

**Analysis of School Climate Priority in
Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAPs) for
California's 50 Largest School Districts**

A report from Fight Crime: Invest in Kids *California*

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Acknowledgements

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids is a national, bipartisan, nonprofit, anti-crime organization. The organization has a membership of nearly 5,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, district attorneys, other law enforcement leaders, and violence survivors, including nearly 400 in California. The members take a hard-nosed look at what approaches work—and what don't—to prevent crime and violence. They then recommend effective strategies to local, state and national policymakers. It operates under the umbrella of the Council for a Strong America.

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Analysis of School Climate Priority in LCAPs for California’s 50 Largest School Districts

Overview

Summary

The adoption of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) in 2013 included a critical measure to encourage school districts to reform school discipline and improve school climate. Specifically, the LCFF statute established “School climate” as one of eight state priorities that all districts and county offices of education must address in their three-year Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs). The LCFF statute provides that each district must include, in their LCAPs, goals, actions, and expenditures related to school climate as measured by all of the following: “pupil suspension rates, pupil expulsion rates, [and] other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness.”

The inclusion of school climate as a state priority is one of several recent state and local advances drawing attention to the overuse of suspensions and the need for improved school climate in California, which together already have helped yield an over 20 percent decline in suspension rates over the past two years.¹ The preparation and implementation of the first round of LCAPs presents an opportunity to build on this momentum.

This report analyzes how the 50 largest school districts in the state, representing 41% of all California public school students, address the school climate priority in their LCAPs. While some of the report findings are encouraging, there remains significant room for improvement.

Encouraging findings include:

- 92% of districts have goals to decrease suspensions;
- 100% of districts have actions that address school climate;
- 70% of districts include actions related to implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Restorative Practices (also referred to as Restorative Justice) and/or Social Emotional Learning;
- 96% of districts include actions to fund counselors, school psychologists, and/or other support staff related to improving school climate; and
- 56% of districts have goals related to school climate survey results.

Findings that identify room for improvement include:

- 42% of districts have suspension goals that are not as “specific” as required, either because the goals are ambiguous or are merely to decrease suspensions in general;
- 26% of districts have no expulsion reduction goals;
- Only 18% of districts have disaggregated suspension goals for individual subgroups (e.g., African-American, Latino);
- Only 8% of districts include goals to reduce not only suspensions but also office/out-of-class referrals, which could simply replace suspensions while resulting in similar levels of lost learning time;

- Over 30% of districts do not specifically identify the funding levels for their actions related to PBIS, Restorative Practices and Social Emotional Learning, because they either identify no funding or bundle these with several actions under a single expenditure, making it impossible to determine how much funding is planned for PBIS, Restorative Practices or Social Emotional Learning;
- 30% of districts, while including actions to employ counselors, school psychologists, and/or other support staff related to improving school climate, do not specify how many support staff will be employed; and
- Only 18% of districts have survey-related goals for both safety and connectedness, as the LCFF statute requires.

Methodology

We reviewed the LCAPs for the 50 largest school districts in California. In assessing how districts addressed the school climate priority area, we primarily focused on what goals, actions and expenditures districts identified as addressing the school climate priority. Still, we erred on the side of inclusion, i.e., counting actions that appeared related to school climate even if not listed as related to the school climate priority.

The Law

The LCFF statute, and the statutorily-authorized LCAP template approved by the State Board of Education, expressly identify “School climate” as one of eight state priorities that must be addressed by each school district’s LCAP. Specifically, the LCFF statute identifies this priority as:

- “(6) School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:
- (A) Pupil suspension rates.
 - (B) Pupil expulsion rates.
 - (C) Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness.”

The requirements for addressing the state priorities in LCAPs are provided in the LCFF statute and the LCAP template.² In particular, the LCFF statute and LCAP template require that:

- LCAPs shall include annual goals, actions, and expenditures for each state priority.³

They also provide that LCAPs shall include goals and actions for each school site and specific subgroups.⁴ If goals and actions apply to all schools and/or subgroups, the LCAP may indicate “all” instead.

- LCAPs must provide goals, actions and expenditures for each of the metrics that the LCFF statute explicitly references within the state priorities—therefore, including suspension rates, expulsion rates and “other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness.”⁵

A plain reading of the statute clearly requires school climate surveys of pupils, parents and teachers because the use of “including” is a statutory directive, rather than merely

identifying surveys as an optional example of other local measures.⁶ If surveys were not required, other terminology like “such as” or “for example” would have been used rather than “including.”⁷

- Goals must be “specific” and “measurable.”⁸

LCAP Requirements for School Climate Priority

- **Goals, actions, and expenditures** related to:
 - Suspension rates
 - Goals must address suspension rates, at a minimum
 - Expulsion rates
 - Goals must address expulsion rates, at a minimum
 - Surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness
 - Surveys must be of pupils, parents and teachers
 - Goals, etc. must address sense of safety and connectedness, at a minimum
- Goals must be **specific and measurable**

Caveats

It is important to remember several caveats when analyzing LCAPs:

First, some LCAPs do not include all expenditures that support school climate and other state priority related actions; as a result, it is not always clear how much is being spent on particular actions. While some LCAPs reference a variety of state, federal and local funding sources, others appear to address only Local Control Funding Formula dollars and some of those appear to address only LCFF Supplemental and Concentration funding, not LCFF Base funding as well—despite that fact that the template instructions require that the LCAP “must reference all fund sources.”

Second, LCAPs generally do not identify whether actions or expenditures are new, rather than a continuation of existing practices. So it is difficult to know when actions and expenditures represent a change in emphasis or direction.

Third, these first year LCAPs are merely statements of intent: there is no guarantee that districts will actually follow through with their planned actions and expenditures. Districts are expected to update what actions and expenditures actually occurred in their 2015-16 LCAP updates. So this analysis should be understood for what it is: an analysis of planned goals, actions, and expenditures rather than an assessment of what districts are actually doing.

Why is School Climate Important to Public Safety?

School climate and school discipline policies are important to public safety because students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to fall behind in school, drop out, and become involved in crime. Suspensions and expulsions are sometimes necessary to prevent unsafe or violent student behavior. But especially when students are suspended or expelled for relatively minor incidents, the primary result is a missed opportunity for learning without addressing any underlying issues contributing to the misbehavior. These students are more likely to fall behind. And putting troubled kids out on the streets without constructive adult supervision can be a recipe for greater misbehavior and crime.

The best way to help students learn and to prevent later crime is to ensure students get the support they need so they can remain in school and off the streets. In many cases, pushing students who are getting into trouble out of school and into an often unsupervised environment can exacerbate rather than help deal with problems

A 2011 Council of State Governments study of Texas students found that students who are suspended or expelled are at greater risk of dropout than their peers and are more likely to repeat a grade. For students with similar profiles, those who had been suspended or expelled one or more times were twice as likely to repeat a grade than those who had no suspensions or expulsions.⁹ Among students disciplined more than 10 times, only 40 percent graduated from high school within the study period.

