
Income Eligibility	None.	A family of three must generally earn at or below \$73,885.
Program Duration	Must operate at least 180 days per year, at least three hours per day but determined by district.	Must operate at least 246 days per year, 6.5 hours per day for full-day program; at least 175 days per year, 3 hours per day for part-day program.
Work Requirement	None.	None for the part-day program. Working families are prioritized for the full-day program.
Staffing Ratio	1 to 33 maximum teacher-child ratio.	1 to 24 maximum teacher-child ratio and 1 to 8 maximum adult-child ratio.
Funding Source	Proposition 98 General Fund.	Proposition 98 and Non-Proposition 98 General Fund.
Providers	School districts.	School districts, county offices of education, community colleges, and community-based organizations.
Teacher Requirements	Bachelor's degree, multiple subject teaching credential, and a Child Development Teacher Permit or at least 24 units of ECE/CD or comparable experience. ^a	Child Development Teacher Permit (24 units of ECE/CD plus 16 general education units).

^a Child Development requirements effective August 1, 2021.
ECE/CD = Early Childhood Education/Child Development.

Source: Legislative Analyst's Office

The Governor's recently published Master Plan on Early Learning and Care set a goal to provide all income-eligible three-year-olds and all four-year-olds with preschool options prior to kindergarten, with an improved TK program as the foundation of early learning and care services for all four-year olds, and CSPP as the base of early learning and care for income-eligible three-year olds

TK Quality. A longitudinal study by the American Institutes for Research concluded "TK is effective for all groups of students who participated. It showed a particularly notable impact on language skills for English learners and mathematics skills for low-income students at kindergarten entry." TK students were found to out-perform peers whom had "some preschool" prior to kindergarten enrollment. The same study found a wide range of quality standards for TK classrooms, including length of school day, student-to-adult ratios and age-appropriate curriculum.

Most local educational agencies provide a four-hour or longer Transitional Kindergarten program. A report submitted by the California Department of Education, *“Kindergarten in California: Implementation Evaluation of Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten Public School Programs in California,”* approximately 69 percent of California’s five-year-olds with birthdays between September 2 and December 2—and who were thus eligible for Transitional Kindergarten—were enrolled in Transitional Kindergarten during the 2015-16 school year. More than half of the state’s Transitional Kindergarten students (57 percent) were categorized as socioeconomically disadvantaged and 36 percent were English learners.

Full-day kindergarten (FDK) facilities grants. The 2018-19 budget provided \$100 million in one-time non-Proposition 98 General Fund for the Full-Day Kindergarten Facilities Grant Program, in order to address unique kindergarten classroom facility needs that may be inhibiting LEAs from offering full day kindergarten. The Office of Public School Construction, with approval by the State Allocation Board, allocated grants to LEAs for schools that did not have enough classroom space to provide FDK or had an existing FDK space that did not meet regulations. Priority for the grants was provided to districts with financial hardship or districts that have a high population of low-income students. The grants required a local match of 50 percent of the cost of new construction and 40 percent of the cost of renovation, except for those districts that met the financial hardship requirements. Applicants had to provide anticipated and three preceding years of kindergarten enrollment data to verify need for new construction. Participation in the Full-Day Kindergarten Facilities Grant Program did not impact a school district’s participation in the School Facilities Grant Program.

According to the Office of Public School Construction, LEAs submitted a total of \$405 million in applications for this FDK program. In the 2019-20 Budget Act, another \$300 million in funding was provided to support three additional rounds of grants. However, this money was rescinded in the 2020-21 Budget Act in anticipation of a COVID-19 recessionary impact on the overall State Budget.

Governor’s 2021-22 January Budget

The Governor’s proposal includes three sources of one-time funding intended to expand LEA’s voluntary TK offerings for young learners: \$250 million Prop 98 funding for an incentive grant program for early TK, \$50 million Prop 98 for a TK and kindergarten teacher training program, and \$200 million General Fund for expanding the FDK facility program to include TK expansion.

The California Transitional Kindergarten Incentive Grant Program. The proposed budget includes \$250 million one-time Proposition 98 General Fund to provide grants to LEAs that increase early access to transitional kindergarten, to help them cover up-front costs associated with expanding programs. Schools would plan and apply in 2021-22, and funding would be released in 2022-23 and 2023-24. Grants would be distributed through a competitive process, prioritizing schools that plan to increase early TK enrollment, serve a high proportion of dual language learners, have a plan to create inclusive classrooms, and the ability to connect the TK program with extended-day services. Selected LEAs would receive funding based on the amount

of increased TK enrollment between 2021-22 and 2022-23. The funding would be equivalent to half of the LCFF rate for each additional early TK student. Schools that achieve their early TK expansion goals would be eligible for additional funding in 2023-24, depending on availability of funds.

Early Education Professional Development Grants Program. The Governor's budget includes \$50 million one-time Proposition 98 General Fund to support the preparation of transitional kindergarten teachers and provide both transitional kindergarten and kindergarten teachers with training in providing instruction in inclusive classrooms, support for English language learners, social-emotional learning, trauma-informed practices, restorative practices, and mitigating implicit biases. The funding is one-time in nature but will be available for encumbrance through 2023-24 and available for expenditure until 2027. Grants would be allocated to LEAs through a competitive process. LEAs applying would need to demonstrate a need for TK teachers or TK or kindergarten development, a plan to create inclusive classrooms, and the ability to connect the TK program with extended-day services. Additional priority factors are similar to those for the incentive grants program and include the proportion of dual language learners, children with disabilities, or children in special education served by the LEA, as well as the proportion of full-day kindergarten programs, among others. Allowable uses for these funds include both direct educational costs such as tuition, stipends, supplies, or coaching, as well as incident costs such as transportation, childcare, and substitute teacher pay. The proposal does not require a particular program.

