



Dear Lompoc Community,

CalSTRS Set to Adopt Increase to Employer Contribution Rate

BY MICHELLE MCKAY UNDERWOOD

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Next week, the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS) Board is expected to adopt an increase to the employer contribution rate, increasing this key local educational agency (LEA) expense from 16.92% to 19.1%.

The increase is due to the exhaustion of the employer rate subsidy that LEAs have enjoyed since the 2019-20 State Budget provided an additional payment of \$2.246 billion to CalSTRS on behalf of employers. In reality, the current-year employer contribution rate is 19.1%, but 2.18% is effectively paid for by the state, leaving 16.92% to be paid by LEAs.

This helps to explain why the employer contribution rate can increase by 2.18% in a single year when the CalSTRS full funding plan allows for only a 1%-point increase to the employer supplemental contribution rate in a given year. The full funding plan also prohibits an employer contribution rate above 20.25%, a constraint that is not affecting this year's increase.

There is a slim chance that the CalSTRS Board could adopt a rate of 18.813%, which will be "Option 2" presented by the system's actuaries. "Although the current actuarial valuation indicates the employer contribution rate could be reduced and still allow the employers to eliminate their share of the unfunded actuarial obligation by 2046 [as required by the full funding plan], the projections included in the valuation also indicate the board may need to raise the employer supplemental contribution rate in the future," states the CalSTRS Board agenda item. In order to maintain stability in the employer rate going forward, CalSTRS staff will recommend the 19.1% employer contribution rate for 2022-23.

For LUSD, this will result in a nearly \$2 million increase in our contribution rate.

EdWeek: Rising fuel costs could have drastic impact on school budgets

Rising fuel prices show no signs of dropping back to pre-2021 levels anytime soon, leaving school districts to worry about a wide range of impacts to their budgets and operations. More than nine in 10 district leaders who answered an EdWeek Research Center survey between March 30th and April 8th said fuel prices in their district have risen since the start of the school year. Fourteen percent of district leaders said fuel costs have doubled or more than doubled since then, and 56%

said they've increased between 1% and 50%. For school districts, when an actual cost exceeds what was budgeted at the start of the year, another line item in the budget often has to shrink or disappear altogether. That could mean the loss of staff members, academic programs, or transportation services. Fuel will cost the Anoka-Hennepin district in Michigan \$100,000 more than expected this year, said Superintendent David Law. The district's \$550m annual operating budget can absorb that increase. But if the high costs persist through the summer into next school year and beyond, it may be a different story, he said, adding: "Our state increase [for the overall operating budget] this year is 2.5%. When part of our budget sees a 15 percent or 18 percent jump, that pushes a cut somewhere else."

[Los Angeles Daily News: Campaign for arts and music education funding kicks off](#)

An effort to increase funding for arts and music education in California schools has reached a milestone, with organizers recently submitting more than 1 million signatures to place a statewide measure on the November general election ballot. Campaign organizers held an event at Hamilton High School in L.A. on April 26 to officially kick off the campaign and to celebrate the milestone.

The "**[Arts and Music in Public Schools](#)**" ballot measure would steer about \$800 million more each year — nearly double the current amount — into art and music programs in K-12 public schools. Campuses that serve a greater number of low-income Black and Latino students would receive more funding. Organizers need 263,200 valid signatures from voters for the measure to make it onto the ballot.

Incident at La Cañada Elementary School

On Thursday, April 28 at approximately 10:18 a.m., La Cañada Elementary School staff called 911 to report a fire in a classroom on campus. The school was immediately evacuated and there were no reported injuries or incidents with students or staff.

A ballast in the primary Special Day Class (SDC) Room 34 exploded and caught the carpet in the classroom on fire. Lompoc Fire Department arrived and extinguished the flames. The SDC is in a separate wing that houses five classrooms including the Santa Barbara County Preschool Program. The Preschool program was close to ending for the day, so they dismissed students a little early. The other four classrooms have been moved to alternate locations on campus. Support was provided by M&O and the electricians were on campus that afternoon to repair the light fixture. The fire caused minor damage. There is carpet and surface damage. Our crews were immediately on site, assessing the damages and beginning the repair work. The SDC class will need to remain at an alternate location until all repairs have been made. The other four classes were able to return to their classrooms on Friday.

This is the second fire at one of our school sites this year (reminder: first day of school at Clarence Ruth K class) due to aged wiring. This would be on the list of projects, if a bond were to pass.

A ParentSquare message was sent to all LC families regarding the incident. Please see photos below:







Supervisor Joan Hartman Meeting

This week Bree and I met with Supervisor Joan Hartman to discuss LUSD and our needs. As the new representative for all of Lompoc, she wanted to learn more about Lompoc and the District. We shared with her our current polling regarding the Bond measure, the urgent need for the Bond, State matching funds and LUSD facility needs. In addition, we discussed the ADA averaging and school funding. We look forward to partnering with Ms. Hartman on future opportunities to support our community and the kids in particular.