Students who are suspended or expelled are also at greater risk of involvement in the juvenile and criminal justice systems. The Texas study found that students who were suspended or expelled one or more times were nearly three times more likely to have contact with the juvenile justice system in the following year than similar students who were not suspended or expelled.¹⁰

Research also has established a link between high dropout rates and crime. According to researchers, a ten percentage point increase in graduation rates would reduce murder and assault rates by about 20%, preventing 400 murders and more than 20,000 aggravated assaults in California each year.¹¹

On the flip side, positive school climate indicators such as supports, caring relationships with adults, school connectedness and safety have been associated with good behavior and academic benefits.¹² Utilizing the School Climate Index developed in California, a May 2013 WestEd study of 1,715 California middle and high schools found that “beating the odds” schools—schools which have significantly better test scores than predicted based on student characteristics—have substantially more positive school climates than underperforming schools.¹³

Alternative Discipline Strategies

Fortunately, evidence-based approaches can effectively improve students' behavior and improve school-wide academic outcomes, while minimizing the use of unnecessary suspensions and expulsions. Schools need an array of disciplinary approaches to address situations appropriately, as they arise. Prevention and intervention approaches include:

- Classroom Management Strategies like The Good Behavior Game¹⁴ and The Incredible Years.¹⁵
- School-Wide Strategies and Curricula such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), also known as School Wide Positive Behavioral Support;¹⁶ Restorative Practices, also known as Restorative Justice;¹⁷ and Social Emotional Learning/Social-emotional skill curricula, such as Positive Action.¹⁸

Findings

Each section below highlights key data and then includes a more detailed discussion, often with additional data.

The Appendix includes a breakdown of findings on several issues for each of the 50 largest districts.

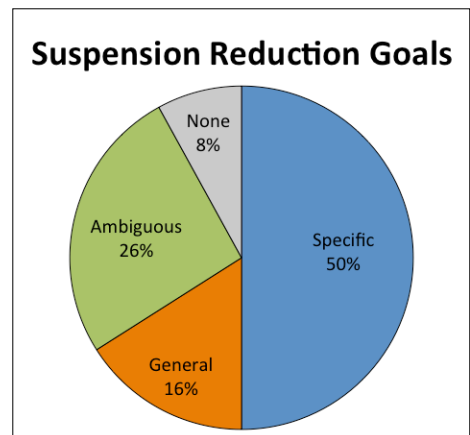
Suspension/Expulsion Goals

Appropriate Goals

- 92% (46 out of 50) of districts have goals to decrease suspensions
 - 50% (25 out of 50) of districts have specific and unambiguous numerical goals to decrease suspensions
 - 26% (13 out of 50) of districts have numerical goals to decrease suspensions that are ambiguous
 - 16% (8 out of 50) of districts have general goals to decrease suspensions
- 8% (4 out of 50) of districts have no goals to decrease suspensions
- Regarding expulsions, 26% (13 out of 50) of districts have no expulsion reduction goals

Only half of LCAPs include specific and measurable goals regarding suspensions as required the LCFF statute and LCAP template. On the other hand, 26% of districts have numerical goals to decrease suspensions that are ambiguous, and 16% of districts have general goals to decrease suspensions.

Numerical goals in LCAPs can be ambiguous in one or more ways. When ambiguities exist, districts that fall short of



meeting their expected goals may be able to claim to have lower goals than were expected. Examples of ambiguity include:

- Unclear if proposed reductions are one-time or annual (proposing ongoing reductions each year).

For example, one district’s goal for Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 is to “decrease the number of suspensions by a minimum of 5%.” But it is not clear if all that is required to meet the goal is a single 5% reduction, as opposed to a 5% annual reduction (e.g., 15% overall reduction over three years).

- Unclear if proposed reductions are a percent reduction or a percentage point reduction, which can lead to significant differences.

For example, one district calls for a “1%” annual reduction to its 6.9% suspension rate.¹⁹ If intended as a 1 percentage point reduction to 5.9% initially, that would be equivalent to a 14 percent reduction (1 divided by 6.9). If intended as only a 1 percent reduction (.01 multiplied by 6.9), that would reduce the rate by 0.069 percentage points to 6.831 in Year 1.²⁰

- Unclear if Year 2 (2015-16) and Year 3 (2016-17) proposed reductions are compared to the baseline year (e.g., 2013-14) or to the immediate prior year (compared to 2014-15 for Year 2 and to 2015-16 in Year 3), which can create a modest or potentially significant difference.

For example, comparison to the prior year would yield a higher reduction goal in one district that calls for a 2% reduction in the number of suspension days in Year 1, a 3% reduction in Year 2, and a 5% reduction in Year 3. If reductions are compared to the prior year, the proposed reduction over three years would be a cumulative 10%, which is twice as high as an incremental increase to a 5% overall reduction if compared to the baseline year.²¹ By contrast, comparison to the baseline year would yield a higher reduction goal in one district that calls for a 20% reduction in the number of students suspended in Year 1 and 10% reductions in both Years 2 and 3. If Years 2 and 3 are compared to the baseline year, the district is calling for a 40 percent reduction, but if Years 2 and 3 reductions are compared to the prior years after suspensions begin declining, the district is calling for a 35 percent reduction.²²

It is easy to avoid such ambiguities. For example, San Diego Unified makes clear that its suspension reduction goals are compared to the baseline year; Santa Ana Unified compares proposed percent changes to each previous year, and includes the intended year-end data for each year; and Twin Rivers Unified simply provides the intended year-end suspension rate for each of the three years.

School District	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
San Diego USD	Decrease the districtwide suspension rate by 5% from baseline	Decrease the districtwide suspension rate by 10% from baseline	Decrease the districtwide suspension rate by 15% from baseline

School District	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Santa Ana USD	Restore 912 instructional days by reducing the total number of suspensions by 10% to 6,000	Restore 1,733 instructional days by reducing the total number of suspensions by 10% to 5,400	Restore 2,471 instructional days by reducing the total number of suspensions by 10% to 4,860
Twin Rivers USD	Suspension rate will decrease to 8 percent overall [and] to less than 20 percent with African American and Latino subgroups	Suspension rate will decrease to 7 percent overall, and to less than 15 percent with African American and Latino subgroups	Suspension rate will decrease to 6 percent overall, and less than 10 percent with African American and Latino subgroups

Size of Suspension Reduction Goals

- Suspension goals range from maintain current rate to a 75% reduction over three years
- The median suspension goal is a 17% reduction over three years

Suspension reduction goals vary significantly among districts, ranging from maintaining existing rates to as much as a 75 percent reduction over three years. At least eight districts (Eastside Union, Oakland, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino City, Twin Rivers, Vista and William Hart) have goals to reduce suspensions by 40 percent or more over three years. Among districts with specific unambiguous goals, the median goal is to reduce suspensions by 17 percent over three years.