Facilities Funding for TK and FDK. The proposed budget includes \$200 million one-time General Fund for school districts to construct new facilities or retrofit existing facilities to support TK. The program is based on the Full-Day Kindergarten Facilities Grant Program described above. Grants would be competitive, and the allocation process would be the same as described for FDK, except that in the first year, priority will be given to LEAs intending to offer and expand TK programs. Further priority will then be given to LEAs qualifying for financial hardship and then LEAs with high populations receiving free or reduced-price lunch. After the first year, priority will be given to LEAs intending to either offer and expand TK programs or convert a part-day kindergarten program to a full-day kindergarten program.

LAO Comments:

TK versus State Preschool. The Legislature has historically taken action to expand access to preschool. The Governor's proposal differs from recent legislative action by expanding access through TK instead of State Preschool. In addition, expanding TK could significantly affect State Preschool enrollment. In some cases, capacity may simply shift from preschool to TK, rather than increasing overall capacity, especially in school districts that currently use classrooms on elementary school campuses for State Preschool. Whether the Legislature wants to expand preschool access through the State Preschool or TK depends on its own specific goals. For example, if the Legislature wants to offer one year of public preschool to all students, then TK could be a better path to expansion. The state could use school district catchment areas as a way to ensure that all eligible children have access to a TK program. If the Legislature wants to

offer preschool to three- and four-year-olds from low-income families, then the State Preschool program could be a better path to expansion. Either way, clarifying the role of State Preschool program and making associated programmatic changes would ensure the state's existing programs operate in alignment to best serve children and their families.

TK Expansion Requires Ongoing Funding. School districts expanding TK likely would incur some one-time costs, such as making facilities suitable for TK instruction, helping additional teachers meet the statutory requirements for TK teachers, and making programmatic changes as alluded to in the Governor's master plan. However, most of the costs associated with TK (such as paying for additional teachers) are ongoing. Under the Governor's proposal it is unclear how school districts would sustain programs after 2023-24, when the proposed one-time incentive grants expire. Furthermore, based on our conversations with several school districts, limited-term funding is unlikely to be an incentive for school districts to expand their TK programs. A much greater incentive to achieve universal preschool for four-year-olds would be to allow school districts to generate a full year of attendance-based funding for children born after December 2, including children who turn five after the school year ends. At full implementation, we estimate this approach would cost roughly \$3 billion more than current spending on TK. Based on the administration's multi-year outlook and associated projections of the Proposition 98 minimum guarantee—and accounting for changes in attendance and cost of living—we think the state would be able to cover the costs of TK expansion within growth in the minimum guarantee. Were the state to take such an approach, however, it likely would be unable to cover the cost of any other major ongoing programmatic K-12 augmentations during the forecast period.

STAFF COMMENTS & QUESTIONS

On-going vs One-time Funding

Under the Administration's proposal, the TK incentive grant funding would be equivalent to half of the LCFF rate for each additional early TK student enrolled during the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. This one-time reimbursement would at least cover the additional costs to the LEA for new TK students during this two-year period.

However, as the LAO notes, the proposal does not address funding sustainability beyond 2023-24, and this potential disincentive for LEAs to make a significant expansion in TK without a long-term funding a policy plan.

The 2021-22 Budget Year may present unique circumstances to promote a long-term TK policy and plan: according to the LAO, in addition to the robust nature of the Test One calculation for Proposition 98, an expansion of TK enrollment's cost could be offset by decreasing the Proposition 2-required deposit, because an increase in TK enrollment would impact the Rainy Day Fund formula's adjustment for changes in the percentage of student attendance. Further,

enormous pandemic-related enrollment decreases may negatively impact individual LEA ADA & LCFF calculations in future years, encouraging voluntary TK expansion.

Full-Day K vs Transitional Kindergarten Expansion

The 2018-19 Budget Act investments in full-day kindergarten facilities was intended as a critical first step toward a long-term Legislative goal to achieve full-day and mandatory kindergarten in all LEAs, for all students. Interest in the FDK facilities program indicates willingness by LEAs to expand their FDK offerings. This Budget proposal raises the question of how the Legislature and Administration want to balance both goals of TK and FDK expansion.

TK vs State Preschool

As the LAO notes, an expansion of TK is a major policy shift from prior Legislative commitments to expand the California State Preschool Program to all eligible four-year olds. The Governor's Master Plan addresses this shift's importance in detail. However, reliance on TK as the base of every Californian four-year old's early learning and child care opportunities, is a complex policy and funding consideration. A careful examination and approach to increasing TK access and child care access simultaneously will be crucial for the stability of the state's child care system and parent choice, and the quality of student opportunities.

Questions:

- One of the requirements of the incentive grant program is a plan for a financially sustainable, ongoing TK program. How will the LEAs do that using one-time funding?
- The TK Incentive Grant program would prioritize LEAs who connect students to expanded learning and care options. How does the Administration intend to facilitate this in the child care policy?
- In light of significant declining enrollment, how many LEAs would potentially be interested in expanding prior to 2022-23, and could the Administration's proposals facilitate an earlier local initiative?
- In light of LAO finding that Rainy Day funds could support Budget Year TK ADA growth, could the Administration expand voluntary TK expansion in 2021-22?
- Current statute tasks TK teachers with additional ECE preparation requirements, compared to any other multi-subject credential teacher. Is this the best long-term credentialing approach to early grade teaching competencies?
- The January Budget has multiple teacher professional development investments in various areas. How should LEAs be approaching these individual funding streams systemically?

Staff Recommendation: Hold Open for May Revise, as part of the overall Proposition 98 package.

ISSUE 3: COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The 2020-21 Budget Act included foundational investments in Community School models. This panel will review the January Budget proposals to expand prior year investments.

