

## Changes in California Public Education

Starting in the 2014-15 school year, districts across California implemented a new school funding structure authorized by the California State Legislature. Known as the **Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)**, this funding structure consolidated numerous former state “categories” of funds into *one* category that aspires to not only make school funding less complex, but also to provide more targeted support to students who, historically, have been challenged to master state academic standards.

With creation of the LCFF came a new planning document, the **Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)**, which the NSD Governing Board must approve annually. The LCAP sets forth how a district will elevate students to mastery of state standards (now the Common Core State Standards) by addressing eight state priorities. These priorities are:

- Provision of Basic Services (e.g., students have fully credentialed teachers and access to current instructional materials)
- Implementation of State Standards (students are taught the State Board of Education-adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS))
- Course Access (i.e., students have access to all areas of study)
- Student Achievement (students are meeting or exceeding standards [Common Core] on State tests [California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress-CAASPP]; English Learners are attaining proficiency in English )
- Other Student Outcomes (students are attaining proficiency on District-created assessments)
- Student Engagement (e.g., students attend school consistently; students report that they fully participate in their learning)
- School Climate (e.g., student suspension rate is low; the school environment is focused on positive behaviors)
- Parent Involvement (e.g., parents attend conferences and school activities; parents volunteer in the classroom and in school activities)

The LCAP is a three-year plan that must be updated annually. The process for updating the plan requires districts to engage as many “stakeholders” as possible, particularly parents and students. Preceding the Governing Board’s adoption of the plan in June are numerous stakeholder meetings that not only provide information on progress toward LCAP goals, but also solicit input in preparation for the following year’s Plan update. To view the NSD LCAP go to: <http://www.newhallschooldistrict.net/>

Besides the new school funding (LCFF) and accountability (LCAP) structures, there are also new State tests (CAASP) that were administered to students for the first time in the spring of 2015. CAASPP aligns to the CCSS, is administered on-line, and is considerably more rigorous than the State’s previous tests under the defunct Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program. CAASPP results, therefore, should not be compared to STAR results.

There is one additional change in California’s public education system. It will not be in place until 2016 or even later. What was formerly known as the **Academic Performance Index (API)**, a system for rating school performance based on annual State test results, came to an end at the conclusion of the 2012-13 school year, the last year STAR testing was administered.

The California legislature will be creating a new accountability “index” which will not only be calculated based on State test results, but also based on other elements (presumably related to the eight State priorities).

With changes in funding, accountability and testing, California is truly entering a new era in public education.