RIVERSIDE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
EDWIN GOMEZ, Ed.D.
County Superintendent of Schools

DATE: August 28, 2026

TO: Dr. Gordon Amerson, District Superintendent
Ms. Melinda Young, Board President
Mr. Garrick Owen, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services
Dr. Ronnie Henderson, Assistant Superintendent, Education Services
Val Verde Unified School District

FROM: Edwin Gomez, Ed.D., Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

BY: Scott Price, Ph.D.
Associate Superintendent
(951) 826-6790

Amanda Corridan
Associate Superintendent
(951) 826-6648

SUBJECT: **2026-27 LCAP and ADOPTED BUDGET – APPROVAL**

The County Superintendent of Schools is required to review and approve the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) before the approval of the district's Adopted Budget [Education Code Section 42127(d)(2)].

<u>Adopted Local Control and Accountability Plan</u>
In accordance with California Education Code (EC) Section 52070, our office has completed its review of the district's 2026-27 LCAP to determine whether it adheres to the guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE).

The district's adopted LCAP has been analyzed to determine whether:

- The plan adheres to the template adopted by the State Board of Education.
- The budget includes sufficient expenditures to implement the actions and strategies included in the plan, based on the projected costs included in the plan.
- The plan adheres to the expenditure requirements for funds apportioned on the basis of the number and concentration of unduplicated pupils.
- The plan includes the calculations to determine whether there is required carryover. If applicable, the plan includes a description of the planned uses of the specified funds and a description of how the planned uses of those funds satisfy the requirements for specific actions to be considered as contributing toward meeting the increased or improved services requirement.

The district's adopted LCAP has been analyzed in the context of the guidance provided by the California County Superintendents and the California Department of Education (CDE). Based on our analysis, the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan for the 2026-27 fiscal year has been **approved** by the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools. Our goal is to further enhance the performance of students by providing feedback and inquiry questions that will support the refinement of future Local Control and Accountability Plans, and any additional plans designed to close the achievement gap in metrics that impact student preparedness for college and career.

Student Achievement

The purpose of the LCAP is to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills necessary to be successful in both college and career. The Riverside County Office of Education conducted a review of research on TK-12 college readiness indicators to identify those that would align with the LCAP purpose and have the greatest impact. As a result of this research, we recommend that local education agencies (LEAs) closely monitor the metrics listed in the data table below for all student groups.

Val Verde Unified School District
Student Groups – Program Participation Status

Indicator	LEA	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED)	English Learner (EL)	Long-Term English Learner (LTEL)	Foster Youth (FY)	Homeless Youth (HY)	Students with Disabilities (SWD)
Enrollment Count 2025[1]	19,080	16,738	3,916		218	761	2,655
Enrollment Percent 2025[1]		87.7	20.5		1.1	4.0	13.9
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Proficiency 2025[2]	-25.8	-31.2	-55.9	-108.8	-74.7	-50.8	-121.2
Mathematics Distance from Proficiency 2025[2]	-79.9	-85.6	-101.0	-176.3	-119.4	-99.3	-157.5
Science Points 2025[2]	47.5	46.5	39.8	32.4	38.4	41.3	34.0
English Learner Progress Indicator 2025[2]			46.3	47.3			
Graduation Rate 2025[2]	95.1	94.9	87.9	90.5	66.7	88.5	85.2
College/Career Indicator Rate 2025[2]	57.4	56.5	29.8	30.8	10.3	36.8	17.7
A-G Completion Rate 2025[2]	57.0	56.0	34.0	34.0	16.7	40.4	17.0
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2025[2]	49.7	49.8	42.3	46.6	13.3	32.8	39.6
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2025[2]	24.1	25.4	21.0	29.5	32.8	35.7	31.9
Suspension Rate 2025[2]	2.7	2.8	2.0	4.2	13.0	2.3	4.5

[1]2025 California School Dashboard Downloadable Enrollment File (No LTEL Data Available)
[2]2025 California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Downloadable Data Files
Note: Blanks indicate that no public data is available for this data point.