Disaggregated Goals

- 18% (9 out of 50) of districts have disaggregated suspension goals for individual subgroups (e.g., African-American, Latino).

Fewer than one in five (18%) LCAPs have suspension goals disaggregated by subgroup, even though racial disparities are of great concern in the use of school discipline measures.²³ Riverside Unified, for example, sets goals of a 33% reduction in the suspension rate over three years for all students and 40% or more reductions for African-American, low-income, and English learner students, and students with disabilities.

How to Measure Suspension Goals

- 36% (18 out of 50) of districts use suspension rates as defined in the LCAP template in their goals

Although the LCFE statute expressly addresses suspension “rates” and the LCAP template includes a clear definition of suspension rates (rate of unduplicated students suspended per 100 students), only 36% of LCAPs state their goals in terms of a reduction in suspension rates consistent with the

template definition. Other measures being used by school districts include the number of suspensions, number of students suspended, number of suspension days lost, and an alternative definition of suspension rate (number of suspensions per 100 students). Some districts include multiple measures related to suspensions in their goals.

While these alternative measures can provide valuable information, using at a minimum suspension rates is important to comply with the LCFF statute, enable comparisons with other districts, and ensure that changes in the use of suspensions are self-evident and not misleading. For example, relying just on the number of suspensions instead of rates can be misleading if the student population declines significantly while the number of students suspended remains the same. In that case, suspension practices would appear unchanged, while in practice the rate of students suspended per 100 students would have increased.

Baseline Data

- 60% (30 out of 50) of districts have baseline suspension data
- 54% (27 out of 50) of districts have baseline expulsion data

While most districts include baseline data on suspension and expulsion, a large percentage—40% to 46%—do not. Without baseline data showing the extent of suspensions and expulsions prior to acting under the LCAP, it is difficult to assess whether or not suspension and expulsion reduction goals are reasonable, let alone being met.

Other Related Goals

- 8% (4 out of 50) of districts include goals to reduce office/out-of-class referrals²⁴
- 4% (2 out of 50) of districts include goals to reduce suspensions on the grounds of disruption/willful defiance

Only 8% of districts include goals to reduce office/out-of class referrals, which is important to help ensure that reduced suspensions are not simply replaced by more office referrals, which could result in similar levels of lost learning time. An additional 6% (3 out of 50) of districts track office referrals as an action, but do not have goals to reduce them. A small number of districts also include goals to reduce suspensions on the grounds of disruption/willful defiance, which is consistent with increasing efforts to reduce suspension on these relatively minor and very subjective grounds, including enactment of AB 420 in 2014 to eliminate K-3 suspensions on these grounds, and district-wide elimination of use of these grounds for all grade levels in Los Angeles Unified, Pasadena Unified and San Francisco Unified.

Actions and Expenditures

Actions Generally

- 100% (50 out of 50) of districts have actions that address school climate.

Alternative Discipline Strategies

- 70% (35 out of 50) of districts include Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Restorative Practices, and/or Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in their Actions
 - 60% (30 out of 50) of districts include PBIS
 - 30% (15 out of 50) of districts include Restorative Practices
 - The above data double counts 20% (10 out of 50) of districts that include both PBIS and Restorative Practices
 - 8% (4 out of 50) of districts include SEL, one of which includes Positive Action, a specific SEL program.²⁵ (Each of these districts also includes PBIS or Restorative Practices)
- Regarding funding for PBIS, Restorative Practices, and/or SEL:
 - 42% (21 out of 50) of districts include clear dedicated funding specifically for PBIS, Restorative Practices, and/or SEL
 - 28% (14 out of 50) of districts bundle PBIS, Restorative Practices and/or SEL into several actions covered by one expenditure, resulting in an inability to determine how much funding is dedicated to PBIS, Restorative Practices and/or SEL
 - 6% (3 out of 50) of districts include no funding for their actions related to PBIS, Restorative Practices and/or SEL

This funding data double counts a few districts that include different approaches to funding for two or more of these actions.

Most (70%) of the 50 largest districts include PBIS, Restorative Practices and/or Social Emotional Learning as an action item to improve school climate, particularly PBIS. Yet it is often unclear how much funding will be available for implementation of these practices.

In fact, only 42% of districts include clear funding dedicated to PBIS, Restorative Practices and/or Social Emotional Learning. For 28% of districts, it is impossible to determine how much funding is planned for PBIS, Restorative Practices and/or Social Emotional Learning because the LCAP “bundles” several actions into the relevant expenditure. For example, one district provides that \$77.4 million will go to Restorative Practices, school police and three other actions, but does not break down how that funding will be divided. In 6% of districts, PBIS, Restorative Practices and/or Social Emotional Learning is identified as an action, but no funding, not even bundled funding, is provided.

Among districts that provide clear dedicated funding for PBIS, Restorative Practices and/or Social Emotional Learning, the amount of funding ranges significantly—from \$11,000 or less annually in four districts to close to \$3 million annually in two districts (Bakersfield City, Elk Grove). These wide disparities raise concerns over whether some districts are providing sufficient funding to effectively implement these practices, particularly given that most districts provide that these actions apply to “all” district schools.

No districts include Good Behavior Game or Incredible Years in their LCAPs.

Support Staff: Counselors, Psychologists, Etc.

- 96% (48 out of 50) of districts include actions to fund support staff related to improving school climate, not counting school police or safety officers²⁶
 - Among several types of support staff, counselors are included 66% (33 out of 50) of districts and psychologists are included in 30% (15 out of 50) of districts
- 66% (33 out of 50) of districts provide a specific number of support staff related to school climate that will be employed, while 30% (15 out of 50) include support staff without specifying the number that will be employed²⁷

The vast majority (96%) of districts include actions to employ support staff that can address school discipline and other school climate issues, not counting school police or safety officers. Counselors (66%) are the most common support staff mentioned. Other common support staff include psychologists, social workers, mental health staff, and behavioral intervention specialists.

Yet 30% of districts include actions to employ one or more kinds of support staff, but do not specify how many of any kind will be employed. Where the number for particular kinds of support staff is specified, it varies from as few as one in several districts to as many as 42 in Bakersfield City Unified (Behavioral Intervention Specialists).

In addition, 34% (17 out of 50) of districts include funding for school police/School Resource Officers, and another 6% (3 out of 50) have funding for campus safety officers but not School Resource Officers.

Other Actions

- 58% (29 out of 50) of districts include professional development/training
- 30% (15 out of 50) of districts include analysis of discipline data
- 22% (11 out of 50) of districts include training in and/or implementation of culturally responsive learning, cultural proficiency, cultural competency, cultural awareness, and/or cultural sensitivity²⁸
- 6% (3 out of 50) of districts include tracking of office referrals

Districts include a variety of other actions in their LCAPs including professional development and training, analysis of discipline data, and culturally responsive learning. Other actions worth noting include tracking of office referrals in 6% of districts. This, similar to including goals to reduce office referrals, is important to help ensure that reduced suspensions are not simply replaced by more office referrals, which could result in similar levels of lost learning time. Other common school climate related actions include parental involvement and extracurricular activities/sports.

