

Superintendent Responses to the 2026-27



June 2026

All educational partners, including LCAP Parent Advisory Committee, District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), and the Superintendent's Student Advisory were invited to ask questions/ give feedback to the Superintendent on the 2026-27 LCAP. Following are her responses.

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Educational Partner Feedback	I really appreciate the time that staff spent with LCAP members this year, and my fellow parents for their time and expertise. As I look at the proposed changes, I'm seeing some points where there could be more helpful communication to streamline feedback collected from District LCAP, community LCAP meetings, parents, students, and community members, and to show its alignment with staff recommendations (or detail why the alignment does not exist). The adjustments proposed are not consistently correlated to the feedback we have seen reported from parents/students/stakeholders throughout the year, though there are exceptions. For example, making PD subject-specific or moving resources away from ethnic studies are not associated with any noted feedback. These may or may not be useful staff recommendations but it's puzzling to see them set up as a response to community input. The class size reduction for ELA is an example of something that did come up in family feedback. Some seem contrary. For example, feedback recommended putting TOSAs back in classrooms to interact with students directly. Yet, the attendance goal suggests adding 2 new TOSAs. I recognize that staff have additional viewpoints and access to data that students, parents, and community members may not be privy to. At the same time, if this plan is put forward as being in conversation with students and	The Three-Year LCAP Cycle When evaluating the proposed changes, it is necessary to view them through the structural lens of the LCAP itself. The LCAP is designed as a comprehensive three-year plan, and we are currently entering its final year. Because we have a three-year horizon to implement actions and meet our established goals, our primary focus in this phase is seeing our current strategies through to completion. Sharp pivots or wholesale changes in year three can disrupt initiatives before they have had the full lifecycle required to demonstrate success. Navigating Staffing and State Mandates As noted, the community feedback included the recommendation that Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs) be returned to traditional classroom roles. I understand why this feels like a straightforward solution from the outside; however, staffing adjustments are highly complex. Moving personnel is governed by strict state mandates, labor agreements, and statutory deadlines such as the requirement to issue preliminary layoff notices (often referred to as "pink slips") by specific dates in the spring. We cannot simply shift roles mid-stream without triggering these regulatory requirements, which severely limits our agility in responding to immediate community staffing requests. Balancing Perception, Metrics, and Operational Needs Community input provides invaluable insight into the lived experiences and perceptions of our district. However, we must also weigh that alongside other forms of feedback, operational realities, and empirical data: Subject-Specific PD: The decision to make Professional Development subject-specific was, in fact, based on other feedback we received internally. Operationally, we are simply reallocating funds that previously sat in a broad, generalized PD category into content-specific areas. Doing this allows us to better track how those funds are being utilized and more accurately measure the impact of that specific training on student outcomes. TOSA Effectiveness: While community preference leans toward direct classroom instruction, our staff must evaluate the effectiveness of our actions using performance data. Our internal metrics clearly demonstrate that TOSAs are proving highly effective in their specialized roles. It is this data-driven effectiveness that justifies the strategic addition of TOSAs to aggressively target our attendance goals.

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	other stakeholders, it would be really helpful to see more direct correlation between feedback mechanisms, the actual feedback received, and the budgetary suggestions made. Thanks so much for taking this so seriously, and for your ongoing efforts to address transparency and student success.	Looking Ahead Please know that your insights, along with the extensive feedback collected from our community, will not be set aside. All of this feedback will continue to be used to evaluate our programs. This will be especially critical next year when we begin the collaborative process of writing an entirely new three-year LCAP.
	How does the District time its request for feedback so that the Committee's perspectives can be incorporated in a meaningful way?	To incorporate the LCAP Committee's perspectives meaningfully, a district must perfectly time its engagement window. If feedback is requested too early, committees do not have the performance data needed to make informed recommendations. If it is requested too late, the district's budget is already locked by rigid state deadlines. Here is how the cycle is sequenced to ensure community input and other data actually drives the district's budgetary decisions: State Data Drop: December The state releases the California School Dashboard, providing the standardized academic, attendance, and behavioral metrics required to evaluate the current LCAP. Without this data, committee feedback would be based purely on perception rather than empirical outcomes. Meaningful Feedback Window: January — March Districts must present a mid-year update on LCAP progress and expenditures by February 28. Because the district now has concrete data but has not yet written the upcoming budget, this is the optimal window for engagement. Committees review the data and provide actionable recommendations that staff use to build the initial draft of the plan. Drafting the Plan: April District staff draft the LCAP goals and actions by merging the community's feedback with initial budget projections (which are based on the Governor's preliminary January budget). The Governor's May Revision: By May 14 The Governor releases the May Revision, which updates the state's education funding based on spring tax receipts. District staff have a tightly compressed two-to-three-week window to reconcile the community-informed LCAP draft with these final state revenue realities before finalizing the local budget. Local Adoption: June — July 1 Following a public hearing, the local school board must officially adopt both the LCAP and the district budget concurrently by July 1. By law, the board cannot adopt an LCAP without a budget that explicitly proves there are sufficient funds to implement its actions.