Board Meeting Training

We attended another training on best practices for running Board meetings and handling disruptive individuals. The firm Lozano Smith held the training and once again discussed that Board Meetings are meetings about the Board's business IN public, but not WITH the public. They discussed the need for having procedures in place for people to identify if they want to speak prior to the start of the Board meeting, the inability of the Board to respond to public comment, the significance of the Board and Cabinet modeling respectful behavior, and the importance of stating the time restrictions at the start of public comment.

Classified Staffing Update

In February, we reported that there were 128 Classified vacancies that had not been filled. As of April 15, that number has grown to 138 vacancies. This is approximately 27% of the District's Classified workforce that have not yet been hired. The lack of these critical vacancies being

unfilled leads to increased burn out by both our Classified and Certificated staff, and a consequential decrease in job satisfaction.

Month	Vacancies
August	120
September	122
October	119
November	120
December	121
January	83*
February	128
March	131
April	138

*In looking at December's agenda and comparing the data to January, it appears a page may have been missed that included paraeducator vacancies and that is why the number of vacancies declined.

[Classified FAQs](#)

On a positive note, there has been some movement toward filling vacancies. Please see list at the end of the transmittal.

School Climate Conference

Lompoc Unified's Bree Valla and Stephanie Wingate presented at the School Climate Conference on the strategies that LUSD has used before, during, and after the pandemic to improve the school climate for students, staff and families in Lompoc Unified. The attendance at the conference was the highest it has ever been and the room where they presented was packed with attendees. LUSD shared how they have addressed staff and student physical and mental health and the creative ways that we have worked to provide ways to promote positive habits during these trying times.

Interviews & Recruiting

We held interviews this week for LVMS Dean, LHS Dean, LHS Assistant Principal, Elementary Teacher, Elementary PE Teacher, English, Elementary Music, and Elementary Art teachers.

Recruitment and Retention

Last week Bree attended a webinar from WestEd on recruitment and retention strategies for school districts. The webinar discussed the importance of being pro-active, working with an Institute of Higher Learning (IHE) such as a university or college, signing bonuses, maximizing existing staff and providing them opportunities to help Certificated staff with non-teaching duties, and more.

According to WestEd, one of the main factors that assist recruitment are the facilities where teachers are teaching. WestEd, according to their website, is “a nonpartisan, nonprofit research, development, and service agency - works with education and other communities throughout the United States and abroad to promote excellence, achieve equity, and improve learning for children, youth, and adults.” These can help build morale, increase recruitment and retention. When teachers have warm, welcoming work spaces they are happier at work. This also aligns with some of the responses we have received from teachers to whom we have offered positions. Please see email below from a recent English teacher applicant:

Hi All,

After some time and thought, and a trip up to Lompoc on Sunday to tour the community and get a look at the schools, my wife and I feel that this would not be in our best interests.

I must respectfully decline your wonderful offer. Please forgive me for taking the time, but I do appreciate the window. This was a tough decision. I wish you all the best of luck in finding the right person for the job.

Thanks again.

This further highlights our need for a bond and improved facilities.

Lompoc Standards Alignment Project Data Reflection Sessions

Over the past week, departments and grade levels gathered in their PLCs to participate in data reflection sessions. During this time, Site Administrators, Orenda reps, District Administrators, TSPs and teachers collaborated and unpacked the data from the Unit 5 assessment and student performance. Teachers disaggregated their data to look specifically at the performance of students with IEPs, English learners, and African American students. They participated in conversations surrounding the achievements their team made in meeting the needs of their learners. They also looked at next steps to support student achievement in the State Standards that showed the lowest scores. Engaging in these tough conversations through our PLC process allows for a better understanding of instructional strategies that will help our students meet the Common Core State standards. Unit 5 wraps up year one of the LSAP for grades 3-12. This process is hard work, but so meaningful as we work together to close achievement gaps.

Lompoc Standards Alignment Project Year 2 Matrices

In partnership with our equity partners, Elementary Common Core Council, Secondary Common Core Council, and teachers, the 2022-2023 grade level/department matrices were released! The “matrix morph” was a highly engaging Professional Development day in March. During the matrix morph, teachers spent two hours discussing, changing, and ultimately coming to a common agreement for their year two matrix. As preparations begin for the 2022-2023 school year, teachers may reference their grade level matrix in the shared Google Drive.

YMCA Summer School Hiring Fair

The YMCA will be holding a hiring fair in the Lompoc Unified School District Education Center TRC on June 1, 2022 from 2:30-5:00 p.m. They will be hiring staff to work the summer school after school programs and summer camp. LUSD employees are encouraged to apply. YMCA will

be making offers on the spot for these positions. These positions will not conflict with summer school or current LUSD positions.

Program Location Changes

After careful consideration of both program needs for students and site needs for space, we will be making changes to the following programs for the 2022-2023 school year:

- 1) Mission Valley will be relocated to the El Camino Center (CDS Principal Eric Trigueiro will be the administrator). This change will provide much needed space at La Honda for the school. It will also provide a more stable location for Mission Valley, a dedicated administrator that works with alternative education, and the opportunity for students to attend appointments without having to report to a traditional campus.
- 2) ATP will be relocated to CHS. ATP was previously on the LHS campus which provided both collaboration for the teachers and inclusion opportunities for students. LHS does not have room for additional classes, but CHS does. Being able to integrate students into a traditional campus gives them a chance to have more learning experiences and be part of a school. Also, being on a school campus provides more support to the teachers for behavioral issues or other student concerns.

