



**Parent
Organization
Network**
Leading School Change

PON Professional Learning Network Report II:

The Impact on Local Control and
Accountability Plans

April 2020



Special Thanks and Acknowledgements

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Azusa Unified School District

Lynwood Unified School District

Pasadena Unified School District

Whittier City School District

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PON's Vision & Mission

PON envisions a public school system transformed by highly-engaged parents actively working with school officials to provide a high-quality educational experience tailored to students' needs and community priorities; where public schools value parents as equal partners and instrumental collaborators in making decisions that affect positive change in school.

We foresee achieving our vision by strengthening the abilities of culturally underserved parents to be trainers and leaders, supporting their local initiatives and advocacy efforts, and connecting them to a broader network of committed individuals and organizations so together they can effect long-term systemic changes resulting in high-quality education for all.

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Executive Summary

The Parent Organization Network (PON) has worked with families for 15 years to build their capacity to engage with schools and advocate for student success and school improvement. PON focuses on removing barriers that hinder engagement and supporting initiatives that strengthen the practice of family and community engagement.

To strengthen this engagement practice, PON facilitated a Professional Learning Network (PLN) with four school districts from 2017-2019. Ten LCAP Administrators and Family Engagement (FE) Specialists completed 500 hours of training (an average of 43 hours per participant). The findings of PON PLN Report I, released in February 2020, showed that staff increased knowledge and strengthened their practice of family engagement.

This report analyzes family and community engagement efforts in the Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) from the same school districts to determine if the PLN influenced changes. After analyzing the family engagement-related goals and actions, metrics, budget, increased or improved services, and stakeholder engagement, we found the following:

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

1. School districts may be undergoing internal changes to shift to the “Dual Capacity-Building Framework” to support the development of family engagement strategies, policies, and programs but these changes are not yet reflected in the LCAP.
2. The LCAP goal is connected to metrics and resources. When school districts explicitly integrate family engagement goals with school climate or student outcomes, more local and state metrics are monitored in relation to parent activities and more resources are provided.
3. School districts’ allocation and expenditures for family engagement goals ranged between .4% and 3.0% of the budget. Districts with broader, integrated goals budgeted and spent from 1.6% to 3.0% of the budget, while those with narrower goals budgeted and spent from 0.5% to 1.2%.
4. While all four school districts have basic metrics measuring inputs and outputs (i.e., participation rates, number of workshops offered, perception data), three of the four now include new local metrics on inputs and outputs and collect additional demographic information in surveys to be able to disaggregate and analyze the data. All PLN participant school districts still need to add metrics on impact outcomes from family engagement activities (e.g., increasing parent knowledge, efficacy, whether they use strategies at home).
5. As with most districts outside PON’s PLN, the “Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Students” section by participant districts was often a copy or restatement of what was mentioned in the Goals and Actions section. Descriptions did not provide the rationale for activities or report the actions’ effectiveness.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

6. All four school districts refined or developed new processes to outreach, inform, or consult with more stakeholders or new stakeholder groups. Most report increasing survey participation numbers for parents and staff. All four school districts now survey students, three of them do so annually and reach between 15% to 57% of the population.

7. School districts have developed structures to allow staff, parents and/or students to spend more time strengthening and applying the continuous improvement cycle to their work by identifying root causes, reporting progress on implementation, and then reflecting and adjusting their plan. These structures may help foster greater levels of engagement and collaboration.

The greatest growth was in community or stakeholder engagement which could be attributed to key external factors: 1) federal and state laws require and are more closely monitoring community engagement efforts by school districts; 2) school administrators are responsible for and have authority over community engagement; and 3) credentialing requirements for administrators were updated in 2017 to prioritize family and community engagement, and community engagement is more robust than family engagement. In addition, the state reinforces community engagement expectations annually through the LCAP process and identifies districts for differentiated assistance to address performance issues including significant disparities in performance among student groups. The state also has signaled the importance of community engagement by investing over \$13 million in its Community Engagement Initiative. Given all these factors, it is no surprise that administrators leading community engagement in their districts would prioritize efforts to enhance community engagement in the LCAPs we reviewed.

Federal and state family engagement frameworks and guiding documents promote the *“Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships”* for systemic engagement, but current practice is focused on coordinating activities for families to attend at the school site level. A general lack of awareness about family engagement research makes it difficult for school districts to transition from activity-driven engagement to a dual-capacity model that requires family engagement training for staff, prioritizes relationship building with families, embeds family engagement in all strategies, measures impact, and sustains engagement with resources and infrastructure.