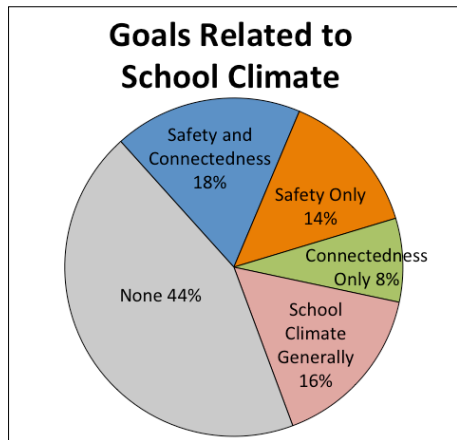
School Climate Surveys

Survey-Related Goals

- 56% (28 out of 50) of districts have goals related to school climate survey results on safety, connectedness or climate generally

- 18% (9 out of 50) of districts have survey-related goals for both safety and connectedness, as required
- 14% (7 out of 50) of districts have survey-related goals on safety but not connectedness
- 8% (4 out of 50) of districts have survey-related goals on connectedness but not safety
- 16% (8 out of 50) of districts describe their goals as improving school climate survey results generally, without highlighting connectedness or safety
- 44% (22 out of 50) of districts have no goals on school climate survey results on safety, connectedness or climate generally²⁹
 - 34% (17 out of 50) of districts reference climate surveys more generally, primarily as a metric that was considered in identifying needs
 - 10% (5 out of 50) of districts do not reference climate surveys at all

Most school districts (56%) include school climate survey-related goals in their LCAPs, although a high percentage (44%) do not. Still, only 18% of districts have survey-related goals for both safety and connectedness as the LCFF statute requires. Twenty two percent have survey-related goals on either safety or connectedness, but not both. Meanwhile 16% of districts describe their goals as improving school climate survey results generally, without highlighting connectedness or safety.



Only one district (West Contra Costa) measures its goals through the School Climate Index developed in California, which provides a composite score (as well as disaggregated scores) incorporating safety, connectedness and other factors and is based primarily on responses from the California Healthy Kids Survey.

In terms of quantifying goals, few districts provide the specificity required. Only 6% (3 out of 50) have specific numerical goals on school climate survey results, while 22% (11 out of 50) have ambiguous numerical goals on school climate survey results and 28% (14 out of 50) have general increase/improve goals on school climate survey results.

Use of Specific Surveys, Including California Healthy Kids Survey

- 60% (30 out of 50) of districts name a specific survey somewhere in the LCAP
- 46% (23 out of 50) of districts explicitly name the California Healthy Kids Survey in the LCAP and another 4% (2 out of 50) of districts name the CORE Waiver/School Culture & Climate Survey, which is an abbreviated version of the Healthy Kids Survey that incorporates all of its connectedness and safety questions

The California Healthy Kids Survey is the most commonly referenced survey, named explicitly in 46% of districts. Other surveys identified include the CORE Waiver/School Culture & Climate

Survey (an abbreviated version of the Healthy Kids Survey), Parent and Student Satisfaction Surveys, the Hanover survey, the Gallup survey, and several district-specific surveys.

The California Healthy Kids Survey is one of three interrelated surveys, known collectively as the California School Climate, Health and Learning Survey (Cal-SCHLS), developed for and supported by the California Department of Education. The related surveys are The California School Climate Survey for staff and The California School Parent Survey. Only one district (Santa Ana) specifically names the Cal-SCHLS staff and parent surveys in its LCAP.

Surveys of Students, Parents & Staff

- 12% (6 out of 50) of districts include goals involving surveys of students, parents and staff
- 30% (15 out of 50) of districts include goals involving surveys of only students

Few districts (12%) include climate goals involving surveys for all three populations specified in the LCFF statute: students, parents and staff. Districts are far more likely to have goals related to only student survey results, with 30% having just student survey-related goals. Meanwhile 6% (3 out of 50) include goals involving surveys of students and either parents or staff, but not all three; 2% (1 out of 50) include goals involving surveys of only parents; and 6% (3 out of 50) are unclear regarding whether surveys in goals are of students parents, and/or staff.

Baseline Survey Data

- 16% (8 out of 50) of districts include baseline data from school climate surveys in their LCAPs
- 84% (42 out of 50) of districts do not include baseline data from school climate surveys in their LCAPs

Most school districts (84%) do not include baseline data from school climate surveys in their LCAPs. Nine of those districts expressly indicate that they will establish baseline data in Year 1 (2014-15 school year). However, California Healthy Kids Survey baseline data from 2012-13³⁰ was available online for nearly one-third of districts whose LCAPs do not include baseline data (13 districts), including three of the districts that indicated they would establish baseline data in Year 1.

Budgeting for School Climate Survey

- 6% (3 out of 50) of districts include funding for climate surveys in their LCAPs

Among the few districts (6%) with funding for climate surveys in their LCAPs, the costs are relatively small, ranging from \$6,000 to \$9,000 annually, with an estimated cost of \$0.33 per student.

Recommendations

LCAPs and LCAP Annual Updates should include:

Suspension & Expulsion Goals

- Specific and unambiguous goals to reduce both suspensions and expulsions, including indicating whether reductions:
 - Are compared to the baseline year or the prior year;
 - Are percent or percentage point reductions (if “%” reduction to a rate); and/or
 - Include the intended suspension/expulsion year-end data outcomes for each year.
- Disaggregated suspension/expulsion goals for individual subgroups, particularly in districts where racial disparities exist;
- The rate of unduplicated students suspended as at least one unit of measure for suspension goals, as the statute requires. Suspension goals may also incorporate other data, including changes in the number of suspensions, number of days lost to suspension, and the number of students suspended;
- Baseline data showing suspension/expulsion rates prior to implementation of the LCAP in order to fairly assess whether LCAP goals are being met, and annual data showing actual suspension/expulsion rates for each year. Districts should clearly indicate which school year baseline data is from;
- Specific and unambiguous goals to reduce (or, at a minimum, actions to track) the number of office referrals and teacher suspensions from class (which are distinct from in-school and out-of-school suspensions), to help ensure that reduced suspensions are not simply replaced by alternatives that result in similar levels of lost learning time; and
- Possibly goals to reduce (or actions to track) the number of citations issued to and arrests of students and the number of students involuntarily transferred to other schools, in order to encourage schools to address the needs of students rather than pass them onto others.

Actions and Expenditures

- Clearly-identified funding levels dedicated to each school climate action, including for PBIS, Restorative Practices, Social Emotional Learning, and counselors and other support staff addressing school climate. Districts should not bundle multiple actions under one expenditure;
- Clearly identified funding source(s) for each action, including distinguishing LCFF Base and LCFF Supplemental/Concentration funding;
- The specific number of schools to be served through each action and indicate, if an action is being phased in, the number of implementing schools each year;
- When actions include employing staff, the number of staff to be employed; and
- An indication whether actions are new or pre-existing.