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		County and State Approval: Late Summer / Fall The adopted LCAP is submitted to the Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE). RCOE conducts a rigorous review to ensure the plan adheres to the State Board of Education's template, legally meets the requirement to increase or improve services for high-need students, and aligns financially with the district's approved budget. The reason proposed adjustments can sometimes feel disconnected from the early spring committee feedback is often due to the May Revision. If state funding drops or shifts in mid-May, the district may be forced to quickly scale back or alter community-requested initiatives to ensure the final July 1 budget remains legally balanced.
	What is your vision for ongoing engagement of community and parent volunteers so that there is a meaningful structure of dialogue between volunteers and district staff?	The district wants to move past parents simply helping with events (like chaperoning) to a true partnership where parents help make important decisions. This plan is built on four main pillars: • Two-Way Feedback: We will not just ask for your input; we will always follow up to explain exactly how your suggestions were used or why they weren't, based on official rules, budgets, or data. • Building Skills Together: We will offer training to help parents understand the complex school data, budgets, and state rules. We will also train our staff on how to genuinely listen to and partner with parents. • Flexible Ways to Participate: We will create options for different commitment levels: ○ At Your School: Informal "coffee chats" with principals and meetings at your School Site Council. ○ At the District Level: Using committees like the LCAP PAC all year long to review data and test new ideas. ○ Direct Access: Continuing to hold town halls and forums where you can speak directly with the Superintendent. • Removing Obstacles: We are committed to making sure everyone can participate by providing translation services, childcare during meetings, and offering flexible meeting times (in-person and online).

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LCAP Parent Advisory	What are the skills and perspectives that are expected from the LCAP Parent Advisory Committee Members?	The role of a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) member is to represent the community's perspective and share your valuable life experiences, focusing on what is best for all students across the entire district. This role involves: • Focusing on the Big Picture: Looking at what helps all students, not just issues at one school. • Advocating for Equity: Specifically championing the needs of students who need the most support (such as low-income students, English learners, and foster/homeless youth). • Partnering Constructively: Working with the district to find solutions and asking respectful questions about data and recommendations. • Thinking Strategically: Be able to see how a student need (like poor attendance) connects to a solution (like hiring a TOSA) and how that fits into the budget. To do this effectively, members are expected to be willing to learn how to read school data and budget summaries, act as a bridge between the school community and district leadership, and think strategically about how student needs connect to district solutions and the budget.
Artificial Intelligence	I urge you to stop investing in AI training for kids and teachers. Study after study documents how using AI programs like Chat GPT make users less intelligent, less able to recall information, and less creative (https://www.wired.com/story/using-ai-negative-impact-thinking-problem-solving-study/).	The concerns raised about cognitive offloading essentially letting a machine do the thinking for us are very real, and they are actively being debated among educators nationwide. Although the apprehension is understandable, I want to assure you that we share the same ultimate goal: protecting and developing our students' intellect, recall, and creativity. We believe we must invest in AI training <i>precisely</i> because these risks exist. AI tools are now a permanent part of the world and the job market. If we simply forbid them, we leave our students unprepared and vulnerable to using the tools carelessly. Our training is focused on teaching students and teachers how to use AI wisely, not how to avoid hard work. We call this AI Literacy, and it includes three main parts: • Learning to Check the Facts: AI often makes mistakes or shares biased information. We teach students they must fact-check and think critically about everything the AI produces instead of blindly accepting it. • Knowing When to Use It: We help students understand which tasks require their own deep thought, struggle, and creativity, versus when the tool is okay for simple tasks like brainstorming or outlining. • Changing How Teachers Teach: We are training teachers to create assignments that AI cannot just "solve." This means focusing on evaluating <i>how</i> a student learned something, not just the final answer. Our priority is making sure students learn to control the tool,