Val Verde Unified School District Student Groups – Race/Ethnicity									
Indicator	LEA	American Indian	Asian	Black/African American	Filipino	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races
Enrollment Count 2025[1]	19,080	43	271	2,013	201	15,332	46	635	398
Enrollment Percent 2025[1]		0.2	1.4	10.6	1.1	80.4	0.2	3.3	2.1
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Proficiency 2025[2]	-25.8	-46.3	27.1	-40.3	74.1	-27.2	-6.8	-7.5	-17.6
Mathematics Distance from Proficiency 2025[2]	-79.9	-88.5	-13.5	-97.2	12.3	-81.5	-56.5	-51.3	-72.7
Science Points 2025[2]	47.5		60.1	44.2	64.7	47.3		53.1	47.1
Graduation Rate 2025[2]	95.1		88.0	95.7	100.0	94.9		94.4	97.1
College/Career Indicator Rate 2025[2]	57.4		72.0	53.0	87.5	57.7		46.3	55.9
A-G Completion Rate 2025[2]	57.0		76.0	57.0	93.8	56.2		48.1	67.6
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2025[2]	49.7		28.0	44.6	43.8	51.4		48.1	29.4
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2025[2]	24.1	24.0	11.3	25.9	4.2	24.3	45.2	18.3	30.8
Suspension Rate 2025[2]	2.7	0.0	0.7	6.0	0.5	2.2	7.4	1.7	5.1

[1] California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Files
[2] CDE Dataquest and Files
Note: Blanks indicate that no public data is available for this data point.

We offer the following commendations and inquiry questions to consider for the implementation of the 2026-27 Local Control and Accountability Plan and the refinement of the plan in future years:

<u>Student Success in Academics</u>

The district is to be commended for demonstrating measurable improvement in student achievement, as reflected by continued gains in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and foundational literacy. Continued growth in early literacy outcomes, increased English Learner reclassification rates, and higher percentages of K–2 students meeting benchmark expectations reflect the district's sustained investment in foundational literacy instruction, language development, and targeted supports that are improving academic outcomes for students.

Additional dialogue related to the questions below may support the achievement of the goals and desired outcomes aligned with student academic achievement:

- How might the district build upon recent improvements in ELA, mathematics, and English Learner Progress to sustain academic growth and accelerate learning for student groups that continue to perform below districtwide outcomes?
- How might the district strengthen its evaluation of instructional supports and interventions to ensure Foster Youth, Students with Disabilities, and other historically underserved student groups experience sustained academic growth across multiple state and local indicators?
- How might the district strengthen vertical articulation across elementary and middle school by ensuring Tier I instruction, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), instructional coaching, and targeted interventions are implemented consistently to improve student achievement?

<u>Student Access, Enrollment, and Success in Rigorous Coursework</u>

The district is to be commended for significantly improving college and career readiness, as demonstrated by the increase in the College/Career Indicator (CCI) prepared rate. Continued growth in A-G completion, A-G Plus completion, Advanced Placement (AP) participation, Dual Enrollment, and college credit attainment reflects the district's sustained commitment to expanding equitable access to rigorous postsecondary pathways. For the Class of 2025, both A-G completion and A-G Plus completion increased, reflecting continued progress in preparing students for college and career success. Notably, English Learners demonstrated meaningful gains across each of these indicators, highlighting the district's continued efforts to increase college and career readiness for historically underserved student groups.

Additional dialogue related to the questions below may support achievement of the goals and desired outcomes aligned to student access, enrollment, and success in rigorous coursework:

- How might the district build upon its success in the CCI outcomes by strengthening systems that ensure equitable access, participation, and success in rigorous college and career pathways for Foster Youth, Students with Disabilities, English Learners, and Long-Term English Learners?
- How can the district strengthen a coherent instructional system that aligns rigorous coursework, grade-level instruction, academic intervention, and student supports to ensure increased access leads to improved academic achievement and college and career readiness for all student groups?
- How might the district use disaggregated data on academic achievement, participation in rigorous coursework, course completion, and college and career readiness to identify

opportunity gaps and strengthen the instructional and student supports needed to improve equitable outcomes across student groups?

Student Engagement and School Climate

The district is to be commended for demonstrating meaningful progress in student engagement and school climate, as reflected in reduced suspension rates and sustained reductions in chronic absenteeism. These improvements reflect the district's continued investment in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), restorative practices, attendance initiatives, family engagement, and comprehensive Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) that prioritize students' social-emotional well-being and school connectedness.

Additional dialogue related to the questions below may support achievement of the goals and desired outcomes aligned to student engagement and school climate:

- How might the district examine the implementation and effectiveness of its attendance, behavioral, and restorative support systems across school sites to better understand which practices are contributing to improved student engagement and reduced chronic absenteeism, particularly for Foster Youth, Students with Disabilities, English Learners, Long-Term English Learners, and students experiencing homelessness?
- The district has made significant investments in social-emotional learning, PBIS, counseling, mental health services, and relationship-based supports. How might the district evaluate the collective impact of these investments on student engagement, school climate, attendance, and student well-being to inform continuous improvement across all school sites?
- How might the district continue to leverage student voice, family engagement, educational partner feedback, and school climate data to strengthen student connectedness, attendance, belonging, and school climate while informing decision-making and expanding meaningful leadership, extracurricular, and authentic learning opportunities for students?

