



**Riverside County
Board of Education**

Jamie Azpeitia-Sachs

Ray "Coach" Curtis

Bruce N. Dennis

Ben Johnson II

Michael Martinez Scott, Ph.D.

Jennifer Mejares Pham

Elizabeth F. Romero

DATE: August 28, 2026

TO: Ms. April Smith, District Superintendent
Ms. Jamey Mullion, Board President
Ms. Rachel Angel, Director, Business Services
Dr. Josie Koivisto, Director, Curriculum and Instruction
Palo Verde Unified School District

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

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

Adopted Local Control and Accountability Plan

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.

Palo 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	2,610	2,145	187		68	69	410
Enrollment Percent 2025 ¹		82.2	7.2		2.6	2.6	15.7
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Proficiency 2025 ²	-77.8	-85.4	-107.3	-134.7	-117.5	-111.8	-147.2
Mathematics Distance from Proficiency 2025 ²	-122.7	-130.2	-154.2	-197.3	-146.0	-131.3	-176.3
Science Points 2025 ²	38.0	36.0	31.9	28.0	31.7		31.0
English Learner Progress Indicator 2025 ²			35.9	32.9			
Graduation Rate 2025 ²	87.7	86.7	84.0	80.0		72.2	73.1
College/Career Indicator Rate 2025 ²	48.6	44.3	16.7	20.0		22.2	25.0
A-G Completion Rate 2025 ²	19.3	16.0	4.0	0.0		16.7	3.8
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2025 ²	34.2	33.5	8.0	10.0		0.0	19.2
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2025 ²	27.2	29.9	19.1	20.0	29.8	29.8	32.6
Suspension Rate 2025 ²	6.0	6.6	4.5	7.4	10.4	9.4	11.7
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.							

Palo 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	2,610	16	7	218	10	1,928	3	351	64
Enrollment Percent 2025 ¹		0.6	0.3	8.4	0.4	73.9	0.1	13.4	2.5
English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Proficiency 2025 ²	-77.8			-104.0		-76.3		-76.2	-80.2
Mathematics Distance from Proficiency 2025 ²	-122.7			-158.6		-121.9		-112.3	-95.9
Science Points 2025 ²	38.0			31.5		37.8		41.0	
Graduation Rate 2025 ²	87.7			52.6		90.5		91.4	
College/Career Indicator Rate 2025 ²	48.6			26.3		45.8		68.6	
A-G Completion Rate 2025 ²	19.3			0.0		18.4		28.6	
Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2025 ²	34.2			21.1		32.9		54.3	
Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2025 ²	27.2			36.8		26.0		22.6	41.0
Suspension Rate 2025 ²	6.0	0.0		16.0		4.6		5.6	9.1
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:

Student Success in Academics

The district is to be commended for sustaining a focus on strengthening Tier I instruction through aligned goals, actions, and investments that support coordinated professional learning, Lexia Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling® (LETRS) implementation, pacing guides, benchmark assessments, and instructional coaching. These aligned efforts provide a

coherent framework for strengthening instructional practice and supporting educator learning across the district.

The district is commended for establishing a comprehensive system of instructional support that integrates professional learning, curriculum leadership, data and assessment systems, and academic coaching to strengthen the implementation of high-quality, standards-aligned instruction.

The district is to be commended for using Annual Goal Analysis and multiple years of California School Dashboard data to inform the refinement of its goals, actions, and improved services. This systematic approach reflects the district's commitment to continuous improvement through evidence-based planning, implementation, and ongoing evaluation.

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 continue using multiple sources of evidence to determine which instructional practices and systems are producing the greatest gains in student learning, and how can those practices be strengthened and implemented to accelerate outcomes for English Learners, Students with Disabilities, Foster Youth, and other student groups?
- How might the district continue to evaluate the extent to which professional learning and instructional support influence classroom practice and contribute to improved student outcomes across schools and student groups?
- How might the district evaluate the extent to which its districtwide actions are contributing to improved academic outcomes while reducing achievement gaps for African American students, and how might those findings be used to strengthen high-quality Tier I instruction and targeted supports?

Student Access, Enrollment, and Success in Rigorous Coursework

The district is to be commended for intentionally supporting students' postsecondary planning through Freshman Seminar, Senior Seminar, Career Technical Education (CTE), A-G coursework, and online and alternative course options that encourage students to explore and prepare for multiple college and career pathways.

The district is commended for continuing to strengthen CTE as a rigorous pathway that prepares students for college, careers, and future success. The district's sustained investment in CTE provides students with meaningful opportunities to develop career-connected knowledge, technical skills, and real-world learning experiences.

The district is to be commended for expanding rigorous learning opportunities through CTE, A-G coursework, leadership experiences, journalism, advanced music, and online and alternative learning options that provide students with multiple pathways toward college and career readiness.

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 use participation and outcome data across its college and career readiness pathways to identify patterns of access and success, refine strategies that improve equitable outcomes, and strengthen a coherent TK–12 approach that builds college and career awareness, preparation, and readiness beginning in the elementary and middle grades, particularly for students whose families may have had limited exposure to postsecondary opportunities?
- How might the district continue evaluating which college and career readiness actions and supports—including CTE, Freshman Seminar, Senior Seminar, A-G coursework, and alternative learning opportunities—are contributing most to improved student outcomes? How might those findings inform future refinement of the district’s college and career pathways?
- How might the district continue examining and evaluating scheduling structures, academic guidance, and student supports to ensure equitable opportunities for students to successfully complete both CTE pathways and A-G requirements?

Student Engagement and School Climate

The district is to be commended for continuing to strengthen the systems and practices that support student engagement and school climate. Through coordinated professional learning, behavior supports and frameworks, and active supervision, the district demonstrates a systematic approach to creating safe and supportive learning environments.

The district is commended for meaningfully engaging educational partners in developing and refining its LCAP. The district demonstrates responsiveness to stakeholder input by strengthening efforts in attendance and student discipline, expanding opportunities for student voice through a middle school advisory group, and continuing Equity Multiplier actions informed by educational partner feedback.

The district is to be commended for continuing to improve several indicators of student engagement and school climate. Reductions in suspension rates and chronic absenteeism, together with improved graduation outcomes, reflect the district’s coordinated implementation of attendance supports, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), and behavioral and mental health services.

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 continue evaluating which adult practices and implementation strategies are having the greatest impact on improving student engagement, school connectedness, attendance, and behavior across all student groups?

- How might the district deepen its understanding of how the experiences of students, families, and staff influence school climate and belonging, and use those insights to strengthen adult practices that improve student engagement and success?
- How might the district strengthen its continuous improvement processes by collecting and analyzing disaggregated evidence, including school connectedness, safety, attendance, behavior, and implementation data, to better understand how LCAP actions and services are improving student outcomes and reducing persistent disparities for African American 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. The district should update and revise its budget projections to reflect changes in available funding.

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 2,288 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 2.6 percent decrease from the certified 2025-26 P-2 ADA. For 2027-28, the district projects a 3.2 percent decrease in ADA. For 2028-29, the district projects a 2.1 percent decrease in ADA. It will be important for the district to monitor enrollment in the current and subsequent years to ensure accurate LCFF revenue and plan accordingly.

Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) – The district's Adopted Budget included Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) for LCFF funding of 4.31 percent, 3.30 percent, and 3.09 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 \$3.3 million in 2026-27, \$2.8 million in 2027-28, and \$3.2 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 23, 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 Palo 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.

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.