School Climate Surveys

- Specific and unambiguous goals to related to survey outcomes on sense of safety and school connectedness;

- Goals related to surveys for each of the three populations (students, parents and staff) that are included in the school climate priority in the LCFF statute;
- The name of the specific survey(s) the district proposes to use;
- The amount of funding that will be budgeted to administer and analyze surveys and the funding source; and
- Baseline data showing school climate survey results prior to implementation of the LCAP in order to fairly assess whether LCAP goals are being met, and annual data showing actual school climate survey results each year. Districts should clearly indicate which school year baseline data is from.

Applying Recommendations to Annual LCAP Updates

Questions to Consider for Districts, Parents and other Community Members

District officials, parents and other community members can apply the lessons learned and recommendations from this analysis to upcoming annual updates of LCAPs. By July 1 each year, districts must update the LCAP. The updates shall include: review of any changes in the applicability of the goals, review of progress towards goals, assessment of the effectiveness of actions toward achieving the goals, listing of actual expenditures, and description of changes to actions made as a result of the assessment.³¹

The updates provide an opportunity not only to make changes needed to achieve LCAP goals, but also to correct and clarify any shortcomings from the original LCAP. For example, the update should clarify any ambiguous goals, because otherwise the district will be unable to effectively review progress towards those goals.

As the LCAP updates are being prepared, district officials, parents and community members should consider, at a minimum, the following questions:

Suspension/Expulsion Goals

- Is the necessary suspension and expulsion data provided?
 - Is baseline data provided, and is it clear what school year it is from?
 - Is 2014-15 data included? If full year data is not yet available, does LCAP indicate that 2014-15 data is incomplete?
- Are there both suspension and expulsion goals?
- Do goals include reductions to suspension rates and expulsion rates, as the statute requires?
- Are the suspension/expulsion goals specific and unambiguous?
 - Do the goals specify a numerical reduction goal, rather than a goal to generally reduce suspensions/expulsions?
 - If the reduction goal is expressed as a “%”, is it clear whether the intended reduction is by a percent or by a percentage point?
 - Is it clear whether Year 2 and Year 3 proposed goals are compared to the baseline year or to each prior year?
 - Do the reduction goals for each year provide the intended year-end data, i.e.,

proposed suspension rate for Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3?

- Are the suspension/expulsion reduction goals disaggregated by subgroups, including racial/ethnic subgroups, with higher reduction goals for subgroups that have higher suspension/expulsion rates?
- Does the LCAP include specific and unambiguous goals to reduce (or, at a minimum, actions to track) the number of office referrals and teacher suspensions from class?
- Is the district making progress towards achieving the expected annual measurable outcomes?

Actions

- Are PBIS, Restorative Practices, and/or Social Emotional Learning identified as actions?
 - If yes, is it clear in how many schools they are being implemented?
 - If yes, is it clear in how many schools they will be implemented in Year 2 & Year 3?
- Are support staff related to school climate identified as actions?
 - Is it clear how many support staff have been funded?
 - Is it clear how many additional support staff will be provided in Year 2 & Year 3?
- Were actual actions/services consistent with planned actions/services?
- What changes will be made to actions, particularly if the district did not make progress to achieving the expected annual measurable outcomes?

Expenditures

- Were actual expenditures provided for each relevant school climate-related action?
 - Were expenditures bundled with other actions, making it difficult, if not impossible, to determine expenditures for each action?
- Were actual expenditures consistent with budgeted expenditures from original LCAP?
- Does the LCAP indicate the specific source(s) of funding (i.e., LCFF Base or Supplemental/Concentration) for each school-climate related action?
- What changes will be made to expenditures, particularly if the district did not make progress to achieving the expected annual measurable outcomes and/or is making changes to goals or actions?

School Climate Survey Goals

- Is necessary school climate survey data provided?
 - Is baseline data provided, and is it clear what school year it is from?
 - Is 2014-15 data included? If full year data is not yet available, does LCAP indicate that 2014-15 data is incomplete?
- Are there both sense of safety and connectedness goals based on surveys?
 - Are the goals specific and measurable?
- Do safety and connectedness goals address survey results for all three populations specified in statute—students, parents and staff?
- Does the LCAP specify the specific survey being used? (e.g., California Healthy Kids Survey)
- Is the district making progress towards achieving the expected annual measurable outcomes?

Conclusion

This analysis of the Local Control and Accountability Plans of the state's 50 largest school districts, representing 41% of public school students, shows that districts are taking positive steps to address school climate, which is one of eight state priorities for the Local Control Funding Formula. Yet there remains significant room for improvement, particular in terms of providing more specific details regarding goals, actions and expenditures. We encourage districts to incorporate more specific details into their upcoming annual LCAP updates and into future LCAPs.

Appendix – Breakdown of Findings for Each of California’s 50 Largest School Districts

<u>District</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Suspension Reduction Goals</u>	<u>Disaggregated Suspension Goal</u>	<u>PBIS/RP/SEL</u>	<u>Funding for PBIS/RP/SEL</u>	<u>School Climate Survey Goal</u>
Anaheim Union HSD	Orange	General	No	PBIS	Dedicated	No j
Antelope Valley Union HSD	Los Angeles	Ambiguous a	No	PBIS	No \$	Climate Generally
Bakersfield City SD	Kern	Specific	No	PBIS	Dedicated	Climate Generally
Capistrano USD	Orange	General	No	No	N/A	No
Chaffey Joint Union HSD	San Bernardino	General	No	No	N/A	No
Chino Valley USD	San Bernardino	Ambiguous b	No	No	N/A	Safety/Connectedness
Chula Vista EUSD	San Diego	Specific	No	No	N/A	No
Clovis USD	Fresno	Ambiguous b, c	Yes	No	N/A	No
Corona-Norco USD	Riverside	Specific	No	PBIS	Bundled	No j
Desert Sands USD	Riverside	Specific	No	PBIS	Dedicated	Safety
East Side Union HSD	Santa Clara	Ambiguous a, c	Yes	No	N/A	No
Elk Grove USD	Sacramento	Specific	Yes	PBIS	Dedicated	Connectedness
Fontana USD	San Bernardino	Specific	Yes	PBIS	Dedicated	No
Fremont USD	Alameda	Specific	No	PBIS	Dedicated	Safety/Connectedness
Fresno USD	Fresno	General	No	RP	Dedicated	Safety
Garden Grove USD	Orange	Specific	No	PBIS g	No \$	Safety/Connectedness
				SEL	Bundled	
Glendale USD	Los Angeles	Ambiguous b	No	No	N/A	Safety/Connectedness
Irvine USD	Orange	Specific	No	PBIS	Dedicated	No
Kern Union HSD	Kern	No Goal	No	PBIS	Dedicated	No
				RP	Bundled	
Lodi USD	San Joaquin	Ambiguous c	No	No	N/A	No
Long Beach USD	Los Angeles	Specific	No	RP	Dedicated	Climate Generally
Los Angeles USD	Los Angeles	Specific	Yes	PBIS & SEL	Bundled	Climate Generally
				RP	Dedicated	
Montebello USD	Los Angeles	Specific	No	No	N/A	Connectedness
Moreno Valley USD	Riverside	General	No	PBIS	Bundled	No
Mt Diablo USD	Contra Costa	Ambiguous a	No	PBIS	Bundled	Safety/Connectedness
Oakland USD	Alameda	Specific	Yes	PBIS & RP & SEL	Dedicated	No j

