

INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
Office of the Superintendent

**TO:** Members, Board of Education  
Executive Cabinet

**DATE:** October 19, 2015

**FROM:** Ramon C. Cortines, Superintendent

**SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF EXECUTIVE CABINET MEETING 10.15.15**

During last week's Executive Cabinet meeting, we discussed the percentage of students in the Class of 2016 who are on track to pass A-G courses with a "D" or better, and the Local Control Accountability Plan.

I. On Track to Pass A-G Courses

Only **49 percent** of the Class of 2016 is currently on-track to meet the District's graduation requirement of passing A-G courses with a "D" or better. (Please see the attachment for a breakdown by local district). LAUSD has other graduation requirements, such as service learning, which means the total percentage of students on track to graduate might be lower. By comparison, in 2013-14, the graduation rate was 70 percent (including options schools) and about 80 percent for comprehensive high schools.

A. Interventions for At-Risk Students

The group remarked on the urgency of the situation and shared their interventions to address it, including:

- **Performance Assessment Student Support (PASS).** This blended-learning credit recovery course offers differentiated instruction for students who fail a class, enabling them to earn a "C" once they master the standards. The PASS program can be implemented during the eight days of Winter Break, allowing more time for credit recovery. Multiple local districts (LDs) are using PASS.
- **Edgenuity.** This computer program teaches students information they have not yet mastered and enables them to receive course credit once they demonstrate mastery. LAUSD has licenses for both a blended learning program, in which teachers' lessons support the digital content, and a virtual learning program, which is all computer-based. Multiple LDs are using this program.  
As just one example of its expected benefits, Mr. Downing explained that LD South will offer 90 Edgenuity courses beginning October 31; he believes these can catch up more than 600 students who are missing six or fewer courses by January 1, and all 1,500 such students by graduation.  
One LD superintendent shared her discovery that some Edgenuity courses had not been uploaded as A-G courses with the University of California Office of the President (UCOP), even though our initial evaluation of A-G courses did not identify any issues with these courses.
- **MiSiS Parent Access Support System Portal (PASSport).** This online portal gives parents 24/7 access to grades, Individual Graduation Plans (IGP), and attendance. PASSport is being pilot at 14 schools, with plans to expand it later.
- **Continuation Schools.** Across LDs, high schools are strengthening partnerships with continuation schools to help at-risk students make up credits in environments that are conducive to their needs.
- **Concurrent Enrollment.** Local districts are expanding partnerships with community colleges to provide courses on high school campuses.
- **Classes Led by Adult Education Teachers.** The Division of Adult and Career Education (DACE) is offering customized classes at high schools, upon request. This resource is underutilized, and Ms. Brashear requested assistance from LD superintendents in getting more students into these classes.

It was observed that during a panel discussion on October 14, LAUSD teachers expressed a lack of clarity about the District's investments to prepare students for A-G requirements and the Common Core. Staff proposed that we develop a comprehensive narrative explaining the interaction of our investments (including our use of Local Control Funding Formula dollars); A-G requirements; and the Common Core.

#### B. Students Needing More than Four Years

During the discussion, the group emphasized the need to support students who require more than four years to earn a diploma, by developing more strategic pipelines between high schools and alternative pathway programs. Staff suggested developing a policy or practice of proactively assessing at-risk students to determine which path (adult education, continuation school, etc.) is best for them; referring them to that option; and coordinating a deliberate handoff with the other school, for example sending the student's IGP to an adult school, to ensure the student completes their needed courses.

Staff noted that students with special needs and English learners are allowed more than four years to graduate, but that not all employees are aware of this policy. Staff also stated that scheduling issues arise when students take more than four years to complete courses. Another challenge they observed was that students' chance of dropping out can increase the longer students are in school. To address some of these challenges, the group suggested clarifying the District's policy to schools, and providing more supports to students with unique needs who take longer to graduate. Also, a question was raised about how many students with special needs make it to adult education and options programs; staff will look into this.

While discussing educational options for students needing more years of instruction, staff highlighted a few points to remember. First, adult education funds exist to educate these students, but the District receives no average daily attendance (ADA) revenue for educating them in a K-12 school. Also, our graduation rate is currently based on a four-year cohort. Additionally, students in adult education can earn a diploma with fewer credits than students in the K-12 LAUSD system. Lastly, community colleges do not require A-G completion, and we should help students find the path that is the best fit for them.

#### C. Specific Student Populations

The group emphasized the need to dig deeper into the on-track data for specific subgroups, such as special education students, foster youth students, English learners, and homeless students. We will examine this data in future meetings. In addition, staff made the following points about specific subgroups:

- **English learners (ELs).** We can use CELDT data to accurately predict, as early as third grade, which ELs will likely become long term ELs if they do not receive adequate interventions.
- **Special Education.** Some students in special education receive a certificate of completion instead of a diploma; however, this certificate does not help students apply for colleges or careers.
- **Foster Youth** have special graduation requirements, and it is important that counselors take this into consideration when analyzing what these students need to earn a diploma. Dr. Duardo will resend data about which schools have foster youth to LD superintendents and principals.

#### D. Next Steps

The salient point was made that as we help off-track students in the Class of 2016, we must simultaneously improve interventions for early learners, including young ELs, so they are on-track years later. Staff also agreed that we should spotlight schools in each LD that are successfully preparing students for graduation.

I scheduled a follow-up meeting in two weeks so that we can continue this important conversation and discuss the potential ramifications of any policy changes in this area.

## II. Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) Overview

The Office of Government Relations (OGR) and LDs have been helping school leaders in each principal network and community groups better understand the local control funding formula (LCFF), including the resources that are available and the accountabilities established through the School Report Card. The OGR has developed simple visuals to help stakeholders understand the LCFF and LCAP and to remember each of the District's goals. (Please see the attached presentation).

During the discussion, Mr. Salcido from the OGR emphasized that community input is essential in the development of the LCAP. For example, the District and UTLA have partnered to host four community meetings in November, during which teachers will provide input on the District's priorities. The attached presentation contains a timeline of key events related to community input and the development of the LCAP. With regards to this, Mr. Salcido highlighted a February deadline for schools to complete parent workshops, which are required as part of a revamped School Report Card so that schools receive and use parent input about their progress towards their goals.

Mr. Salcido also shared that the District has developed a concise manual summarizing the main ideas of the LCAP. The manual has been translated into five languages, and will be distributed to principals shortly, so they can easily share it with parents.

It was suggested that future presentations to stakeholders about the LCFF should clarify the relationship between the LCAP and targeted student population (TSP) dollars. Ms. Reilly built on this comment to suggest that we should help stakeholders understand how LCAP and TSP dollars are a subset of our operating budget, which is a subset of our total budget. The group agreed that we should clarify how *all* of the District's resources factor into helping students graduate, and that we should ultimately help schools stay focused on their outcomes and their progress towards their goals.

Attachments