For family engagement initiatives to be successful, it will require more guidance from state agencies and greater involvement from administrators (i.e. superintendents and principals), the decision makers that ultimately determine the role of and resources for family engagement plans. However, there is hope. The California Department of Education (CDE) developed a self-reflection tool for Priority 3: Family Engagement that requires administrators to facilitate discussions with stakeholders to assess dual capacity-building in developing trust, creating partnerships and seeking input on decisions. The State Board of Education approved the much-needed tool in March 2019. This will provide initial data to assess the areas where school districts need more support and create an opportunity to align the need with the System of Support.

Although the CDE is beginning to make changes, it will be difficult to change practice if formal, pre-service family engagement training is not afforded to administrators and teachers. The resistance to learn new theoretical models

and adopt new strategies and practices will prove difficult to overcome. To change this, family engagement advocates must engage the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) to review existing expectations and training.

There is a lot of work ahead of us to develop strong practices, policies, and systems that will support effective family engagement for student success, but together we are taking steps in the right direction. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to work with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE), the four school districts that participated in the PON PLN, and PON members that provided input for this report. I look forward to a continued collaboration.

Sincerely,

Araceli Simeón

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Araceli Simeón". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Project Director & PLN Facilitator

In 2017, the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) was created to “advise and assist” school districts and the California Department of Education “to deliver on California’s promise of a quality, equitable education for every student.” This statewide agency sponsored 57 two-year Professional Learning Networks (PLNs) to promote innovative thinking¹. School district participation in the PLNs is voluntary.

Each PLN determined the specific areas on which they wanted to focus based on local needs. All 57 PLNs aimed to “build a culture of continuous improvement, overcoming systemic issues, and improving student outcomes” using “the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and the CA School Dashboard as tools for improvement”². In addition, some of the PLNs were designed to increase capacity on a specific Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) priority or student population.

Purpose

The purpose of PON’s PLN was to strengthen the capacity of district staff to develop the organizational and procedural conditions needed to establish systemic family engagement across all schools in a district. The two goals for the two-year experience included:

1. To review research on family engagement and engage in a reflection and analysis process to determine each school district’s current state of family engagement. Community engagement was covered as well, but to a lesser extent.
2. To improve staff training and practice of family engagement in schools, using research-based practices and continuous improvement cycles.

The purpose of this report is to analyze family and community engagement efforts in the Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) from the four school districts that participated in the PON PLN to determine if changes are aligned to information reviewed in the PLN.

1. California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (2019). *About CCEE*. <https://www.ccee-ca.org/about-ccee.asp>

2. California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (2019). *Professional Learning Networks*. <https://www.ccee-ca.org/professional-learning-networks.asp>.

Process

Four school districts participated in the PLN: Azusa Unified School District, Lynwood Unified School District, Pasadena Unified School District, and Whittier City School District. Prior to this effort, PON had supported parents and community leaders in Lynwood, Pasadena, and Whittier so they could participate in their respective school district's LCAP community engagement process.

The PLN was composed of LCAP Administrators and Family Engagement Specialists, who are responsible for implementing family engagement services and actions to support parent or community liaisons at the school site level. The PLN members met in-person 11 times per year, mostly on a monthly basis, for two years. The PLN members also participated in a second meeting or activity per month to support their learning and skill building; these varied from additional in-person meetings, virtual meetings, webinars, conferences, and site visits.

Methodology

To assess the impact of the PON PLN on participating school district LCAPs, school districts' three-year plans and budgets, we reviewed two to three LCAPs for each district from 2017|18, 2018|19, and 2019|20. This 3-year cycle started in the 2017|18 school year, when the PLN began, and impact was reviewed more closely in 2018|19 and 2019|20. The following aspects of the LCAPs were analyzed: 1) LCAP goals and actions; 2) Metrics; 3) Budget allocation and actual expenditures for family engagement plans; 4) Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Pupils descriptions related to family engagement goals; and 5) Stakeholder engagement.

LCAP Goals and Actions on Family Engagement

In this section (referred to in this report as the Family Engagement Section), we looked for references and themes related to the "Dual Capacity Building for Family-School Partnerships" framework which includes training or professional development for staff, moving away from parent activities and investing in the system for district-wide engagement. We also looked at the CDE Family Engagement Toolkit with areas of focus that include forming District Teams, developing vision statements, and greater focus on relationship building.

Metrics

Currently, there are no standard metrics for family engagement as these vary depending on the activity, but many districts use logic models to plan their family engagement programs and identify metrics. “A logic model is a graphic depiction (road map) that presents the shared relationships among the resources [inputs], activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact for [a] program. It depicts the relationship between [a] program’s activities and its intended effects.”³ The field has focused on measuring *quantitative* inputs and outputs and we refer to these as “Basic Metrics”. The metrics for *qualitative* inputs/outputs and outcomes are referred to as “New Metrics”. For examples, please see the two tables below.

