



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

Strengthening Local K–12 Accountability

The Role of County Offices of Education

Technical Appendices

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Appendix A. Data Collection Methods

We developed data for this report from three sources. Surveys were sent to the 50 county superintendents that review and approve district LCAPs.¹ Of these, 43 responded. The survey was conducted by email in November and December 2015. Respondents were advised that all answers would be treated confidentially. We did not insist that the superintendent fill out the survey, and we are aware that, in several counties, a staff person completed it. Technical Appendix B presents a copy of the survey and collected responses.

Second, we interviewed county superintendents or other county office staff in 10 counties. The first set of interviews took place in July and August 2015. A second set of interviews was conducted in January and February 2016. These counties were chosen to include a range of counties based on size, geography, racial/ethnic composition, and urban/rural character. Interviews were designed to supplement our survey—to dig deeper into each county office’s LCAP process, the range of technical assistance provided to districts in that process, and the expectations of county office staff for how the process will unfold in the future. As with the survey, we promised confidentiality to those interviewed.

Third, we interviewed a small number of district staff on their views of the county LCAP process. Specifically, we interviewed staff in six districts that were located in four of the counties included in our county office interviews. Other studies have documented LCFF implementation in districts during the first two program cycles. Our goal for these interviews was to compare the views of county office and district staff on the local process, take the temperature of the COE-district relationship, and to gauge district enthusiasm for county office technical assistance.

¹ California has 58 counties. Eight counties have only one school district, however, and those LCAPs are reviewed by the California Department of Education.

Appendix B. PPIC Survey of California County Superintendents of Education

1. Overall, how would you rate the quality of 2015–16 district LCAPs in your county?

#	Answer	%
1	Excellent	9%
3	Fair	33
2	Good	58
4	Poor	0
	Total	100

2. Overall, compared to the 2014–15 LCAPs, was the quality of 2015-16 district LCAPs in your county higher, lower, or about the same?

#	Answer	%
1	Higher than in 2014-15 plans	84%
2	About the same as the 2014-15 plans	14
3	Lower than the 2014-15 plans	2
	Total	100

3. Next, please rate the overall quality of 2015–16 district LCAPs in your county in each of the following areas:

#	Question	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
1	The clarity of district goals and improvement actions	10%	50%	40%	0%	100%
2	The clarity of the district budget plan	5	73	22	0	100
3	The description of how supplemental and concentration funds are used	2	38	57	2	100
4	The extent that teachers and principals participated in the LCAP process	2	41	44	12	100
5	The extent that parents and the public participated in setting district priorities	7	52	33	7	100

4. Did your county office offer extra technical assistance to individual districts in preparing their 2015–16 LCAPs? We define "extra" technical assistance as information or guidance to help districts improve the quality of their plans (e.g. assisting a district in refining LCAP goals or helping a district identify programs or services that would address their LCAP goals).

#	Answer	%
1	Yes	98%
2	No	2
	Total	100

5. Please indicate the types of extra technical assistance your county provided to individual districts in the preparation and approval of district 2015–16 LCAPs. Please select all that apply.

#	Answer	%
1	Help in identifying district strengths and weaknesses	71%
2	Help in defining goals or setting targets	86
3	Help in strengthening improvement plans to address district goals	79
4	Help in aligning district budgets with its improvement plan	86
5	Help in strengthening district leadership and principal training	43
6	Other (see below)	24

Other
Data collection and analysis to identify needs.
Identifying research based strategies.
Identifying implementation strategies.
Systems change - implementation and progress monitoring.
Connect with stakeholders and gather input.

6. Did your county office charge a fee for any of the extra technical assistance provided in the preparation and approval of the 2015–16 LCAPs?

#	Answer	%
1	Yes	2%
2	No	98
3	Don't know	0
	Total	100

7. Overall, do you think the LCAP process will improve the quality of education in California?

#	Answer	%
1	Yes	79%
2	No	0
3	Don't know	21
	Total	100

8. In the long run, what role do you expect your county office will have in providing technical assistance under LCFF?

#	Answer	%
1	We would provide MOST of the technical assistance districts need to improve	71%
2	We would provide technical assistance in MANY areas and help districts find other sources for the rest	29
3	We would provide technical assistance in a FEW areas and help districts find other sources for the rest	0
4	We expect to provide VERY LITTLE technical assistance	0
	Total	100

9. At the conclusion of the current three-year LCAP, county offices may be required to provide technical assistance to struggling districts. Overall, what types of technical assistance do you anticipate your districts will need to improve on the LCAP outcomes?

#	Answer	%
1	Identifying district strengths and weaknesses	93%
2	Curriculum development	69
3	Strengthening improvement plans and budgets	88
4	Defining goals or setting targets	81
5	District leadership and principal training	83
6	Other (see below)	21
7	I don't anticipate our districts will need technical assistance	0

Other
Monitoring progress and adjusting as needed in a timely manner. Focusing goals and actions so they are attainable. Prioritizing goals and actions. Systems development to monitor implementation and progress Research-based practices and professional development aligned to 8 state priorities. Tools for measuring data aligned to metrics. Using data to change. Messaging with parents and other stakeholders. Supporting strategic thinking and planning. Identifying, tracking, reporting, and analyzing meaningful data. Measuring academic return on investment. Strategically allocating resources.

10. Next, thinking about the LCAP process, please rate how important each of the following are in helping districts improve the quality of education. Please select only one response for each row.

#	Question	Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not at all important	Total
1	Broadening the range of K-12 goals	23%	54%	18%	5%	100%
2	Setting explicit goals for the eight state priorities	46	37	10	7	100
3	Requiring Input from parents, teachers, and the public	66	32	2	0	100
4	Coordinating the use of resources to address needs of students	88	10	2	0	100
5	Encouraging districts to think strategically about the best use of new funds	93	7	0	0	100

11. Thinking about the LCAP process, please rank each of the following types of resources in order of which would be the most helpful to county offices in offering assistance to their districts. Please rank in order where 1 = most helpful to county offices and 5 = least helpful.

#	Answer	1	2	3	4	5
1	A permanent source of funding for technical assistance	83%	2%	12%	2%	0%
2	Technical assistance on how to work with districts on improving their LCAPs	0	15	20	34	32
3	A clearinghouse of county office, district, and non-profit providers of quality technical assistance	2	12	10	29	46
4	Information on exemplary district practices pegged to the eight state priorities	10	59	15	12	5
5	Technical assistance on using strategic planning to improve the quality of schools	5	12	44	22	17
	Total	100	100	100	100	100

12. Do you think the state should make significant changes to the LCAP process for 2016–17?

#	Answer	%
1	Yes	12%
2	No	79
3	Don't know	10
	Total	100

13. If you responded “yes” to question 12, please select the changes you think the state should make in the LCAP process. Please select all that apply.

#	Answer	%
1	Restrict the number of goals	60%
2	Eliminate the multi-year projections of outcomes and budget allocations	20
3	Limit the overall length of LCAPs	60
4	Other (see below)	80

Other (please specify)
Give county superintendents more authority over process and outcomes
Change the template to be more reader friendly
Clarity of expectations- consistent message from state.
Simplify



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