Lompoc Youth Violence Coalition

On April 26, Rebekah Spicuglia, shared the vision and work of One Community Action, which is based in Santa Maria. Ms. Spicuglia has personal experience with youth violence and currently oversees the work of One Community Action. This organization works in the high schools in Santa Maria and is interested in partnering with initiatives here in Lompoc to reduce youth violence.

Community Dialogue #2: Youth Violence

On April 27, Brian Jaramillo held a community dialogue at Lompoc Foursquare Church. The purpose of the dialogues is to open up the discussion of youth violence in the community and elicit feedback. The conversation invites the community to discuss their vision for the youth of Lompoc, how they see violence impacting our community, initiatives they have seen in the past, ideas they have for the future, and others that should be involved in the conversation. The dialogue was well attended and our thanks to Bernie Federmann for his collaboration on this effort. The information gathered will be brought back to the Youth Violence Coalition.

Cabrillo Wellness Center Grand Opening

On April 27, Cabrillo High School held a grand opening ceremony for its new Wellness Center. Principal Mark Swanitz, Executive Director Brian Jaramillo, Lead Counselor Brianne Jory, and SEL Counselor Dreu Lamberena spoke about the importance of student wellness, SEL skills for all students in LUSD, and the ongoing effort that the Wellness Center represents. LUSD Board Member Tom Blanco was in attendance to recognize this effort.

Senior Health & Fitness Day

The Lompoc Hospital District Foundation, Healthy Lompoc Coalition, Lompoc Family YMCA, Lompoc Unified School District and other community partners will be hosting a Health and Fitness Day in Huyck Stadium on Saturday, May 14. Please feel free to share the attached flyer.
ATTACHMENT #1

M&O Update

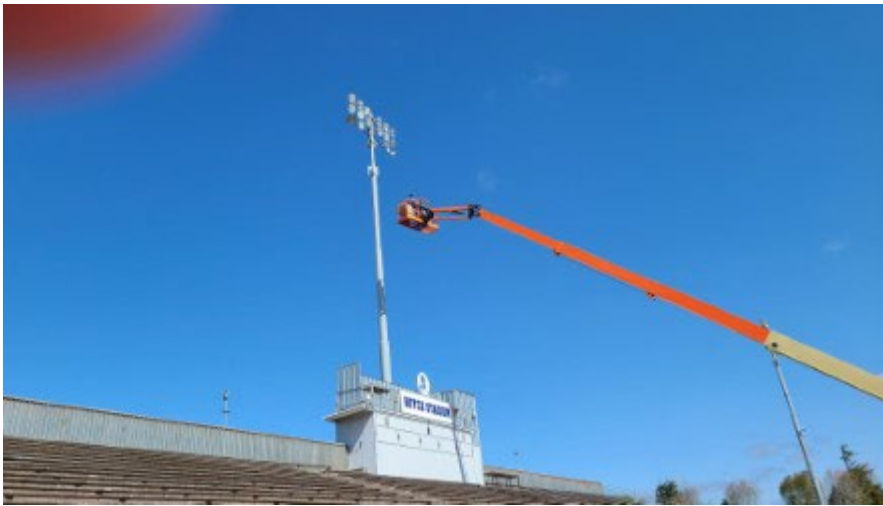
We have finally hired our new carpenter, congratulations to Keith Huyck!

Our crews are working hard taking care of work orders. Our current projects include:

- The grass and wire project started at Crestview on Thursday, April 28.
- The Ed Center HVAC project has begun. The two heaters have been put in place and the rest of the work will be done at the beginning of summer break. See photos
- The LHS stadium light replacement project has been completed. All of our crews assisted in this project. See photos
- The fencing repair project has been completed at LHS. The new gate has also been installed. See photos
- The bid opening for the LHS fencing project and the Ed Center fencing project was held on Tuesday, April 26.









LUSD and Classified HR Welcomes the Following Newly Hired Classified Positions

- CNW I at Los Berros VAPA began on 3/14/22
- Para-Special Ed at LHS began on 3/21/22
- Para-Special Ed at CHS began on 3/28/22
- Para-Special Ed at LVMS began on 3/28/22
- SSA at Miguelito began on 4/1/22
- Para-Special Ed at LVMS began on 4/1/22
- Para-Special Ed at LVMS began on 4/1/22
- SSA at Buena Vista began on 4/1/22
- Para-Special Ed at ADTP began on 4/4/22
- CNW I at Central Kitchen/BFCDS began on 4/4/22
- CNW I at LHS to begin on 5/2/22
- Para-Special Ed at Hapgood began on 4/25/22
- SSA at Ruth to begin on 5/2/22
- Bus Driver I in Transportation to begin on 5/12/22
- Bus Driver I in Transportation to begin TBD

SSA = Student Supervision Aide

Your partner in education,

Trevor McDonald
Superintendent of Schools