<u>District</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Suspension Reduction Goals</u>	<u>Disaggregated Suspension Goal</u>	<u>PBIS/RP/SEL</u>	<u>Funding for PBIS/RP/SEL</u>	<u>School Climate Survey Goal</u>
Orange USD	Orange	No Goal d	No	PBIS	Dedicated	Safety/Connectedness
Placentia-Yorba Linda USD	Orange	General	No	PBIS	Bundled	Safety k
Pomona USD	Los Angeles	Ambiguous c	No	PBIS h	Bundled	No
Poway USD	San Diego	Ambiguous a	No	PBIS & RP	Bundled	Safety
Rialto USD	San Bernardino	Ambiguous b	No	PBIS	Dedicated	No
Riverside USD	Riverside	Specific	No	PBIS	Dedicated	Climate Generally
Sacramento City USD	Sacramento	Specific	No	RP & SEL	Dedicated	Climate Generally
				PBIS	Bundled	
Saddleback Valley USD	Orange	Ambiguous b	No	No	N/A	No
San Bernardino City USD	San Bernardino	Specific	No	No	N/A	Connectedness l
San Diego USD	San Diego	Specific	No	PBIS & RP	Bundled	Safety
San Francisco USD	San Francisco	Specific	Yes	RP	Dedicated	Climate Generally
San Jose USD	Santa Clara	Specific	No	PBIS	Bundled	No j
San Juan USD	Sacramento	Specific	Yes	PBIS & RP	Dedicated	Safety/Connectedness
San Ramon Valley USD	Contra Costa	General	No	RP	No \$, i	Safety/Connectedness
Santa Ana USD	Orange	Specific	No	PBIS & RP	Bundled	Safety
Stockton USD	San Joaquin	No Goal	No	PBIS & RP	Bundled	No
Sweetwater Union HSD	San Diego	No Goal	No	No	N/A	No
Temecula Valley USD	Riverside	Ambiguous b	No f	PBIS	Dedicated	Connectedness
Torrance USD	Los Angeles	Specific	No	PBIS & RP	No \$	No j
Twin Rivers USD	Sacramento	Specific	No	No	N/A	Safety
Visalia USD	Tulare	General e	No	No	N/A	No
Vista USD	San Diego	Specific	No	No	N/A	Climate Generally
West Contra Costa USD	Contra Costa	Ambiguous b	Yes	RP	Dedicated	Safety/Connectedness
William S Hart Union HSD	Los Angeles	Specific	No	PBIS	Dedicated	No m

Definition of Terms:

Disaggregated Suspension Goal – Goal established for individual subgroup(s)

PBIS – Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

RP – Restorative Practices

SEL – Social Emotional Learning

Bundled – Funding for several actions listed under one expenditure, making it impossible to determine how much funding is intended for individual action

Dedicated – Funding level identified for individual action

Coding Guide to Findings:

- (a) Unclear if proposed reductions are compared to prior year or baseline year
- (b) Unclear if proposed reductions are one-time or annual (proposing ongoing reductions each year)
- (c) Unclear if proposed reductions are by percent or percentage point
- (d) Includes reduction goal for student incidents of behavior referrals to counseling and mental health services, not suspensions
- (e) Reduction goal for incidents leading to suspension
- (f) Unclear if goal relates to all students or to foster youth only
- (g) Counted as PBIS for including “work toward developing improved systems of positive behavior intervention programs and systems of support for students”
- (h) Counted as PBIS for including “positive behavior support”
- (i) Provides “Supported through existing Educational Services budget”
- (j) No survey-related goals on safety/connectedness/climate generally, although other survey-related goals listed
- (k) Also addresses climate generally
- (l) Surveys used to measure student engagement, yet listed under school climate priority; presumed to be related to connectedness
- (m) Survey listed as measure for school climate, but no specific goal tied to survey results

Endnotes

¹California Department of Education. (n.d.). Dataquest. Retrieved on January 21, 2015 from <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

² The first year LCAPs analyzed utilized the temporary LCAP template approved by the State Board of Education in January 2014. LCAP updates and future LCAPs will utilize the permanent LCAP template approved by the State Board in November 2014. LCAPs are for three years and must be updated annually. Ed. Code 52060(b).

³ Ed. Code 52060(c) provides that “A local control and accountability plan adopted by a governing board of a school district shall include, for the school district and each school within the school district, both of the following: (1) A description of the annual goals, for all pupils and each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved for each of the state priorities identified ... and for any additional local priorities identified by the governing board of the school district. (2) A description of the specific actions the school district will take during each year of the local control and accountability plan to achieve the goals identified” 52064 provides that the State Board shall adopt an LCAP template that “include[s] guidance for school districts, county superintendents of schools, and charter schools to report ...: A listing and description of expenditures for the 2014-15 fiscal year, and each fiscal year thereafter, implementing the specific actions included in the local control and accountability plan.”

The permanent LCAP for 2015-16 and beyond provides “For school districts, Education Code sections 52060 and 52061 ... require(s) the LCAP to include a description of the annual goals, for all pupils and each subgroup of pupils, to be achieved for each state priority as defined in 5 CCR 15495(i) and any local priorities; a description of the specific actions an LEA will take to meet the identified goals; a description of the expenditures required to implement the specific actions”

The temporary LCAP template for 2014-15 provided “For school districts, Education Code sections 52060 and 52061 ... require(s) the LCAP to include a description of the annual goals, for all pupils and each subgroup of pupils, for each state priority and any local priorities.... For school districts, Education Code sections 52060 and 52061 ... require the LCAP to include a description of the specific actions an LEA will take to meet the goals identified. Additionally Education Code section 52604 [sic] requires a listing and description of the expenditures required to implement the specific actions.

⁴ The subgroups, where numerically significant, are listed in Section 52052: Ethnic subgroups, Socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils, English learners, Pupils with disabilities, and Foster youth.

⁵ Permanent LCAP template (“For each LCAP year, identify and describe specific expected measurable outcomes for all pupils using, at minimum, the applicable required metrics for the related state priorities.... [T]he goal tables must address all required metrics for every state priority in each LCAP year. The required metrics are the specified measures and objectives for each state priority as set forth in Education Code sections 52060(d) and 52066(d)”); Temporary LCAP template (“must, at minimum, use the specific metrics that statute explicitly references as required elements for measuring progress within a particular state priority area”).

