

Parent Advocacy and the LCAP Process

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This week's blog focuses on how parents can advocate for programs that address their children's educational needs. Public schools and districts have always encouraged parental engagement and advocacy. Now, under the State of California's [Local Control Funding Formula \(LCFF\)](#) these are essential. The LCFF, which took effect in the 2013-14 school year, determines funding for public schools in our state. The LCFF requires each school district to develop a [Local Control Accountability Plan \(LCAP\)](#). It further requires that the LCAP be written in collaboration with parents, educators, employees and community members. The LCAP determines how state funding will be spent in each school district. Districts are reaching out to parents to be part of the LCAP process. In order for the LCAP process to develop a truly effective plan, parents from all parts of the community must participate.

The LCFF allocates a uniform base grant to each school district based on student attendance. In addition,

supplemental grants are allocated for the benefit of targeted disadvantaged student groups. These groups include English Learners and students who are economically disadvantaged. LCAP committees, comprised of parents, educators, employees and community members, have a great deal of power in determining how state funds will be used. It is imperative that parents, whose children are English Learners and/or receive free and reduced lunch, be members of these LCAP committees.

How can parents advocate for their children's educational needs in the LCAP process? Here are some ways:

- Become a member of your school district's LCAP committee.

- Attend the annual open forums in your district where parents are invited to provide input to the LCAP.

- Attend school site council meetings and give feedback on how your school is spending its funding allocation.

- If your child is an English Learner, attend ELAC (English Learner Advisory Committee) meetings at your school. Give input when your school's plan is being reviewed.

- If you are an ELAC member, attend DELAC (District English Learner Advisory Committee). Provide feedback when the LCAP is reviewed.

- Participate in DAC (District Advisory Committee) meetings focused on serving students who are

economically disadvantaged.

Provide feedback to your principal or members of your district's LCAP committee on how you feel funds should be used.

Speak with other parents about the effectiveness of the educational programs in your school and district. As a group, advocate for your children's needs through the forums mentioned above.

Many of you advocate for and support parents whose voices are seldom heard. This may be because they speak another language, or were not raised in this educational system. You educate parents who sometimes just don't realize the power they have to influence decisions about educational programs at their schools and districts. Thank you for your important work.

The LCFF was developed to give local communities more control in educating their children. It can be an equitable method of funding schools if all parents' voices are part of the process. Use the system for the benefit of your children and encourage other parents to do the same.

With love and affection,

Rosemarie

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