To access resources and tools that will support future LCAP development, please go to https://www.rcoe.us/services-for-districts/assessment-accountability-and-continuous-improvement/lcap-support/.

Adopted Budget

In accordance with California Education Code (EC) Section 42127, our office has completed its review of the district's 2026-27 Adopted Budget to determine whether it complies with the criteria and standards adopted by the SBE and whether it allows the district to meet its financial obligations for the 2026-27 fiscal year, as well as satisfy its multi-year financial commitments.

The district's Adopted Budget was developed in the context of the Governor's 2026-27 May Revise. Subsequently, the 2026-27 State Budget was adopted, which contained differences from the May Revise. On August 4, 2026, the district's board approved a 45-Day Revise incorporating the enacted State Budget's impact. Our office incorporated the district's revised multi-year financial projection into our review and final determination.

Based on our analysis of the information submitted and our assessment of revenue changes in the enacted State Budget, we approve the district's budget, but would like to highlight the following:

Enrollment and Average Daily Attendance (ADA) – The district estimates 17,587 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 0.8 percent decrease from the certified 2025-26 P-2 ADA. For 2027-28 and for 2028-29, the district projects to remain flat in ADA each year. The district's attendance projections for the two subsequent fiscal years appear optimistic based on historical trends. It will be important for the district to monitor attendance in the current and subsequent years to ensure accurate LCFF revenue and plan accordingly. Our office recommends the district develop a contingency plan should attendance not materialize as planned.

Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) – The district's Adopted Budget included Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) for LCFF funding of 2.30 percent, 2.41 percent, and 3.06 percent for the 2026-27, 2027-28, and 2028-29 fiscal years, respectively. Our office recommends a contingency plan should LCFF funding not materialize as projected in the 2026-27 State Budget.

Unrestricted Deficit Spending – The district's Adopted Budget indicates a positive ending balance for all funds in the 2026-27 fiscal year. However, for the unrestricted General Fund, the district anticipates expenditures and uses will exceed revenues and sources by $19.7 million in 2026-27, $12.1 million in 2027-28, and $11.0 million in 2028-29. Our office strongly discourages districts from committing to additional ongoing expenditures without offsetting reductions and stresses the need to continue identifying solutions to reduce any potential structural deficit.

Employee Negotiations – As of the board date, June 16, 2026, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations continue with both the certificated and classified bargaining units for the 2026-27 fiscal year. Prior to entering into a written agreement, California Government Code (GC) Section 3547.5 requires a public school employer to publicly disclose the major provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, including but not limited to, the costs incurred in the current and subsequent fiscal years. The disclosure must include a written certification signed by the district superintendent and chief business official that the district can meet the costs incurred by the district during the term of the agreement. Therefore, please make available to the public and submit a disclosure to our office at least ten (10) working days prior to the date on which the governing board is to take action on a proposed agreement.

Reserve for Economic Uncertainties – The minimum state-required reserve for a district of Val Verde Unified School District's size is 3.0 percent. The district projects to meet the minimum-reserve requirement in the current and two subsequent fiscal years. Additionally, existing law imposes a 10.0 percent cap on the amount school districts can maintain in their reserves in fiscal years immediately succeeding those in which the Public School System Stabilization Account balance is at least 3.0 percent of TK-12 Prop. 98 funding. This condition was met with the 2025-26 deposit amount, triggering the local reserve cap for the 2026-27 fiscal year. The district's approved 45-Day Revision projects to meet the statutory 10.0 percent reserve cap.

Cash Management – Attention to cash solvency remains a critical fiscal practice and should continue to be prioritized in the coming year. The district projects sufficient cash balances to cover projected expenditures during the 2026-27 fiscal year. Should the district identify the need for temporary borrowing options, our office strongly advises districts to consult with legal counsel and independent auditors prior to using Cafeteria Special Revenue Fund (Fund 13) and Building Fund (Fund 21) for temporary interfund borrowing purposes to remedy cash shortfalls.

Fiscal Distress Documentation – Education Code Section 42127.6 requires the County Superintendent of Schools to review and consider any studies, reports, evaluations, or audits that may indicate a school district is experiencing fiscal distress. Our office did not receive any such reports for the district.

Conclusion

Our office commends the district for its efforts thus far to preserve its fiscal solvency and maintain a quality education program for its students. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office.