

Local Control Accountability Plans Year 2:

Tips for Integrating the LCAP into Charter School Operations and Annual Updates

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Think back to 2013 when California implemented the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF): a reorganized funding model for public schools. LCFF consolidated several K-12 funding streams into base, supplemental, and concentration grants with the goal of simplifying how funding is allocated to local educational agencies (LEAs) and how LEAs can use those funds. Allocating resources in the previous model was like getting paid in gift cards: each funding source had its own specific set of rules and uses. Under LCFF, there is much greater flexibility in using the consolidated funding stream to improve academic outcomes for students. With this flexibility comes an additional layer of accountability for all charters, districts, and county offices. Now, enter the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)!

An LCAP describes in detail how LEAs will meet annual goals for all pupils and specific initiatives to address state and local activities. With the first year of LCFF implementation and LCAP writing complete, this year is dedicated to updating the LCAP and reflecting on goals and progress. Each of the LCAP sections should be reviewed carefully and with broad input from stakeholders. The LCAP is a strategic document that can provide a road map for the three years of the plan. The LCAP is:

<p>A THREE-YEAR PLAN, WITH UPDATES & REVISIONS</p>	<p>Don't leave it on a shelf! This year is a plan for 2015-2018, but also must include an annual update that explains what you actually did versus what you said you would do.</p>
<p>A PRACTICAL TOOL FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SCHOOL'S VISION</p>	<p>Demonstrates how the vision set out in your charter translates to day-to-day implementation.</p>
<p>A DESCRIPTION OF THE WHOLE STORY OF THE SCHOOL'S RESOURCES AND MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS</p>	<p>The LCAP forces you to tie together other plans that may be in place (e.g. Single Plan for Student Achievement, LEA Plans). Your LCAP should include other funding sources, such as Title 1, if they relate to actions that are helping implement goals.</p>

**A TOOL FOR CHECKING PROGRESS
THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR**

Don't save checking metrics until the end of the year; examine the metrics throughout the year to see if actions are working.

As the budgeting and goal setting time of year is here, let's review the major pieces of the LCAP and tips for annually updating each area.

LCAP Section 1: Stakeholder Engagement

Recall that a key motivation for LCFF is the belief that local decisions are more likely to benefit students than one-size-fits-all state-level mandates. With that comes the responsibility at the local level to report the process used to consult with all stakeholders and how it contributed to the development of the LCAP and annual update. Stakeholders include parents, students, school personnel, and members of the community.

Tips for updating Section 1:

- Engage early and often but do not ask for information you are not planning to use, and set a calendar of engagement events that is accessible to everyone.
- Work to develop an organizational culture that is transparent and open to debate.
- Use different methods of communication to reach all stakeholders effectively -- this can include communications in multiple languages!

Section 2: State Priority Areas

LCAPs must include a description of annual goals to be achieved for each student subgroup for each of the eight state priority areas. There are required metrics for each state priority, and charters can also use their own local measurements. Financial data – spending on subgroups of students – is also part of this section.

Tips for updating Section 2:

- Include all funding sources, not just supplemental and concentration funding. Including other plans or links to other plans (Common Core, LEA, etc.) will better describe the school's holistic effort to improve student outcomes.
- Change processes and systems need to link expenditures to goals. This is called goal-based budgeting and is a main objective of the LCAP. First, assess students' needs, then set goals based on those needs and create an action plan, and last, connect expenditures to those goals.
- Make sure to use multiple methods to measure outcomes. There is no pass on this despite the lack of API scores. Make sure to allow enough time for something to work; sometimes a year is not enough, which is an advantage to a three year plan with updates!



Section 3: Use of Supplemental and Concentration Funds and Proportionality

In section 3A, LEAs must identify the amount of supplemental and concentration grant funds and how they will be expended in 2015-2016. If provided charter-wide, the school must describe how such services are principally directed and are effective towards meeting the goals for its unduplicated count students. In section 3B, LEAs must identify the Minimum Proportionality Percentage (MPP) and provide a description of how the LEA will increase or improve services for its low income, English learners, and foster youth. In other words, during the transition to full implementation of LCFF, LEAs must make adequate progress toward spending the proportionate share of the increase on the students who generated the supplemental and concentration grant funds.

Tips for updating Section 3:

- To identify your projected LCFF funding, make use of the FCMAT LCFF calculator! <http://fcmat.org/local-control-funding-formula-resources/>
- Ensure expenditures to support these students are reasonable and sufficient for making progress on achievement goals in the LCAP.

Developing, implementing, and refreshing the LCAP is no small undertaking, but the connection to LCFF goals and a state-wide push to better support students with the highest needs is clear. The rewards of an annual strategic planning session, deep stakeholder involvement, and transparency around funding priorities are valuable at all levels of charter school organizations.

Using the LCAP as part of your school's operating plan will provide a roadmap for implementing the mission and vision of your charter.

For more detailed information on preparing the LCAP, download EdTec's presentation from the 2015 Charter Leadership Forum at <https://edtecinc.box.com/lcap-year2> 