Table 1: Logic Model Aligning Activity, Impact & Evaluation⁴

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What you used to do what you did (i.e. money, staff, resources) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What you did 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reach and scope of what you did 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What your activities accomplished (e.g., can be short-term, mid-term, long-term) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The impact you had on children and families •The impact may be two-generational or may only be contributory.

Table 2: Sample Metrics for a Family Engagement Activity⁵

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS	OUTPUTS	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	MID-TERM OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES	GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cost of program & staff training •Cost of teachers/ parent trainers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Research-based family literacy program offered with outreach and targeted engagement of lowest readers and their families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Number of families participating •Percentage of participants completing program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Families have increased capacity to support literacy at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Families regularly utilize learned strategies at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The reading performance of participating low-performing readers increases •Children and family members spend regular time reading together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Closure of the reading achievement gap •Strengthening parent child relationships

3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020). *Program Performance and Evaluation Office*. <https://www.cdc.gov/eval/logicmodels/index.htm>.

4. National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (4/24/2019). *Effective Practices Webinar Series: Using Qualitative and Quantitative Data to Evaluate Family Engagement*.

5. National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (4/24/2019). *Effective Practices Webinar Series: Using Qualitative and Quantitative Data to Evaluate Family Engagement*.

Budget

School districts can use Title I, English Learner Parent Involvement Funds and LCFF/LCAP Funding to fund family engagement. In this section we monitored each district's allocation and spending, percentage of budget spent on family engagement, and whether allocations/percentages increased over time.

Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Students

LCFF requires districts to increase or improve services for unduplicated students (i.e., low-income students, English learners, and foster youth). The increase or improvement in services must be beyond what all students receive. To clarify how districts must meet this requirement, the new LCAP Template adopted in January 2020 requires districts to report the percentage of increased or improved services and describe *how* the services increased or improved at the percentage required. Districts also must show how the needs of unduplicated students were considered first before selecting each action being provided to an entire school or district, and if these actions are or will be effective in meeting the district goals for these students. Consequently, in this section we looked for data used to identify needs, research-based practices, and whether activities to achieve family engagement goals were deemed effective.⁶

Stakeholder Engagement

LCFF law and regulations require school districts to include stakeholder engagement as they develop their LCAP. Specific requirements include but are not limited to:

- Soliciting general input and feedback throughout the process;
- Consulting with specific groups (outlined in "Consult" section);
- Sharing a draft of the LCAP with district level committees (i.e., Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) and, if applicable, to the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), school-site staff and committees;
- Responding to feedback from PAC and DELAC in writing;
- Presenting the LCAP in a public forum before the district's school board of education approves the LCAP at a subsequent meeting; and
- Reporting its stakeholder engagement process in the LCAP. The new template requires a description of the engagement process, how the input was considered before finalizing the plan, a summary of the input or feedback provided by specific groups, and which aspects of the LCAP were influenced by specific stakeholder input.

6. California Department of Education (2020). Approved LCAP Template 2020. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/lc/>

In this section we sought to understand each district's engagement process and see how it compared with stages in the "Community Involvement Continuum". During the PLN we reviewed three models of engagement and this is the one that resonated with the group. This model promotes community engagement for the purpose of co-constructing solutions to social problems through equal partnerships between practitioners, families, and students to transform experiences and systems in order to improve results. Co-construction refers to the notion of setting priorities based on how community members or stakeholders define them⁷ and assumes community members will have been well-informed about the issue they are solving⁸. See Figure 1 for a graphic representation of the model.

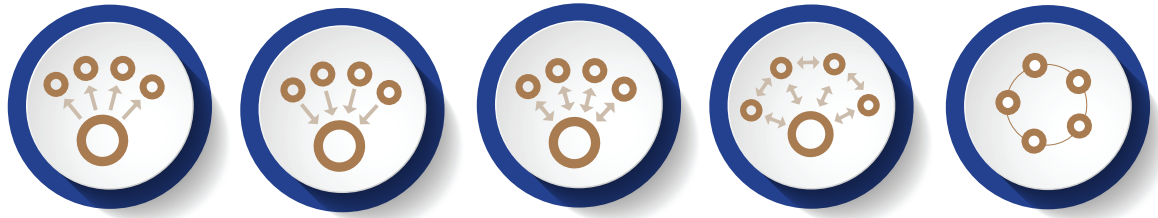
As viewed through this model, we looked for changes that would expand outreach to increase representation of underrepresented communities and provide new ways to seek general input from stakeholders or improve their process to engage and communicate (inform). We reviewed how districts consulted with specific audiences to get them directly involved in the process as required by law (i.e., parents in general, the Parent Advisory Committee, English Learner Parent Advisory Committee, teachers, principals and administrators, other school personnel, Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Administrators, Local Bargaining units and other stakeholder groups as applicable). We also looked at whether the school district is reaching higher levels of engagement and co-ownership of the LCAP and continuous improvement process through collaboration and/or shared leadership.