PANEL

The following individuals will participate virtually in the discussion of this issue:

- Liz Mai, DOF
- Michael Alferes, LAO
- Elly Garner, CDE

BACKGROUND**2020-21 Budget Act Community Schools Program**

The final 2020-21 Budget Act authorized the California Community Schools Partnership Program grants and appropriated \$45 million in one-time federal relief aid from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund, with the intent to support existing Community School models during the COVID-19 pandemic.

School districts, county offices of education, and charter schools, excluding non-classroom-based charter schools, are eligible to apply for the Program, and awards are expected in February 2021.

According to CDE and the Budget Act, grant funding may be used for any of the following purposes:

- Expanding and sustaining existing community schools
- Coordinating and providing health, mental health, and pupil support services to pupils and families at community schools
- Providing training and support to local educational agencies (LEAs) personnel to help develop best practices for integrating pupil supports.

Applicants are also required to include four key pillars in their community school model, which are aligned and integrated into high-quality, rigorous teaching and learning practices and environments:

- Integrated support services;
- Family and community engagement;
- Collaborative leadership and practices for educators and administrators; and
- Extended learning time and opportunities.

In addition, CDE recommends that an LEA application should also include strategies to address learning loss and support student-centered learning, based on research findings outlined as ‘the science of learning and development.’ These include, but are not limited to, the following: student engagement, social-emotional learning, trauma-informed approaches, peer-to-peer support, positive school climate, and ‘just-in-time’ academic and social-emotional supports.

According to CDE, 102 LEAs have applied for this program, for a total of \$167.5m in funding.

Governor’s 2021-21 January Budget

The January Budget provides an additional \$265.2 million of one-time Proposition 98 to expand the Community Schools grants program, as authorized in the 2020-21 Budget Act, and would expand the Program to support the establishment of new community schools in addition to expanding and enhancing existing community school models.

According to the DOF, these new grants are meant to be one-time funds to help schools with the initial expansion or start-up costs.

Prior Community School Investments

The Healthy Start Support Services for Children Act (Healthy Start Initiative) was established in 1991 through SB 620, and provided comprehensive, school-community integrated services and activities to improve the lives of children, youth, and families. The services included health, dental, and vision care; mental health counseling; family support and parenting education; academic support; health education; safety education and violence prevention; youth development; employment preparation; and others—serving as the seed funding for most existing Community School models in California. The Healthy Start Initiative provided grants to local education agency partnerships for program development and implementation. Schools with 50 percent of the students eligible for free and reduced meals in the lower grades, and 35 percent eligible in middle through high schools were eligible for the competitive grant. In addition, English learners were a targeted population. Planning, operational, and combined grants that included planning and implementation activities were awarded to local educational agencies and their collaborative partners for locally coordinated, school-linked services.

The Healthy Start Initiative was designed to do the following:

- Ensure that each child receives the physical, emotional, and intellectual support that he or she needs-in school, at home, and in the community-to learn well.
- Build the capacity of students and parents to be participants, leaders, and decision-makers in their communities.
- Help schools and other child and family-serving agencies to recognize, streamline and integrate their programs to provide more effective support to children and their families.

The CDE administered Healthy Start and awarded two- year planning, five year operational, and seven-year combined planning and operational grants to LEAs. Healthy Starts developed

community partnerships with public and private partners to deliver coordinated physical and mental health services to children and their families. These services were provided to students at the school site or at other district locations. After the Healthy Start grants expired, LEAs were expected to sustain the partnerships, programs, and services through other funding sources.

State funding for the Health Start Initiative funding was eliminated in 2007. Some community school models found other funding sources to maintain services, including MediCal LEA billing (MAA), local First 5 funding, and other local health and community partnership funding. A total of 823 Healthy Start planning grants, 651 operational grants, and 19 combined grants were awarded during the Initiative's existence, impacting over 1,500 school sites.

STAFF COMMENTS & QUESTIONS

Lessons Learned from Healthy Start

A 1996 longitudinal evaluation of the Healthy Start Initiative, conducted by Stanford Research Institute International (SRI) found improved student outcomes in reading, math, and student attendance. The SRI evaluation also recommended five policy changes to Healthy Start to strengthen the program: 1) Better integration of student services with direct instruction, 2) Inclusion of parents and families in decision-making bodies, 3) Greater support for coordination time to manage and lead local initiatives and partnerships, 4) Better follow-up for student service integration into a comprehensive service plan, and 5) Recognize the trade-offs between single-school and multiple-school LEA approaches in systems-change goals.

A 2011 white paper by the UC Davis Center for Community School Partnerships, CRESS Center (the original Healthy Start Initiative technical assistance provider) and the Partnership for Children and Youth, made further recommendations to strengthen the original Healthy Start model for future Community School initiatives: 1) Limit grant funding to planning and coordination, rather than services; 2) Require LEA commitment beyond single-site models, 3) Encourage greater involvement from county health and human service agencies, 4) Require more intentional integration of plans for providing learning support services in to the educational systems at the school and district levels, and 5) Provide guidelines for tracking outcomes. They further recommend two state-level improvements to support local models: 1) a state-level "Children's Cabinet" to improve interagency partnering at the state level, and 2) state guidance around best practices for local interagency partnerships.

Effective Community School Policies

According to the *Community School Playbook*, published in partnership with the Learning Policy Institute and the Partnership for the Future of Learning: Community Schools are a place-based school improvement strategy in which "schools partner with community agencies and local government to provide an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement." The *Playbook* details four key pillars in the success of Community School models: 1) Integrated student supports 2) Expanded learning

time and opportunities 3) Family and community engagement 4) Collaborative leadership and practices, which shaped the 2020-21 Budget investment.

