

The Community Coalition v. LAUSD Settlement: Winning New Services for High-Need Students September 2017

Under a groundbreaking settlement, more than \$150 million of additional funds will be distributed among 50 of the highest need middle and high schools in Los Angeles over the next three years for new or increased services for low-income students, English-language learners, and foster youth. This agreement resolves a lawsuit under California's new school funding law on behalf of the Community Coalition of South Los Angeles and parent Reyna Frias against the Los Angeles Unified School District.

About the Lawsuit:

The settlement resolves a 2015 lawsuit filed by Public Advocates Inc., the ACLU of California, and Covington & Burling LLP against LAUSD on behalf of parent Reyna Frias and the Community Coalition, a South Los Angeles based social justice organization. The suit challenged the district's failure to direct some \$450 million annually to increased or improved services for [high-need students](#). It is the first case brought to enforce California's education finance reform law known as the [Local Control Funding Formula \(LCFF\)](#). If left uncorrected, the district's practice would have resulted in more than \$2 billion in lost services for high-need students over the years.

Last year, plaintiffs won a decision from the California Department of Education requiring LAUSD to correct most of this funding error going forward, but still left several hundred million dollars in lost services from years past in dispute. The settlement resolves the claim for these outstanding funds for high-need students.

Details of the Settlement:

The settlement provides for:

- More than **\$150 million over 3 years** going to new services for high-need students (approximately **\$50M a year** starting immediately in this 2017-18 school year).
- The funds to be distributed across **50 of the highest need middle and high schools** in the district according to the number of low-income, English Learners and foster youth at the school.
 - These schools were selected based on multiple factors, including the number of high-need students, math scores, suspension rate, foster youth and homelessness rates.
 - For a complete list of the 50 schools receiving new funds and the amount each school will receive over the next two years, click [here](#).
- **Services for high-need students.** These additional funds must be spent on a menu of services for high-need students developed jointly with LAUSD, community partners and school leaders, including:
 - Significant increased investments in high need students, including **academic support and mental health, social and emotional support**;
 - Increasing A-G and Advanced Placement course access for high school students including **A-G intervention and recovery**;

- **Linked Learning** (an approach that incorporates, rigorous academics, career and technical education, work-based learning, and student supports);
- **School climate** initiatives including **restorative justice**;
- Graduation and student recovery for **dropout prevention** for high-need students;
- **Parent & community engagement** for high-need communities.
- **Early school site planning is key.** School principals should consult with local communities to submit an immediate spending plan for some or all of the 2017-18 funding as soon as possible consistent with the services listed above. They must submit a 2-year plan by October 31, 2017 for spending the new funding for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years combined. The Superintendent will review and approve the plans within 20 school days.
- **Use it or lose it.** *Schools must spend all funds received in the first two years of the settlement by June 30, 2019.* Any unspent funding may be reallocated by the Superintendent among the other 50 schools. All settlement funds must be spent by the end of the 2019-20 school year. Any unspent funds as of June 30, 2020 may be used by the District for any District purpose.

Take Action. Implementation is key to making sure LA's most vulnerable students truly benefit from this settlement agreement. Be an ally to high-need students:

- Spread the word in your community about this groundbreaking settlement!
- Educate your school principal and [School Site Council](#).
- Gather your school community to provide input on the spending plans.
- Lift your voice in school and district budgeting by joining your School Site Council or the district Parent Advisory Committee to weigh in on the [Local Control Accountability Plan \(LCAP\)](#).
- Support the campaign for a better Student Equity Need Index to ensure resources are reaching LA's highest need schools. Find out more [here](#).

Key Definitions:

- **High-Need Students:** Refers to low-income students, English language learners and foster youth.
- **LCFF (Local Control Funding Formula):** The new school funding law that promises increased resources for high-need students.
- **LCAP (Local Control & Accountability Plan):** This is a three-year spending and academic plan that school districts must adopt to show how they are spending their money to improve outcomes for students, including high-need students. Districts must meaningfully engage parents, students and community in developing this plan.
- **School Site Council:** Decision-making committee comprised of staff, parents, students and community members responsible for developing the school site plan.

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