

Contact:
Bill Lucia
Phone: 916.448.3868
Email: bill@edvoice.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State Budget Proposal Fails to Ensure Funding Is Spent to Close Achievement Gaps

Sacramento, CA – January 10, 2018—The 2018-19 California budget proposes to program ongoing revenue gains from the lengthy economic recovery into the state’s rainy-day account (“piggy bank”) to plan ahead for any economic slowdown on the horizon. And, importantly, it proposes to fully fund the Proposition 98 K-14 minimum school funding guarantee, and fully fund the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) to local school districts. However, EdVoice released the following statement today expressing strong concerns that nothing in the state budget ensures that schools will be held accountable for improving student learning:

“Getting through the acronyms and jargon of education finance can indeed be a challenge,” said Bill Lucia, President of EdVoice. “This proposal provides more money but nothing new on transparency and nothing new on accountability to ensure all kids have a great teacher and a great school. Nothing in the proposal demonstrates the state itself is serious on working to close academic achievement gaps. It’s not just about the money. It’s whether the money is putting the needs of children first instead of the bureaucrats and adults employed by the school system.

“To some it may seem like all is great for California schools. The budget now suggests schools are fully funded and on a path so students can learn. But Legislators, parents, and education stakeholders should not be fooled. Buried in the budget, on page 24 titled Fiscal Transparency, there are purportedly new proposals to require local educational agencies (LEAs) to link budget expenditures for funds received under LCFF to their strategies to serve disadvantaged students generating the extra money for the district.”

The budget also extols a new accountability system, which simply doesn’t exist. Accountability means certain rewards and consequences based on actual results. However, the budget document acknowledges on page 25 that California’s new accountability scheme under LCFF is voluntary. And with respect to federal accountability the U.S. Department of Education recently rejected the state’s plan. California fails to comply with minimum accountability signed into law by President Obama two years ago, requiring states receiving extra resources from the federal government to submit plans to demonstrate systems are in place to ensure that all public schools are working to address the extra challenges in educating disadvantaged youth.

A recent California Assembly Education Committee bill analysis acknowledges there is no accountability for the lowest-performing 5% of schools, noting, “...while it was originally thought that the SBE might take final action at the January 2018 meeting, due to recent feedback from the Federal government about the state’s accountability plan which will require revisions, it no longer appears probable that the SBE will take action this month. It is more likely that the SBE would be ready to

take action in identifying the lowest 5% of schools in either March or May. Therefore, the Committee should consider whether this bill is premature.”

“This budget doubles down on flawed language already in state law,” Lucia continued. “The state is saying it will track dollars to the administration and bureaucrats in school districts but not to the school level where disadvantaged students are that generated the extra income to the district; and, the supposedly new proposal to produce a website to track the amount of funding provided to each ‘local educational agency’ is like re-gifting a wedding present. That website already exists but ‘local educational agencies’ are district headquarters where the bureaucrats are, not the schools where the principals and hardworking teachers are working every day to help disadvantaged kids reach grade level expectations. That’s the whole problem; this budget proposal does not improve fiscal transparency at all.

“Nor does the budget proposal address recent litigation on the right to literacy that alleges the state is systematically writing off English learners and disadvantaged students and the state’s full economic potential. Just recently, a third major lawsuit against the state’s LCFF/LCAP plan, [Ella T v. State of California](#), was filed to challenge the state’s dereliction in addressing the failure of adults to ensure every child’s constitutional right to be taught how to read.”

Lucia said, “Filing parent lawsuits is not a constitutional system of accountability. California is systematically ignoring the academic failure of 60% of its school aged enrollment.”

According to the most recent state results, 73% of low-income students, 72% of Hispanic/Latino students, 78% of African American students and 85% of English learners are not meeting standards in 4th grade math. Only 3 out of every 20 English learners is at grade level in math in 4th grade.

EdVoice is a nonprofit advocacy organization based in Sacramento working to increase student achievement for all students in California and eliminate inequality of educational opportunity.

