



LINKED LEARNING
ALLIANCE

May 6, 2016

Dr. Michael Kirst, President
California State Board of Education
1430 N Street, Suite 5111
Sacramento, CA 95814
Via Email Only (sbe@cde.ca.gov)

Re: SBE May 2016 Agenda Item #02 (Developing a New Accountability System/LCFF
Evaluation Rubrics)

Dear President Kirst:

The Linked Learning Alliance, the statewide coalition of education, industry, and community organizations advancing integrated approaches to college and career readiness, strongly urges you to set aside the staff recommendation and instead include College and Career Readiness as a key indicator in the LCFF evaluation rubrics. Prior iterations of the proposed rubrics, going back to August 2015, have included explicit recognition of College and Career Readiness (incorporating at least A-G completion and CTE Pathways), an encouraging sign for those who support the integrated approach and the equity goals it addresses. The absence of this key indicator from the version being presented at the May State Board meeting will be viewed in the field as a step backward, signaling to LEAs, communities, and educators throughout California that the state is not committed to integrating college and career readiness and prefers separate academic and vocational tracks. This separation has the potential to track students into low wage jobs, at best, and would become a barrier to equitable opportunities for postsecondary success for all students.

We urge you to consider and adopt one of the three specific indicators of college and career readiness proposed in Professor David Stern's letter of May 5, which are based on existing and projected data elements that are available for this purpose:

1. In the LCFF evaluation rubric that is currently being designed, a component that supports analysis of local data could include as a recommended indicator the number or percent of graduating seniors who have satisfied a criterion for college readiness and a criterion for career readiness. For instance, if one of the indicators of college readiness is completion of the a-g course sequence required for CSU and UC, and one of the indicators of career readiness is completing a sequence of connected CTE courses that meet state standards, then acknowledging college and career readiness would simply mean counting the number of students who do both. Currently about one-third of California's CTE completers also complete the a-g sequence, so this is not a negligible number. But achieving the goal of the Common

Core would mean increasing that number, and making this explicit in the new accountability system would encourage districts to do so.

2. The LCFF evaluation rubric also could include as a recommended local indicator the number or percent of graduating seniors who have successfully completed the program of study in a qualified pathway that includes both the a-g course sequence and a CTE course sequence. For instance, a qualified pathway might be a California Partnership Academy, certified Linked Learning pathway, or certified NAF academy. The next version of Aeries, perhaps the most commonly used Student Information System in California, will include a new table in which districts can routinely record whether a student is participating in one of these pathways each year, so that information can easily be linked with the student's course transcript.
3. If a College and Career Readiness Indicator (CCI) is created that awards a certain number of points to a school for each student who meets certain criteria, extra points can be awarded for a student who meets at least one college readiness criterion and at least one career readiness criterion. The accountability system in the state of Kentucky, for example, awards bonus points for students who meet both college and career readiness criteria.

The staff analysis presented in the April 27, 2016 memo titled "California's Accountability and Continuous Improvement System – Further Analysis of Potential Key Indicators" (memo-dsib-amard-apr16item02) was a thoughtful, but limited, investigation of potential College and Career Readiness indicators which ignored alternatives that meet the four criteria for potential key indicators. Course Taking Behaviors, which the Linked Learning Alliance agrees is a valid indicator of college and career preparedness, was rejected on the grounds that there the only available measure of integrated College and Career course taking is the International Baccalaureate Career-Related Certificate (IBCC). A measure that is dismissed for have an n-size of four. However, IBCC is merely one of many integrated pathway models that meet this standard. There are already more than 1,200 pathways in California (including the state's 500 Partnership Academies), and the number is growing exponentially.

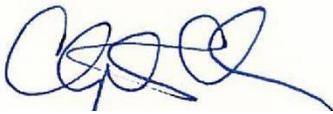
But even without accounting for fully integrated pathways, the indicators can include the proportion of students who complete both a college preparatory sequence and a CTE sequence. CALPADS already includes data on the percentage of students completing A-G requirements. District data systems also include information on dual enrollment, as they are required to maintain this data under state law (including AB 288 (Holden) enacted last year). A College and Career Readiness indicator could count the number or proportion of students who have completed (1) either A-G or 12 units or more of dual enrollment AND (2) a CTE sequence of three courses. Because more than 12,000 CTE courses now satisfy the A-G standard, it is possible and increasingly frequent for students to complete both sequences, unlike a generation ago.

These composite metrics would address the requirements for a meaningful and valid College and Career Readiness indicator that meets all four necessary criteria for potential key indicators. The data are (1) currently collected and available for use at the state level (2) use a consistent definition, (3) can

be disaggregated to the school and subgroup level, and (4) are supported by research as a valid measure.

As the State Board draws closer to adopting the key indicators for the evaluation rubrics and a coherent state, local and federal accountability and continuous improvement system, we encourage you to consider the importance of the initial indicators you select. These choices will have long term consequences both from a data collection standpoint, as well as for the signals they send to the public about the state's priorities and what is achievable for all students in their local communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CC', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Christopher Cabaldon
President
Linked Learning Alliance