

Questions of the Superintendent with respect to the 2017-18 LCAP
May 23, 2017

1. Why was the Task Force eliminated as a strategy for recruiting teachers, and is the District considering housing help for teachers interested in living closer to the District? (Goal #1)

The Task Force wasn't actually eliminated. As HR expanded recruitment efforts to include site administrators, a task force was no longer necessary.

At this time, the District is connected with several initiatives by outside organizations to look at strategies to support teachers who wish to buy a home. There are also outside agencies that are exploring building/providing housing for teachers and other public employees and the District will work with these agencies.

2. What other means of support is the District providing teachers with to help Long Term English Learners? (Goal #4)

The District has entered a partnership with E.L. Achieve, an organization that works with school districts assisting them with the creation of effective systems to support English Learners. E.L. Achieve's approach is grounded in research-based practices and is also results oriented. Furthermore, through such an approach, E.L. Achieve believes school districts can ensure the academic achievement of English Learners. In addition, they stress that explicit language instruction in every class, every day is an integral part of the whole approach.

For these reasons, the District will solidify a plan to ensure 100% of its teachers receive professional development on explicit language instruction by offering several Constructing Meaning (CM) Institutes throughout the next 2 to 3 years. Through this institute, teachers will have a better understanding of the role language plays in content learning, will know how to decide what language knowledge students need to access content, as well as express their understanding of the material, and will be able to provide appropriate, explicit oral and written language instruction.

3. How are English Learners progressing and what other supports are available for them? (Goal #4)

The percent of English Learners who demonstrated progress on the 2016-17 California English Language Development Test increased from the previous year (2015-16), which in turn was an increase from two years ago (2014-15) as well. While the increase each year was small, between 1% to 2%, the fact that the rate increased is significant, especially since the total number of English Learners district-wide continues to fluctuate

year after year and throughout the school year as well. We have also seen an increase in the percent of 9th grade EL students earning 30+ credits after the 1st semester of the school year indicating they are on track for graduation. The rate in 2014-15 was 77.3% while the rate in 2016-17 was 78.3%. The same is true for the percent of 10th grade EL students earning 120+ credits by the end of their 10th grade year. For this group, the 2013-14 percent was 60.3%, while the 2015-16 rate was 62.9%. These small increases demonstrate that the District's efforts in supporting EL students have had a positive effect in the area of academic achievement. However, the District is well aware that the effect level is minimal and more needs to be done.

In addition to providing teachers with professional development and instructional tools to support ELs in the classroom, the District supports a Bilingual Resource Teacher at each site whose roles and responsibilities consist of working with students closely and monitoring their progress. Thus students have access to an adult on campus who can guide them for additional support. Homework/Tutoring Centers, after school programs and one-to-one support with content teachers are available at each of the schools. Students could be reminded more frequently of such services for them to access when needed.

4. What is the reclassification criteria for English Learners with IEPs, and how are parents made aware of the criteria and process? (Goal #4)

The District uses the same reclassification criteria for students with disabilities as with general education students who are nondisabled. In addition, the IEP team reviews the EL status of a student based on the results of the reclassification criteria and decides as a team if accommodations are needed, if the student has successfully met redesignation criteria, or if the student requires an alternate exam to determine English status.

One of the Title III federal requirements is that school districts must notify parents of English Learners of the following: their child's proficiency level in English, the school's recommendation for program placement, and an explanation of the process for identifying when their child is ready to exit the English Learner program. The District does this through the Annual Parent Notification Letter during the first weeks of the start of the school year.

5. Is one College and Career Advisor (CCA) at each high school sufficient? (Goal #5)

The College and Career Advisor (CCA) position was initially a part-time position (.6 FTE) funded by the district. That has increased to a full time position, and it continues to be funded by the district. Given all the other needs and priorities at this time, and the fact that regular counselors also assist students in college and career planning, the District believes that one CCA counselor in each of the comprehensive sites is adequate at this time.

6. (Annual Update Goal 5) The District continues to work on ensuring all students have access to “A-G courses, however, the percent of students graduating meeting the A-G requirements is low in comparison to that of the overall graduation rate. Why is this the case?

In many cases, the requirements to meet A-G criteria are more stringent than the graduation requirements. For example, a student may meet graduation criteria by receiving a “D” in a course, but would need a “C” grade to meet the A-G criteria. The goal is to have as many students as possible meet A-G criteria, but if a student receives a “D” in a course and doesn’t retake it for a “C” or better, the student will still graduate but won’t meet A-G. Counselors work with students to show them these options and many students do take advantage of the opportunities to earn a better grade in a course.

Students also need to take some courses beyond the requirements for graduation to meet A-G criteria. Students are encouraged to take these courses but they are not mandatory. For more information on the district graduation requirements and UC A-G requirements, see the district website and site Program Planning Handbooks (www.seq.org)

7. In the long term, how sustainable/how realistic is it for the District to maintain the desired outcomes of Goal #6? Is it the District’s plan to always keep this as one of it’s LCAP goals? (Goal #6)

The District’s philosophy is that all students should have access to a rigorous course of study that will allow them to successfully compete in today’s society alongside their peers. To that end, the District advocates for encouraging students to enroll in at least one AP/IB course by the time they complete four years of high school. It does not require students to participate in such courses, but it does ensure they have access to them .

8. Who are the “at risk” students? How does the District define “at risk”? (Goal #7)

At-risk for incoming 9th grade students are those students who are identified by their middle schools as having not had success in middle school due to attendance or behavior. These areas impact the student’s academic success. Once in high school, at-risk students are those who are credit-deficient and as they fall behind in credits, become “at-risk” of not graduating from high school.

9. How does the District support students in the Independent Studies Program in need of taking a course through a community college?

The students are enrolled in ISP first. The ISP teacher then works with the student to

enroll them in a community college course. There are many ISP students who are already doing this. They have concurrent enrollment in our district and the community college.

10. What other support programs/systems (in addition to Acknowledge Alliance) does the District have/offer students returning from court/community schools? (Goal #7)

Students coming in from the court/community schools have an intake meeting with the school and the Attendance and Welfare coordinator to discuss how the student will best succeed in the comprehensive or continuation school. Each student is provided an individual plan that is created at that meeting. That may include counseling, enrollment at a continuation school, check-ins with administration, etc.