###

Website for funding data at “district” level on LCFF supplement and concentration grants:

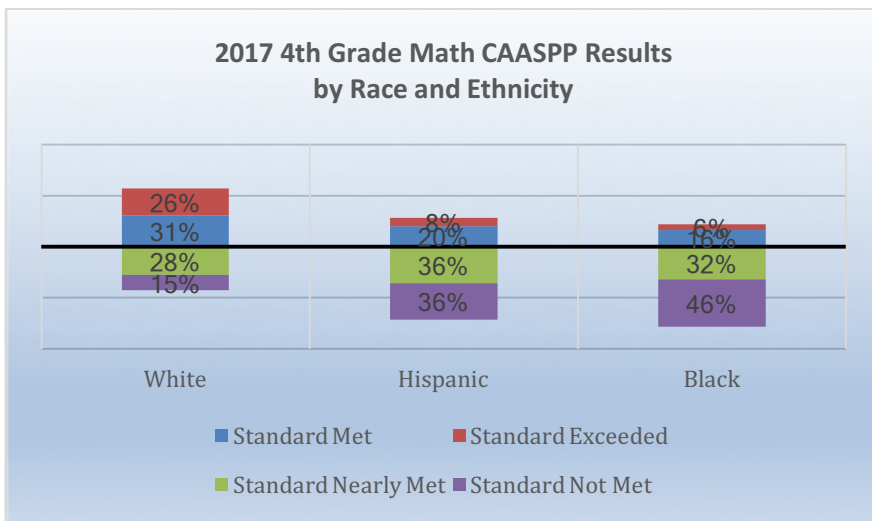
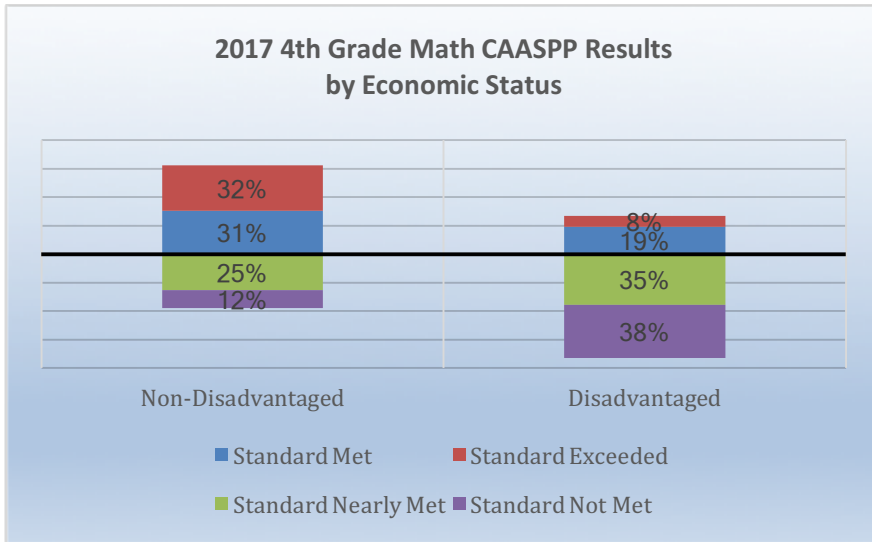
<http://ias.cde.ca.gov/lcffreports/>