The *Playbook* provides further recommendations for policymakers, particularly relevant to supporting new community school development:

- Define community schools comprehensively, organized around four pillars;
- Specify the criteria by which schools will be selected for grants and other types of support;
- Provide specific language about the purpose of the four pillars, while allowing for flexibility in local implementation;
- Build a strong foundation by specifying key aspects of implementation, including hiring a fulltime community school director for each school, broad and deep engagement in an assessment/ planning process, and regular reporting around implementation and outcome metrics;
- Support school transformation strategies aimed at improving teaching and learning, rather than simply focusing on out-of-classroom supports and activities;
- Invest in professional development to support collaborative leadership structures and practices and to encourage and facilitate cross-agency collaboration;
- Identify a leadership structure and clearly defined next steps, including—where there will be more than one community school—language specifying a cross-sector steering committee or implementation team and a clear articulation of its authority. Baltimore and Los Angeles provide the best examples of this type of language;
- Ensure the participation of teachers, families, and communities at every stage of the process;
- Address issues of interagency collaboration, including data sharing with appropriate privacy protections;
- Specify which entities will need to be involved for successful local implementation; and
- Invest in professional development to support continuous improvement, the process that follows the broad and deep engagement in an assessment/planning process.

Questions:

- What technical assistance infrastructure has CDE developed for supporting the expansion and sustainability of the Community Schools model?
- What lessons-learned from the Healthy Start initiative and other community school research should be added to the Community Schools program to support student outcomes and sustainability?
- What funding amount is sufficient for planning and operational support for interested LEAs over a four year timeline, if long-term sustainability is the goal?
- Should funding student or community services be allowable during the full term of the grant, based on Healthy Start and Community School sustainability recommendations?

Staff Recommendation: Hold Open for May Revise, as part of the overall Proposition 98 package.

ISSUE 4: SCHOOL MEDI-CAL BILLING**PANEL**

The following individuals will participate virtually in the discussion of this issue:

- Panelist: Liz Mai, DOF
- Panelist: Amy Li, LAO
- Panelist: Elly Garner, CDE

BACKGROUND

School-Based Medi-Cal Billing Program. Schools have the option to seek partial reimbursement for some health-related services from Medi-Cal—the state’s health care program for low-income residents—through the school-based Medi-Cal billing program. Because Medi-Cal is jointly funded by the state and federal government, greater participation from schools allows the state to bring in additional federal funds. Eligible services through the Medi-Cal billing program include counseling, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and transportation related to these services. Previously, schools were primarily eligible to be reimbursed for services provided to students receiving special education who also were enrolled in Medi-Cal. A recent program change approved April 2020, however, expands coverage to include all Medi-Cal enrolled students. Low participation has been a longstanding issue, as only about half of California’s school districts participate in the Medi-Cal billing program. A recent analysis by WestEd showed that California received a low rate of federal reimbursement per Medi-Cal enrolled student in 2014-15 compared to other states—suggesting substantial opportunities to draw down additional federal funds for student services.

The Medicaid LEA Billing Option Program (LEA BOP), the School-Based Medi-Cal Administrative Activities program (MAA) program are California’s formalized school-based Medicaid claiming and reimbursement programs. These programs allow LEAs to receive partial federal reimbursement for direct medical services and associated administrative costs. The LEA BOP and the MAA program can be administered directly by school districts.

The LEA BOP is a reimbursement program in which LEAs (school districts, COEs, charter schools, SELPAs, and community colleges) can bill for covered services provided by qualified providers or contracted practitioners after the service has occurred and has been paid for by the LEA . To participate in the LEA BOP, LEAs must enroll through the DHCS as a Medicaid Provider (DHCS 2018b).

The MAA program offers a way for LEAs and state agencies to obtain federal reimbursement for the cost of certain administrative activities that are necessary for the proper and efficient administration of school-based Medicaid. The program allows LEAs in California to claim administrative activities, costs that are otherwise not allowable for claiming under the LEA BOP

or other Medicaid programs because they are not direct Medicaid services. The MAA program includes activities such as referring students and families to enroll in Medicaid and coordinating Medicaid services between agencies.

2019-20 Budget Package Established the Medi-Cal Billing Work Group. In response to low participation in the school-based Medi-Cal billing program, the 2019-20 budget package provided \$500,000 one-time General Fund for the California Department of Education (CDE) to convene two interagency work groups—one of which was to focus on Medi-Cal billing and include the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). The work group is tasked with providing recommendations to the Legislature, by October 1, 2021, to improve LEA access to the Medi-Cal billing program. The work group's interim report released in October 2020 identified several barriers to program participation, including the lack of interagency collaboration between CDE and DHCS, challenging documentation and billing system requirements, a high share of claims being disallowed, and limited state-led training and support.

Governor's Budget Proposal:

The Governor's budget includes two proposals related to the school-based Medicaid billing:

- \$5 million one-time Proposition 98 General Fund to fund two or more LEAs, that are providers in the LEA BOP program and demonstrate a history of receiving federal reimbursement for health related assessments and services through the LEA BOP program to establish professional learning networks designed to:
 - Support local educational agencies in establishing the infrastructure and partnerships needed to enable successful participation in the Local Educational Agency Medi-Cal Billing Option Program.
 - Define common characteristics and best practices of local educational agencies that are successful in submitting claims through the Local Educational Agency Medi-Cal Billing Option Program and drawing down federal reimbursement for Medi-Cal services.
 - Provide peer-to-peer learning opportunities and create capacity for local educational agencies to become self-sustaining and secure federal reimbursement for services provided to Medi-Cal eligible students.
- \$250,000 in ongoing Proposition 98 for an LEA to provide guidance for Medi-Cal billing within the statewide system of support. The selected LEA shall demonstrate success in submitting claims through the LEA BOP program and drawing down federal reimbursement for Medi-Cal services and a willingness and capacity to do all of the following:
 - Provide effective assistance and support to local educational agencies in securing federal reimbursement for services provided to Medi-Cal eligible students.