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		rather than letting the tool control their intelligence.
Student Safety	I ask that RUSD do more to protect kids and their families from ICE.	I completely understand why you are asking the district to do more; the threat of immigration enforcement creates a climate of fear and stress that directly impacts our students, their families, and their ability to focus on learning. Student safety and well-being are our highest priorities, and I want to assure you that Riverside Unified School District (RUSD) has strict, established policies in place to protect our families. Here is what RUSD is currently doing to protect students from immigration enforcement and ensure our schools remain safe havens: 1. Schools are "Safe Learning Zones" In 2017, the RUSD Board of Education adopted a resolution designating all district campuses as Safe Learning Zones (Board Policy 3515.19). We are committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive environment for all students, regardless of their immigration status or national origin. Under California law and federal guidance, all children have a fundamental right to a public education, and that right is non-negotiable. 2. Strict Denial of ICE Access Without a Judicial Warrant RUSD does not permit immigration enforcement agents to freely access our campuses. • If an immigration enforcement agent comes to a school, district policy requires staff to deny access unless the agent presents a valid judicial warrant or court order signed by a state or federal judge. • ICE Administrative Subpoenas alone do not grant access to our schools or student records; the district refers these to legal counsel and opposes the enforcement of subpoenas that are not directly education-related. • Even if a valid judicial warrant is presented, agents are required to wait in the front office while the district's legal counsel and administration review the documentation. Access is then strictly limited to exactly what the warrant authorizes, and an administrator will monitor the interaction. • For more information, visit: https://www.riversideunified.org/important-information/immigration-resources 3. Protection of Student Privacy RUSD does not collect, track, or share any information regarding the immigration or citizenship status of our students or their families. We do not initiate communication with federal immigration authorities, nor do we use district resources, personnel, or local school police to conduct or support federal immigration enforcement activities.

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		4. Staff Training and Emergency Protocols Our staff and administrators are actively trained on how to respond if approached by outside agencies. While staff are instructed not to physically impede an armed officer to avoid escalating safety risks, they immediately implement districtwide emergency safety protocols to secure the campus, prevent unauthorized access to classrooms, and notify district administration. 5. Immediate Family Notification Consistent with California law (Senate Bill 98), if immigration enforcement activity is confirmed on a school campus, we will notify the families of the impacted school using ParentSquare, phone calls, and emails. Furthermore, if a request or warrant involves a specific student, their parent or guardian is notified immediately. We are committed to doing everything within our legal authority to protect the rights, dignity, and privacy of our students. We continuously lean on the California Values Act (SB 54) and state guidance, which designate public schools as highly restricted "sensitive locations".
Ethnic Studies	I appreciate the dedication to ethnic studies.	Ethnic Studies is a key part of a well-rounded education. By exploring the diverse histories, cultures, and contributions of different communities, this course helps students gain a deeper understanding of the world. More importantly, this coursework develops essential skills for success in a diverse workforce, including: • Critical Thinking: The ability to analyze information and ideas. • Empathy and Cultural Awareness: The skills to understand and work with people from all backgrounds. What This Means for our Students • New State Requirement: A new California state law (Assembly Bill 101) makes a one-semester Ethnic Studies course a mandatory requirement for high school graduation. • Starting Class: This requirement begins with the Class of 2030—the students who are incoming 9th graders for the 2026–2027 school year. • Our Commitment: Our district started offering these courses ahead of the state deadline to ensure our teachers and students are fully prepared for this new standard. We appreciate that parents and community members value this work, which reinforces our commitment to inclusive, high-quality instruction.