⁶ An example of school climate surveys is the California School Climate, Health and Learning Survey (Cal-SCHLS), developed for and supported by the California Department of Education. It is comprised of three interrelated surveys: The California Healthy Kids Survey for students, The California School Climate Survey for staff and The California School Parent Survey.

⁷ Just as the term “including” is directive as it relates to school climate surveys in the statute, it also reflects a directive requirement when used within other state priorities. For example, LCAPs are required to address specific metrics for parental involvement (efforts to seek input in parental decisionmaking, and promotion of parent participation in programs for unduplicated pupils and special need subgroups), which are also preceded by the term “including” in the LCFF statute. The LCAP template specifically highlights these parental involvement metrics in its list of required metrics, without even referencing the term “including.”

The use of the term “as applicable” prior to the listing of the school climate metrics should not be viewed as an invitation to ignore any of the metrics, just as “as applicable” when used in the same way prior to the list of the pupil achievement and pupil engagement priorities’ metrics would not be interpreted to invite districts to leave out required metrics such as statewide assessments or chronic absence. Presumably, “as applicable” would excuse addressing a particular metric if it were something that the district simply could not address, such as English learner reclassification rates for a district with no English learners or high school dropout rates for an elementary school district.

⁸ Permanent LCAP template (“identify and describe specific expected measurable outcomes” in Instructions, and “Expected Annual Measurable Outcomes” in template); Temporary LCAP template (“Describe annual goals and expected and actual progress toward meeting goals. This section must include specifics projected for the applicable term of the LCAP ...” in Instructions, and “What are the specific predicted outcomes/metrics/noticeable changes associated with each of the goals annually and over the term of the LCAP?” in Guiding Questions).

⁹ Fabelo, T., Thompson, M., Plotkin, M., Carmichael, D., Marchbanks, M.P., & Booth, E.A. (2011). Breaking Schools' Rules: A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates to Students' Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement. *Council of State Governments Justice Center*.

¹⁰ Fabelo et al., supra.

¹¹ Lochner, L. & Moretti, E. (2004). "The effect of education on crime: Evidence from prison inmates, arrests, and self reports." *The American Economic Review*, 94(1), 155-189; Criminal Justice Statistics Center, Office of the Attorney General. (n.d.). *California criminal justice profiles 2008, 2009, 2010*. Table 11. Retrieved on February 7, 2013 from <http://ag.ca.gov/cjsc/publications/profiles/pub.php>. Based on annual average of reported homicides and aggravated assaults from 2008–2010.

¹² Nader, Kathleen. (2012). *Violence Prevention and School Climate Reform*. National School Climate Center, School Climate Brief Number 5. Retrieved on January 13, 2015 from <http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/documents/policy/sc-brief-v5.pdf>; Gambone, M., Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2002). *Finding out what matters for youth: Testing key links in a community action framework for youth development*. Retrieved on January 13, 2015 from <http://www.ydsi.org/YDSI/pdf/WhatMatters.pdf>

¹³ Voight, A., Austin, G., & Hanson, T. (2013). *A climate for academic success: How school climate distinguishes schools that are beating the achievement odds* (Full Report). San Francisco: WestEd. Retrieved on January 13, 2015 from http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/hd-13-10.pdf

¹⁴ The Good Behavior Game is a relatively inexpensive, elementary school classroom-wide intervention in which a class is divided into groups and the groups compete for simple privileges, such as lining up first for lunch or recess. The approach, implemented by teachers, uses positive peer pressure to improve aggressive/disruptive classroom behavior and prevent later criminality. By developing students' self-control, later outcomes can be improved. Children assigned to first grade classrooms without the Good Behavior Game and an enhanced curriculum had a 37 percent higher risk of suspension in sixth grade than children in classrooms with those elements. In eleventh grade, the students left out had 2.5 times higher risk of recent suspension than those with the Good Behavior Game and enhanced curriculum, and the program also cut conduct disorders (a behavioral disorder with high correlation to delinquency) and experimentation with illicit and hard drugs by more than half. Ialongo, N., Ulmer, L., Kellam, S. & Brown, C.H. (n.d.). *Longer term outcomes of two universal, first-grade preventive intervention trials*. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Retrieved on July 6, 2011 from http://www.jhsph.edu/bin/c/a/session_2_slides_dr_ialongo.pdf. Interpretation of odds ratio by Nick Ialongo, personal communication July 6, 2011. A more recent GBG trial in Colorado found no results, so this approach should be carefully monitored when implemented and further studied. <http://www.rwjf.org/files/research/58328.final.pdf>

¹⁵ The Incredible Years is an approach that helps teachers manage the classroom environment. The Incredible Years has long been known as a proven parent training and child training approach for young children with severe early behavior problems. But researchers have now developed a teacher-led classroom management curriculum, Dinosaur School, which can be used as a prevention approach with all students in the early grades, not just those with severe behavior problems. Teachers work with children in small group activities and through vignettes, incorporating puppets, picture cue cards for non-readers, games and homework activities. Topics addressed include learning school rules, anger management, social skills and communication skills. One evaluation found that after 30 classroom lessons per year for preschoolers, kindergartners and first-graders, teacher use of positive classroom management strategies increased and students showed more emotional regulation and fewer conduct problems. The study found that Dinosaur School led to the greatest improvement for the kids who started with the highest levels of conduct problems. Similar improvements were seen for students with very poor initial levels of school readiness. Webster-Stratton, C., Reid, J., & Stoolmiller, M. (2008). Preventing conduct problems and improving school readiness: Evaluation of The Incredible Years Teacher and Child Training Programs in high-risk schools. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. 49 (5), 471-488.

¹⁶ PBIS is a universal, school-wide prevention strategy for improving behavior and school climate. PBIS uses a three-tiered public health model to create primary (school-wide), secondary (targeted) and tertiary (individual) systems of support. At the universal level, schools create three to five clear behavioral expectations and rules that all students and teachers know. Responses to inappropriate behavior are clearly defined, such as a teacher response – like a warning, time out, privilege loss or parent contact – versus sending a student to the principal's office or suspension or expulsion. Teachers and school leaders implement a rewards system to encourage students to exhibit positive behavior and be leaders for their peers. Students receive points or token rewards for positive behavior and are recognized periodically for their success. Research shows this is a promising approach. Bradshaw, C., Mitchell, M., & Leaf, P. (2010). Examining the effects of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports on student outcomes: Results from a randomized controlled effectiveness trial in elementary schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*. Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 133-148.