- Work in coordination and collaboration with expert lead agencies identified pursuant to Section 52073.1, special education resource leads identified pursuant to Section 52073.2, the Department of Education, and the Department of Health Care Services, and the Medi-Cal professional learning networks (described above).
- Identify and disseminate information around existing resources, professional development activities, and other efforts currently available to assist local educational agencies in successfully submitting claims through the LEA BOP program and drawing down federal reimbursement for Medi-Cal services.
- Upon request by the Department of Education and the Department of Health Care Services, develop new resources and activities designed to build capacity for local educational agencies to secure federal reimbursement for services provided to Medi-Cal eligible students.
- Serve as a point of contact for local educational agencies, and regularly participate and share the perspectives of local educational agencies in the LEA Program Advisory Workgroup convened by the Department of Health Care Services.
- Other duties as prescribed by the State Department of Education, to enhance Medi-Cal services on school sites, increase access of care for students, and increase Medi-Cal reimbursement for local educational agencies

LAO Comments:

Given Upcoming Work Group Recommendations, Medi-Cal Billing Proposals Are Premature. The final work group recommendations expected in October will likely include a set of policy changes aimed at increasing access and participation in the Medi-Cal billing program. It is unclear whether the Governor's proposals would be an effective complement to these recommendations. For instance, the interim report highlights that DHCS has limited staff designated to the Medi-Cal billing program, and CDE has no formal role in providing technical assistance. Given the complexity of program requirements and the recent expansion to include all Medi-Cal enrolled students, having a state-level agency providing technical assistance may better address the needs of schools.

STAFF COMMENTS & QUESTIONS

Questions:

- Given that additional coordination will be needed with DHCS to make any improvements in this program, what actions are being taken on the health agency side to ensure that LEAs could build capacity and implement?
- Does CDE have any immediate-term recommendations given the ongoing difficulty of LEAs in accessing Medi-Cal billing options?

Staff Recommendation: Hold Open for May Revise, as part of the overall Proposition 98 package.

ISSUE 5: STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH**PANEL**

The following individuals will participate virtually in the discussion of this issue:

- Paula Fonacier-Tang, DOF
- Amy Li, LAO
- Elly Garner, CDE

BACKGROUND

Mental Health Funding for LEAs. LEAs do not currently have significant sources of funding dedicated for supporting the mental health of students within their Proposition 98 allocations. For students with mental health needs who qualify for special education and have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that requires services, LEAs may use their special education funding to provide these services. Of the total amount of funds available to LEAs for special education, approximately \$152 million was set aside each year in as Educationally-Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) funds, restricted to education-related mental health services that are included in IEPs. Recently, the state expanded the allowable use of ERMHS funds to include mental health services for all students beginning in the 2020-21 fiscal year. However, given that the costs for special education services generally far exceed the amount of categorical funds provided for this purpose, this expansion of the use of mental health funding will not create a significant expansion of mental health services for the general student population. LEAs may also use their general operation funds to provide services to students, including mental health or wellness services, and these expenditures have been an allowable use of recent pandemic relief funds.

Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63; 2004). The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) imposes a one percent income tax on personal income in excess of \$1 million. The purpose of the MHSA is to expand mental health services to children, youth, adults, and older adults who have severe mental illnesses or severe mental health disorders to supplement and not supplant existing resources and services.

The Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) was established in 2005 and oversees expenditures generated from the MHSA in the Mental Health Services Fund (MHSF). The 2013-14 Budget Act trailer bill, known as the Investment in Mental Health Wellness Act, included expenditure authority from the MHSF of \$32 million annually for MHSOAC to support counties to increase capacity for client assistance and services in crisis intervention, crisis stabilization, crisis residential treatment, rehabilitative mental health services, and mobile crisis support teams. In 2018-19 the expenditure authority was reduced to \$20 million annually. According to MHSOAC, since 2017-18, 50 percent of the funding has been allocated to programs dedicated to children and youth aged 21 and under, and approximately \$20 million

was allocated for four School-County Collaboration Triage grants to: 1) provide school-based crisis intervention services for children experiencing or at risk of experiencing a mental health crisis and their families or caregivers; and 2) supporting the development of partnerships between behavioral health departments and educational entities.

Mental Health Student Services Act. The 2019 Budget Act included expenditure authority from the MHSF of \$50 million one-time in 2019-20 and \$10 million ongoing for the Mental Health Student Services Act (MHSSA), a competitive grant program administered by the MHSOAC to establish mental health partnerships between county mental health or behavioral health departments and school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education. These partnerships support: (1) services provided on school campuses; (2) suicide prevention; (3) drop-out prevention; (4) outreach to high-risk youth and young adults, including, but not limited to, foster youth, youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ), and youth who have been expelled or suspended from school; (5) placement assistance and development of a service plan that can be sustained over time for students in need of ongoing services; and (6) other prevention, early intervention, and direct services, including, but not limited to, hiring qualified mental health personnel, professional development for school staff on trauma-informed and evidence-based mental health practices, and other strategies that respond to the mental health needs of children and youth.

The MHSSA supports partnerships between county behavioral health programs and educational entities. Combining the \$50 million allocation in 2019-20 with the annual \$10 million allocations for the subsequent three fiscal years, MHSOAC allocated a total of \$75 million over four years for funding of the MHSSA Partnership Grant Program. The funding was made available in two categories: 1) \$45 million for counties with existing school mental health partnerships, and 2) \$30 million for counties developing new or emerging partnerships.

According to MHSOAC, 18 awards utilized the \$50 million. MHSOAC estimates approximately \$80.5 million in additional funding would be required to fund all 38 outstanding grant applications for school-mental health partnerships, \$45.5 million with existing partnerships and \$35 million for new and emerging partnerships.

Governor's 2021-22 January Budget

The Budget provides \$25 million ongoing Proposition 98 General Fund to fund partnerships with county behavioral health to support student mental health services. Funds would be provided as competitive grants to LEAs to match, on a 1:1 basis, proposed county expenditures for children's mental health services, as specified in a county's three-year program and expenditure plan or annual update prepared pursuant to Section 5847 of the Welfare and Institutions Code from their share of the MHSF.

