



**Riverside County  
Board of Education**

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**DATE:** August 28, 2026

**TO:** Dr. Greg Sackos, District Superintendent  
Mr. Dean Primmer, Board President  
Desert Center Unified School District

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

**BY:** Scott Price, Ph.D.  Amanda Corridan   
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**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.

| Desert Center Unified School District<br>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 <sup>1</sup>                                                     | 29    | 20                                    | 4                    |                                  | 2                 | 5                   | 4                                |
| Enrollment Percent 2025 <sup>1</sup>                                                   |       | 69.0                                  | 13.8                 |                                  | 6.9               | 17.2                | 13.8                             |
| English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Proficiency 2025 <sup>2</sup>                | -66.1 | -86.8                                 |                      |                                  |                   |                     |                                  |
| Mathematics Distance from Proficiency 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                | -46.2 |                                       |                      |                                  |                   |                     |                                  |
| Science Points 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                                       |       |                                       |                      |                                  |                   |                     |                                  |
| English Learner Progress Indicator 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                   |       |                                       |                      |                                  |                   |                     |                                  |
| A-G Completion Rate 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                                  |       |                                       |                      |                                  |                   |                     |                                  |
| Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2025 <sup>2</sup>                     |       |                                       |                      |                                  |                   |                     |                                  |
| Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                             | 40.0  | 33.3                                  |                      |                                  |                   |                     |                                  |
| Suspension Rate 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                                      | 8.8   | 12.0                                  |                      |                                  |                   |                     |                                  |

<sup>1</sup>2025 California School Dashboard Downloadable Enrollment File (No LTEL Data Available)

<sup>2</sup>2025 California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Downloadable Data Files

Note: Blanks indicate that no public data is available for this data point.

| Desert Center Unified School District<br>Student Groups – Race/Ethnicity                                                                                                                          |       |                 |       |                        |          |          |                  |       |                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|------------------------|----------|----------|------------------|-------|-------------------|
| Indicator                                                                                                                                                                                         | LEA   | American Indian | Asian | Black/African American | Filipino | Hispanic | Pacific Islander | White | Two or More Races |
| Enrollment Count 2025 <sup>1</sup>                                                                                                                                                                | 29    |                 |       |                        | 1        | 13       |                  | 13    | 2                 |
| Enrollment Percent 2025 <sup>1</sup>                                                                                                                                                              |       |                 |       |                        | 3.4      | 44.8     |                  | 44.8  | 6.9               |
| English Language Arts (ELA) Distance from Proficiency 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                                           | -66.1 |                 |       |                        |          |          |                  |       |                   |
| Mathematics Distance from Proficiency 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                                                           | -46.2 |                 |       |                        |          |          |                  |       |                   |
| Science Points 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                                                                                  |       |                 |       |                        |          |          |                  |       |                   |
| A-G Completion Rate 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                                                                             |       |                 |       |                        |          |          |                  |       |                   |
| Career Technical Education (CTE) Completion Rate 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                                                |       |                 |       |                        |          |          |                  |       |                   |
| Chronic Absenteeism Rate 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                                                                        | 40.0  |                 |       |                        |          | 23.1     |                  | 42.9  |                   |
| Suspension Rate 2025 <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                                                                                 | 8.8   |                 |       |                        |          | 0.0      |                  | 21.4  |                   |
| <sup>1</sup> California School Dashboard/Dashboard Additional Report Files<br><sup>2</sup> CDE Dataquest and Files<br>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 its continued commitment to strengthening instructional systems through the thoughtful use of local assessment data, formative progress monitoring, and California School Dashboard information to guide continuous improvement.

The district demonstrated measurable improvement in mathematics performance while continuing to strengthen literacy instruction through evidence-based interventions, implementation of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Elementary, expanded early literacy supports, and ongoing professional learning. The district's commitment to

providing personalized instruction within its unique rural setting reflects a strong focus on meeting the individual needs of every student.

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

- As the district continues implementing its literacy interventions, AVID implementation efforts, and small-group instructional support, how might it continue to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies to identify and build upon those producing the greatest gains in student achievement?
- Recognizing the district's positive mathematics outcomes, how might it continue leveraging effective instructional practices to sustain mathematics growth while accelerating achievement in English language arts (ELA)?
- How might the district continue refining its use of formative assessment and progress-monitoring data to ensure instructional decisions remain responsive to the needs of individual students within its multi-grade classrooms?

#### **Student Access, Enrollment, and Success in Rigorous Coursework**

The district is commended for its continued commitment to preparing students for successful transitions beyond eighth grade through implementation of AVID Elementary, expanded technology integration, personalized academic supports, early literacy initiatives, and partnerships that broaden access to secondary educational opportunities. The district's continued expansion of its Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P) and emphasis on equitable access to enrichment opportunities demonstrate a thoughtful commitment to preparing students for future academic success.

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:

- As the district continues supporting successful student transitions, how might it identify and build upon the transition supports that most effectively prepare students for success in secondary education?
- As the district continues expanding ELO-P opportunities, AVID implementation, and technology integration, how might it continue evaluating the impact of these initiatives on student readiness for future academic and career pathways?
- How might the district continue strengthening partnerships with neighboring educational agencies, postsecondary institutions, and regional partners to expand rigorous learning opportunities while maintaining equitable access for all students?

#### **Student Engagement and School Climate**

The district is to be commended for its intentional efforts to strengthen student engagement through expanded family outreach, transportation supports, social-emotional learning (SEL), ELO-P services, and strategic use of Equity Multiplier funding. The district is recognized for its measurable improvement in chronic absenteeism and suspension rates while continuing to

prioritize student wellness, school connectedness, and equitable access to supportive learning environments for students in its rural community.

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

- As the district continues implementing attendance improvement strategies, how might it continue evaluating which approaches are having the greatest impact on reducing chronic absenteeism, particularly for students facing transportation and geographic barriers?
- How might the district measure the long-term impact of the ELO-P and Equity Multiplier investments on student engagement, attendance, and overall school connectedness?
- How might the district continue strengthening partnerships with students, families, and community organizations to identify and address barriers that influence student attendance, engagement, and well-being?

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 22 ADA for the current fiscal year, or a 11.6 percent decrease from the certified 2025-26 P-2 ADA. For 2027-28, the district projects a 3.9 percent decrease in ADA. For 2028-29, the district projects a 4.0 percent increase in ADA.

*Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)* – As a “basic aid” district, the district's primary revenue source is property taxes. Our office recommends the district closely monitor actual property tax receipts throughout the year and revise its budget and multi-year financial projections accordingly.

*Unrestricted Deficit Spending* – The district’s Adopted Budget indicates a positive ending balance for all funds in the 2026-27 fiscal year. For the unrestricted General Fund, the district projects no deficit spending in the current or two subsequent fiscal years.

*Employee Negotiations* – As of the board date, June 24, 2026, the district reports salary and benefit negotiations are complete with both the certificated and classified bargaining units for the 2026-27 fiscal year.

*Reserve for Economic Uncertainties* – The minimum state-required reserve for a district of Desert Center Unified School District’s size is the greater of \$90,000 or 5.0 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.

*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.