¹⁷ Restorative Justice or Restorative Practices in schools is another alternative school discipline policy that seeks to “encourage accountability, repair harm, and restore relationships.” A primary component of Restorative Practices is the use of circles, which bring together the offender(s) and those harmed and gives them the opportunity to sit down to discuss the issue and work together to find solutions to repair the damage and come up with an appropriate solution. Examples of solutions include a written apology from one student to another, an agreement between students to avoid the behaviors that led to a conflict or an agreement for students to help teachers with chores. Sumner, M., Silverman, C.J., & Frampton, M.L. (2010). *School-based restorative justice as an alternative to zero-tolerance policies: Lessons from West Oakland*. Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice, University of California, Berkeley, School of Law. Retrieved August 1, 2012 from <http://www.law.berkeley.edu/1109.htm>; Sherman, L., & Strang, H. (2007). *Restorative justice: The evidence*. London: The Smith Institute. Retrieved on August 9, 2012 from http://www.iirp.edu/pdf/RJ_full_report.pdf. An International Institute for Restorative Practices 2009 presentation showed before-and-after success stories of school-wide Restorative Practices in 10 schools in the United States, Canada and England, with meaningful to very impressive reductions in problem behaviors and suspensions. International Institute for Restorative Practices. (n.d.). *Improving school climate: Findings from schools implementing restorative practices*. Bethlehem, PA: Author. Retrieved on August 9, 2012 from <http://www.iirp.edu/pdf/IIRP-Improving-School-Climate.pdf>. An earlier, 2007 review by Lawrence Sherman and Heather Strang, top researchers in the field, found that when Restorative Justice programs were not fully implemented there were no significant differences in results between schools implementing Restorative Justice and control group schools. But, in the minority of schools where the effort was more fully implemented and for a longer period, the whole-school Restorative Justice model produced significant results compared to control group schools. Sherman, L., & Strang, H. (2007). *Restorative justice: The evidence*. London: The Smith Institute. Retrieved on August 9, 2012 from http://www.iirp.edu/pdf/RJ_full_report.pdf. Taken together, this indicates that Restorative Justice is certainly a promising approach that deserves to be more carefully studied and more widely disseminated if those studies confirm these very promising results.

¹⁸ These curricula or stand-alone programs help students proactively learn and practice valuable social-emotional skills like empathy, stress-management and problem-solving. A review of over 200 school-based, school-wide social and emotional learning programs found that participants demonstrated better social-emotional skills, fewer conduct problems and had lower levels of emotional distress. Academic performance was also improved, with participants scoring 11 percentiles higher on achievement tests. To be successful, such programs must be well implemented and include the “SAFE” criteria – Sequenced, Active, Focused, Explicit. Researchers believe that programs are more likely to be effective if they include a sequenced step-by-step training method, use active forms of learning, focus on skill development and specify explicit learning goals. Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011), The impact of enhancing students’ social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, 82: 405–432. The Positive Action program is a K-12 school-based social-emotional education program that teaches children that their positive behaviors can reinforce more positive behaviors in themselves and others. In one study of students from at-risk schools, Positive Action produced academic gains, (for example, a 50 percent relative improvement in the number of kids who score proficient in the state math test), dramatic cuts in suspensions, reductions in frequent fighting (23 percent vs. 33 percent), and a cut of more than half in the number of young people who reported having carried a gun (4.5 percent vs. 10.7 percent). Snyder, F.J., Flay, B.R., Vucinich, S., Acock, A., Washburn, I.J., Beets, M.W., & Li, K.K. (2010). Impact of a social-emotional and character development program on school-level indicators of academic achievement, absenteeism, and disciplinary outcomes: A matched-pair, cluster randomized, controlled trial. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*. 3(1), 26-55; Beets, M., Flay, B., Vuchinich, S., Snyder, F., Acock, A., Burns, K., et al. (2009). Use of a Social and Character Development Program to Prevent Substance Use, Violent Behaviors, and Sexual Activity Among Elementary-School Students in Hawaii. *American Journal of Public Health*, 99(8), 1438-1445.

¹⁹ Some districts do clearly propose relatively modest reductions of just 1 or 2 percent, rather than percentage point reductions, so it is important to be clear which kind of reduction is being proposed.

²⁰ Over three years, the measurement for the percentage point reduction goes from 6.9% prior to the LCAP, to 5.9% in Year 1, 4.9% in Year 3, and 3.9% in Year 3. The measurement for a percent reduction goes from 6.9% prior to LCAP, to 6.83% in Year 1, 6.76% in Year 2, and 6.7% in Year 3. In percent terms, the difference is between a 43 percent overall reduction over three years if reductions are one full percentage point annually (from 6.9% to 3.9%), compared to an approximately 3 percent overall reduction if it is just a one percent reduction (from 6.9% to 6.7%).

²¹ Applying these goals, when comparing reductions to prior years, if 1,000 suspension days were lost in the baseline year, a 2% decline would lead to 980 suspension days in Year 1 (1,000 – 20, which is 2% of 1,000), a 3% decline would lead to 951 suspension days lost in Year 2 (980 – 29, which is 3% of 980), and a 5% decline would lead to 903 days lost in Year 3

(951 – 48, which is 5% of 951). If the reductions were just compared to the baseline year, the proposed number of suspension days lost would be 980 in Year 1, 970 in Year 2, and 950 in Year 3.

²² The 35% overall proposed reduction when comparing reductions to prior years, rather than the baseline year, results from the following calculation: if 1,000 students were suspended in the baseline year, a 20% reduction in Year 1 leads to a goal of 800 students suspended (1,000 – 200, which is 20% of 1,000), a 10% reduction compared to Year 1 leads to a goal of 720 students suspended in Year 2 (800 – 80, which is 10% of 800), and a 10% reduction compared to Year 2 leads to a goal of 648 students suspended in Year 3 (720 – 72, which is 10% of 720). The proposed decline from 1,000 to 648 students suspended would be 35%. If all reductions are compared to the baseline year, the goal for the overall number of students suspended by Year 3 would be 600, representing a 40% reduction: 1,000 – 200 (20% of 1,000) in Year 1 – 100 (10% of 1,000) in Year 2 – 100 (10% of 1,000) in Year 3.

²³ Losen, D.J., Martinez, T., & Gillespie, J. (2012). *Suspended Education in California*, The Center for Civil Rights Remedies at the Civil Rights Project.

²⁴ Includes two districts that clearly identify office referrals and two districts that identify referrals more generally and therefore may cover office referrals.

²⁵ Does not count many districts that address social/emotional supports and needs, but not social emotional learning curriculum, in their LCAPs.

²⁶ Includes support staff identified in Stockton Unified LCAP Revision Presentation. Revised LCAP not yet available.

²⁷ Districts are counted as specifying the number of support staff provided that they specify the number for at least one category of support staff (i.e., counselors), even if they identify other categories of support staff without specifying the number of those that will be funded.

²⁸ Most common of those are culturally responsive learning in 12% (6 out of 50) of districts and cultural proficiency in 6% (3 out of 50) of districts.

²⁹ These include a few districts that reference school climate surveys for reasons unrelated to the school climate priority area.

³⁰ LCAPs often used 2012-13 data for baseline data for various metrics, given that the 2013-14 school year was not completed until very late in the LCAP process.

³¹ Ed. Code 52061.