LEA applicants must provide a plan that describes the following:

- The need for mental health services at the local educational agency as well as potential gaps in local service connections.
- That plans address the mental health needs of enrolled students in kindergarten through grade 12 in a manner consistent with a whole child approach, including but not limited to the following:
 - Professional development for educators to identify early warning signs and risk factors for students in need of mental health supports.
 - Establishment or expansion of mental health and counseling staff available in schools.
 - Development of peer support networks, and other activities that promote students' sense of connectedness and belonging to a school community.
 - Development of partnerships with community organizations, including health and mental health service providers, with an emphasis on those that serve at risk student groups.
 - Development of resources and supports for family engagement.
 - Resources that address the acute and chronic mental health support needs in communities experiencing ongoing natural disasters and systemic violence.
- A proposal for how the funds will be used to expand a county's children's mental health services project and meet data collection and reporting requirements required of Mental Health Services Act three-year program plans.

Funds would be awarded for up to a three year term, with the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to review the grantee and determine renewal at the end of the grant period. The SPI shall determine the amount of grants.

The Governor's Budget also includes two related proposals in the health budget that will be heard in Subcommittee #1 on Health and Human Services:

- \$400 million one-time in a mix of federal funds and General Fund, available over multiple years, for the Department of Health Care Services to implement an incentive program through Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans, administered by county behavioral health departments and schools.
- \$25 million one-time Mental Health Services Fund, available over multiple years, to expand the Mental Health Student Services Act Partnership Grant Program, which funds partnerships between county behavioral health department and schools. Priority for the grants will be given to high-poverty and rural schools, with funds supporting suicide and drop-out prevention services, outreach to high-risk youth, and other strategies that respond to the mental health needs of students.

STAFF COMMENTS & QUESTIONS**Questions**

How will the ongoing Proposition 98 funds for Mental Health match the Mental Health Student Services Act Partnership funds, and the new incentive program through the Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans ensure a coordinated response to student mental health needs?

How many LEAs does the Administration anticipate funding with the proposed \$25 million investment? How will LEAs sustain funding for mental health needs?

Staff Recommendation: Hold Open for May Revise, as part of the overall Proposition 98 package.

ISSUE 6: SCHOOL CLIMATE DATA

This panel will review the January Budget proposals impacting School Climate data systems for TK-12 schools.

PANEL

The following individuals will participate virtually in the discussion of this issue:

- Michelle Valdivia, DOF
- Michael Alferes, LAO
- Elly Garner, CDE

BACKGROUND

Currently, Ed Code requires school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education to adopt Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) each year, and requires the LCAPs to address eight state priorities, including school climate, as measured by 1) Pupil suspension rates, 2) Pupil expulsion rates and 3) Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teacher on the sense of safety and school connectedness. LEAs are currently required to measure and report on school climate in the LCAP and through a local indicator on the Dashboard.

Current law also authorizes anonymous, voluntary, and confidential research and evaluation tools to measure pupils' health behaviors and risks, including tests, questionnaires, and surveys containing age-appropriate questions about the pupil's attitudes concerning or practices relating to sex, to be administered to any pupil in grades 7 to 1, with parent notification and opt-out requirements.

Many LEAs use the California Health Kids Survey and the other surveys developed by CDE and West Ed as part of the CA School Climate, Health and Learning Survey online tool, to meet these requirements.

The California Healthy Kids Survey

The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) is an anonymous, confidential survey of school climate and safety, student wellness, and youth resiliency. It is administered to students at grades five, seven, nine, and eleven. It enables schools and communities to collect and analyze data regarding local youth health risks and behaviors, school connectedness, school climate, protective factors, and school violence. The CHKS is intended to be part of a comprehensive data-driven, decision-making process on improving school climate and student learning environment for overall school improvements. It is focused on five important areas for guiding school improvement:

- Student connectedness, learning engagement/motivation, and attendance.
- School climate, culture, and conditions.
- School safety, including violence perpetration and victimization/bullying.
- Physical and mental well-being and social-emotional learning.
- Student supports, including resilience-promoting developmental factors (caring relationships, high expectations, and meaningful participation).

The CDE encourages schools and districts serving students in 5-12 grades to administer the CHKS to provide data metrics for their LCAP.

The CHKS is a companion tool to the California School Staff Survey for staff and the California School Parent Survey for parents. Together, they form the California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey System (Cal-SCHLS).

The California School Staff Survey assesses the perceptions and experiences of K-12 teachers, administrators, and other school personnel. It is intended for use for all grades. The results are intended to address problems relating to low teacher recruitment, morale and retention; guide professional development and school improvement efforts; and determine the degree to which staff perceptions align with the attitudes and experiences of students and parents.

The California School Parent Survey measures parent involvement, which is one of the eight state priorities to be addressed in an LEA's LCAP. The survey measures parent perceptions about the school's learning environment, school climate, student supports, and parent outreach and involvement efforts. The survey also provides data on the scope and nature of parent involvement at the school.

To meet the data collection needs of the schools amid the pandemic, CalSCHLS was revised for the 2020-21 school year to support surveys across different school settings (distance learning, in-person, and hybrid). The survey questions were expanded to assess more areas related to social and emotional health, social isolation, and students' experiences learning from home.

The System provides for technical assistance, and additional services to the LEAs on understanding and using data collected from all the surveys, through a CDE contract with WestEd.

According to the CDE, "at the heart of the CHKS is a research-based core module that provides valid indicators to promote student engagement and achievement, safety, positive development, health, and overall well-being. In addition, there are supplementary modules to choose from at the secondary school level that ask detailed questions on specific topics. These include more in-depth questions on school climate; resiliency and youth development; social emotional health and learning; tobacco use; alcohol and other drug use; safety/violence; physical health; sexual behavior; after school activities; gang awareness; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender school

experiences; and military connected school. Districts can also customize their questions in a custom module targeting topics of local interest.”