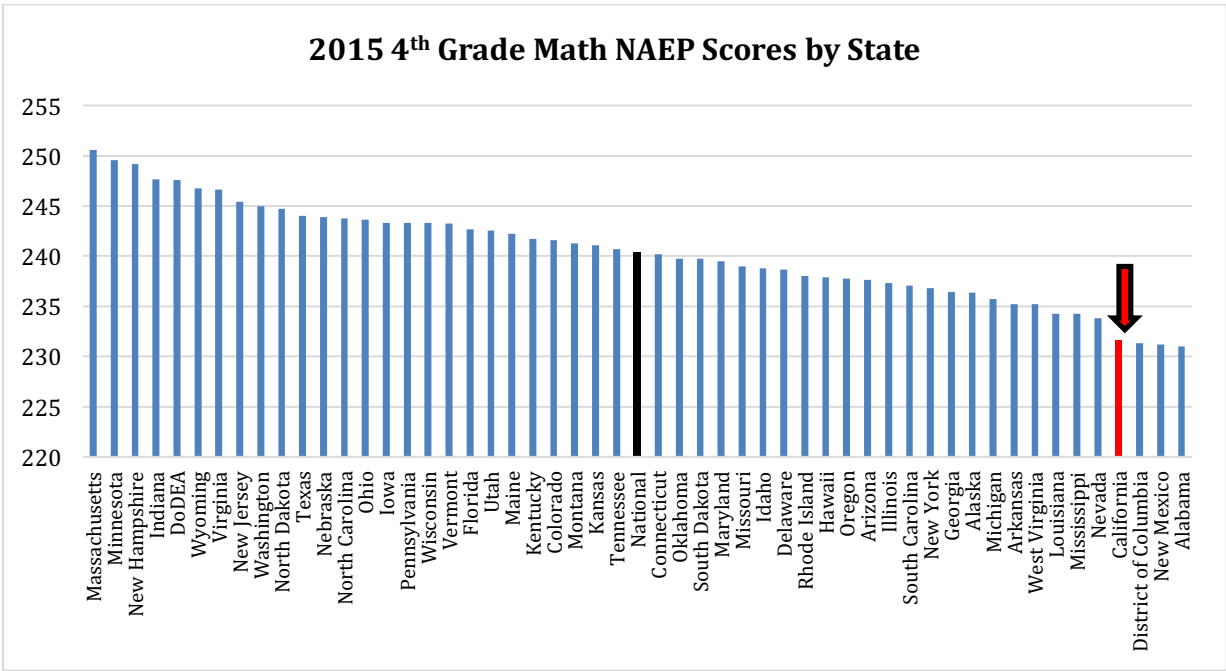
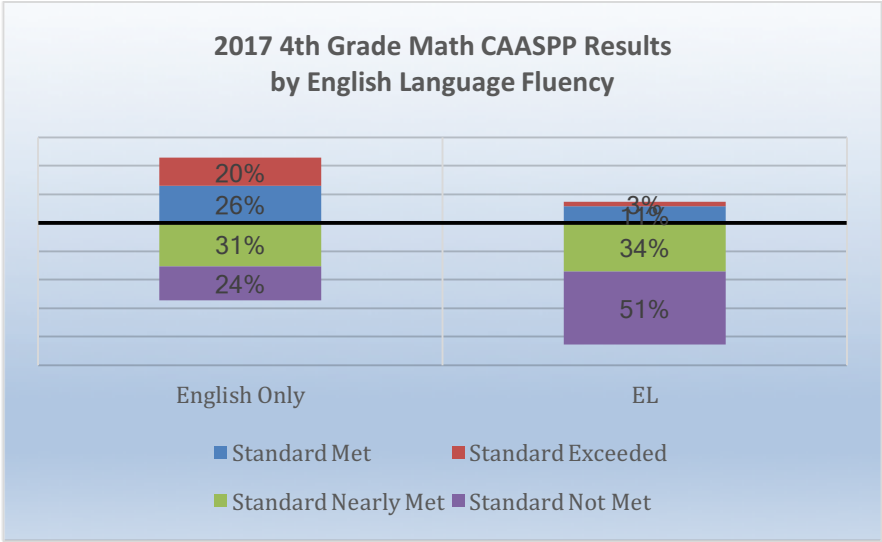
Title V Regulations: § 15496. Requirements for LEAs to Demonstrate Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Pupils in Proportion to the Increase in Funds Apportioned for Supplemental and Concentration Grants.

(a) An LEA shall provide evidence in its LCAP to demonstrate how funding apportioned on the basis of the number and concentration of unduplicated pupils, pursuant to Education Code sections 2574, 2575, 42238.02, and 42238.03 is used to support such pupils. This funding shall be used to increase or improve services for unduplicated pupils as compared to the services provided to all pupils in proportion to the increase in funds apportioned on the basis of the number and concentration of unduplicated pupils as required by Education Code section 42238.07(a)(1). An LEA shall include in its LCAP an explanation of how expenditures of such funding meet the LEA’s goals for its unduplicated pupils in the state priority areas. An LEA shall determine the percentage by which services for unduplicated pupils must be increased or improved above services provided to all

pupils in the fiscal year as follows...

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 42238.07 and 52064, Education Code. Reference: Sections 2574, 2575, 42238.01, 42238.02, 42238.03, 42238.07, 47605, 47606.5, 52052, 52060, 52061, 52062, 52063, 52064, 52066, 52067, 52068, 52069, 52070, and 52070.5, Education Code; 20 U.S.C. Sections 6312 and 6314.





2015 4th Grade Math NAEP Scores by State for Students Eligible for Free & Reduced Price Lunch