The CHKS was funded through federal funds until 2009, when a federal mandate that LEAs administer the CHKS expired as well. Currently the CHKS and the California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey System are not supported directly through the annual Budget Act. The CDE supports the existing CHKS through state discretionary Tobacco-Use Prevention Education (TUPE) and After School Education and Safety grant funds. LEA fees also generate approximately \$160,000 in annual funding.

As a funding condition, districts receiving TUPE funding are required to conduct the CHKS at least once every two years. For all other districts and schools, participation in any of these surveys is voluntary.

According to CDE, over 740 districts, 5,500 schools, 1.4 million students, and 128,000 staff have participated in a California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey tool in 2019-20. CDE provides a subsidized rate for the survey and tools, there are data workshops available.

Governor’s 2021-22 January Budget

The Governor’s Budget provides \$10 million in one-time Proposition 98 General Fund for one or two LEAs (selected by CDE and the executive director of the state board of education) to:

- Make information available on valid, reliable, and appropriate school climate surveys for purposes of helping local educational agencies better assess community needs stemming from the COVID-19 Pandemic and distance learning, including surveys for students, families, and educators.
- Of the total, \$5 million shall be used to provide grants to local educational agencies to implement enhanced survey instruments and support start-up costs associated with conducting annual school climate surveys.
- Provide training for LEAs on interpreting data and using responses collected to inform continuous improvement efforts.

STAFF COMMENTS & QUESTIONS

A 2013 report, A Climate for Academic Success (Voight, Austin & Hansen) identified common themes in research around school climate, including: 1) Order, safety, and discipline, 2) Academic supports, 3) Personal and social relationships, 4) School facilities, and 5) School connectedness. This study reports that there is evidence to suggest that these factors have an important role to play in turning around unsuccessful schools and that a positive school climate has been associated with higher academic achievement and healthy behavioral outcomes for students.

The CDE's School Conditions and Climate Work Group (CCWG) 2017 report recommends the following definition:

“School Conditions and Climate refers to the character and quality of school life. This includes the values, expectations, interpersonal relationships, materials and resources, supports, physical environment, and practices that foster a welcoming, inclusive, and academically challenging environment. Positive school conditions and climate ensure people in the school community (students, staff, family, and community) feel socially, emotionally, and physically safe, supported, connected to the school, and engaged in learning and teaching.”

The CCWG also makes the following recommendations for state implementation:

- Establish a School Conditions and Climate Validity and Reliability Technical Design Group responsible for developing the criteria to vet school conditions and climate surveys, and vetting the surveys that would appear on the CDE menu of state-vetted and state-supported survey tools.
- Provide a menu of state-vetted and state-supported survey tools and instruments to LEAs.
- Require the survey tools to cover four research based school conditions and climate domains and related constructs: safety, relationships, conditions for teaching and learning, and empowerment.
- Include useful tools, resources, and supports about school conditions and climate within the developing statewide system of support to build the capacity of system actors as they endeavor to improve school conditions and climate.

According to the CDE, a \$3 million annual state investment would maintain the Cal-SCHLS and its support system, free of cost, for all LEAs. This investment could include new or modified instruments.

Questions:

- Has the Administration explored the possibility/cost of creating a module related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic within the existing Healthy Kids Survey? How long would it take for WestEd to turn a module around versus the January Budget proposal timeline?
- How will the surveys developed differ from recent efforts by the CDE through the Cal-SCHLS to provide relevant survey tools during the pandemic?
- Is there a precedent for having individual LEAs as grant-making bodies to their LEA peers statewide? And is this an appropriate state-wide role?

- Is there an opportunity in 2021-22 to improve upon the CHKS and Cal-SCHLS system to comprehensively support LEA use of the survey?

Staff Recommendation: Hold Open for May Revision Discussions.

ISSUE 7: SCHOOL SYSTEMS INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORT

The purpose of this panel is to update the Subcommittee on the crucial work of the California Statewide System of Support and local education agencies struggling with student performance and outcomes.

PANEL

The following individuals will participate virtually in the discussion of this issue:

- Michelle Valdivia, DOF
- Amy Li, LAO
- Elly Garner, CDE

BACKGROUND**Student Opportunity & Performance Accountability**

Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP). To ensure accountability for LCFF funds, the state requires that all LEAs annually adopt and update an LCAP. The LCAP must include locally-determined goals, actions, services, and expenditures of LCFF funds for each school year in support of the state educational priorities that are specified in statute, as well as any additional local priorities. In adopting the LCAP, LEAs must consult with parents, students, teachers, and other school employees.

The eight state priorities that must be addressed in the LCAP, for all students and significant student subgroups in a school district and at each school, are:

- Williams settlement issues (adequacy of credentialed teachers, instructional materials, and school facilities).
- Implementation of academic content standards.
- Parental involvement.
- Pupil achievement (measured in part by statewide assessments, Academic Performance Index, and progress of English-language learners toward English proficiency).
- Pupil engagement (measured by attendance, graduation, and dropout data).
- School climate (measured in part by suspension and expulsion rates).
- The extent to which students have access to a broad course of study.
- Pupil outcomes for non-state-assessed courses of study.

COEs must address the following two priorities, in addition: Coordination of services for foster youth, and coordination of education for expelled students.

School district LCAPs are subject to review and approval by COEs, while COE LCAPs are subject to review and approval by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI). Statute also established a process for districts to receive technical assistance related to their LCAPs. The SPI is authorized to intervene in a district that is failing to improve outcomes for students after receiving technical assistance.

The 2017-18 Budget Act required COEs to provide a summary of the plan for supporting schools and school districts within their county, including a description of goals for LCAP review, and provision of technical assistance and support. COEs must measure progress towards meeting these goals by identifying and assessing metrics, as well as specifying the actions and expenditures to meet these goals. Finally, COEs must identify how they are collaborating with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, the CDE, and other COEs.

The 2018-19 Budget Act specified updates to the LCAP including: 1) a summary table of planned expenditures for all actions for each goal included in the LCAP, broken out by fund source; 2) a summary of the actions and planned expenditures to increase or improve services for English learners, low-income and foster youth students; 3) specified that LEAs can prioritize their goals, actions and related expenditures within the eight state priorities; and 4) required the LCAP and Annual Update template adopted by SBE to use language that is understandable and accessible to parents and required school districts and county offices of education to post prominently on the homepage of their website their approved LCAP.

Pursuant to LCFF statute, the SBE developed an online tool and interface for an evaluation rubric, called the California School Dashboard, which was launched at the end of 2017 and redesigned at the end of 2018. The dashboard uses a color-coded indicator to show how an LEA scores on a particular indicator.

Technical Assistance and Support of LEAs. Along with the release of the Dashboard, beginning in December 2017, the SBE identified LEAs in need of assistance based on LEA scores on the dashboard indicators and created a tiered structure, based on statute, to provide this assistance.

OVERVIEW OF STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

Level of Support	Description of Supports Available
Support for All LEAs and Schools (Level 1)	Various state and local agencies provide an array of resources, tools, and voluntary assistance that all LEAs may use to improve student performance at the LEA and school level and narrow disparities among student groups across the LCFF priorities, including recognition for success and the ability to share promising practices.

Level of Support	Description of Supports Available
Differentiated Assistance (Level 2)	County superintendents, the CDE, charter authorizers, and the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) provide differentiated assistance for LEAs and schools, in the form of individually designed assistance, to address identified performance issues, including significant disparities in performance among student groups.
Intensive Intervention (Level 3)	The State Superintendent of Public Instruction or, for charter schools, the charter authorizer may require more intensive interventions for LEAs or schools with persistent performance issues over a specified time period.

Source: State Board of Education agenda, January 2018

Due to the pandemic, 2019-20 data is not available to identify new LEAs, and a total of 301 LEAs remain eligible to receive differentiated assistance, based on 2018-2019 data.

County Offices of Education Differentiated Assistance. The 2018-19 Budget Act also provided state and regional structures to support LEAs identified for differentiated assistance or intervention as refined in statute, specifying the process for COEs to support school districts in need of technical assistance and the ability of a school district to seek assistance from the COE and other providers. Similar adjustments were made to the process for the SPI to assist struggling COEs.

Statute also established a formula for providing funding for COEs to support school districts. Under this formula, COEs would receive base funding plus additional funding determined by the number of school districts identified as in need of differentiated assistance on the dashboard, and a total of \$67.7 million in ongoing funding was provided to COEs for this purpose in 2019-20.

The 2018-19 Budget Act provided \$4 million in ongoing Proposition 98 funding to establish between six and 10 COEs as geographic lead agencies in their region. The responsibilities of the lead COEs include building the capacity of other COEs in the region, coordinating and collaborating technical assistance across the region, providing technical assistance to a school district if a COE is unable to, and identifying existing resources and developing new resources upon request of the CCEE or the SPI. As of 2019-20, nine geographic lead agencies have been established. The 2018-19 Budget also included \$10 million in ongoing Proposition 98 funding to establish between six and 10 (SELPAs) to serve as special education resource leads to work with COEs to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE). The CCEE was created as part of the LCFF accountability framework, with its goal to advise and assist school districts charter schools, and COEs to achieve identified outcomes in their LCAPs under the LCFF. Statute allows the CCEE to accept requests or referrals for technical assistance from a COE and SPI. There are also special circumstances where an LEA is referred to CCEE due to receiving an emergency apportionment or as a result of the CA school dashboard. The CCEE may contract

with individuals, LEAs, or organizations with expertise in the LCAP state priority areas and experience in improving the quality of teaching, improving school and district leadership, and addressing the needs of student populations (such as unduplicated students or students with exceptional needs). In 2020-21, the CCEE was provided with approximately \$12.3 million in ongoing funding.

The CCEE has conducted statewide training for LEAs and education stakeholders on the LCAP and the school dashboard, with a focus on improving student outcomes and closing the achievement gap. In addition, the CCEE has facilitated the development of Professional Learning Networks (PLNs) made up of COEs, statewide organizations, and non-profits led by facilitators to support collaborative efforts to build capacity. The CCEE is currently reviewing results and deliverables from the PLNs.

The CCEE has undertaken pilot projects in 11 LEAs that reflect urban, suburban, and rural areas with different needs for technical assistance, including a COE and a charter school. LEAs volunteered for the pilot program and the CCEE selected LEAs to participate based on whether the LEA had: 1) persistent academic/achievement challenges as evidenced by achievement gaps between student demographic groups, test scores, or other metrics; 2) a leadership team, including the Board of Trustees overseeing the LEA, that fully commits to participating in pilot process; and 3) the support of their COE.

Governor's 2021-22 January Budget

The proposed budget includes \$72.4 million in ongoing Proposition 98 General Fund for COEs and \$12.5 million for CCEE to support school districts in improving instruction and that are in need of improvement under the state's accountability system to be distributed pursuant to a statutory formula enacted in the 2018-19 budget. These funds would support 301 identified in 2018-19 through the state's accountability measures to need targeted technical assistance, as well as the reopening and Distance Learning supports that COEs and CCEE have brought online during the pandemic response.

STAFF COMMENTS & QUESTIONS

Questions:

- In light of CCEE's role in safe reopening schools support, are there any capacity challenges for existing workload and new school safety leadership?
- In light of the COE's role in safe reopening schools support, are there any capacity challenges for existing workload and new school safety leadership?
- In light of lacking data in 2020 for Differentiated Assistance, is any state direction needed that utilizes other pandemic-era data?

- Should sub-group Learning Loss be a metric in the near term?

Staff Recommendation: Hold Open for May Revision Discussions.