Note that although PON would have liked to triangulate the information from staff interviews and the LCAPs with data from parents to determine where each district was in terms of its community engagement process, this was not done due to lack of time and resources. However, the report includes some voices from parents and community leaders that are PON members in some of the PLN districts; their voice is reflected in the recommendations provided in each report section.

7. Center for the Study of Social Policy (2010) *Growing and Sustaining Parent Engagement*.

8. Council of Chief State School Officers and Partners for Each and Every Child (2017). *Meaningful Local Engagement UnderESSA: A Handbook for LEA and School Leaders*

Figure 1: Community Engagement Continuum (Adapted version) ^{9, 10}



	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	SHARED LEADERSHIP
GOAL	To provide balanced and objective information in a timely manner. Establish communication channels and channels for outreach.	To obtain feedback on analysis, issues, alternatives and decisions. Increase visibility of desire to build partnership.	To work with the public to make sure that concerns and aspirations are considered and understood. Build trust.	To partner with the community in each aspect of decision-making. Build partnerships.	To place final decision making in the hands of the community. Improved student outcomes.
COMMUNICATION	Communication flows from the school or district to the community.	Communication flows from the community to the school or district, as requested.	Communication flows both ways, it is participatory.	Communication flow is bidirectional	Strong Bidirectional Relationship
PROMISE	"We will keep you informed."	"We will listen to and acknowledge your concerns."	"We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the decisions made."	"We will look to you for advice and innovation and incorporate this in decisions as much as possible."	"We will implement what you (community) decide."

9. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (2011). *Principles of Community Engagement –Second Edition*https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/pce_what.html

10. Sustaining Community Website (2017). *What is the Spectrum of Public Participation?*<https://sustainingcommunity.wordpress.com/2017/02/14/spectrum-of-public-participation/>



PON PLN Impact on Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs)

A. Findings on Family Engagement Goals and Actions

Finding 1: School districts may be undergoing internal changes to shift to the “Dual Capacity-Building Framework” to support the development of family engagement strategies, policies, and programs but these changes are not yet reflected in the LCAP.

The LCAPs remained unchanged over the 3-year period for two districts. One district already subscribed to the “*Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships*” before staff participated in the PLN. Their effective practices led to their selection to the state’s Community Engagement Initiative so they can work with other districts in sharing and identifying best practices. And while their LCAP remained the same, knowledge and practices are changing based on the time and resources they have invested on family and community engagement. For another school district, their family engagement work is guided by the district’s strategic plan and the family engagement unit’s internal annual action plan, which is robust, but it is not integrated into the LCAP.

For the other two districts, substantive plan modifications and budget reallocations occurred, due largely to new leadership and drastic budget reductions. We observed that in times of financial crisis, a district aimed to retain core elements of the district’s family engagement efforts by prioritizing parent training, events, and services. However, this reinforces the idea that the parent engagement specialist role at the district level is to coordinate workshops and events, when it is supposed to be evolving to “lead a process of continuous improvement at schools across the district”¹¹ to achieve systemic engagement.

In times of leadership transition, a district sought improvement by making changes to programs and systems in place, but it is unclear what evaluation process took place to determine what to keep and what to change as the rationale behind changes was not documented in the LCAP. In both scenarios, initial steps staff had taken to integrate the family engagement framework in terms of integrating family engagement training for staff, actions on relationship building between staff and families, or conflict resolution between school staff and families were eliminated in subsequent versions of the LCAP.

11. California Department of Education (2017). *Family Engagement Toolkit: Continuous Improvement through an Equity Lens*. Pages 3-4

PON Recommendations

Parents may not be fully aware of a district's actual investment in staff professional development or a district's internal plans, but they are sensitive to staff changes given that the work is relationship-based. Parents notice when staff are moved to other schools, work hours are reduced, or they are let go and positions are no longer filled. When staff is hired, parents take note of the new person's skill levels in terms of ability to build trust and relationships, communicate clearly and in language, and support parents/families with information and resources.

Recommendations:

1. Keeping parents informed of district changes that directly affect the parent-school relationship would serve both parties well. We recommend including parents in the decision-making process while different options are being considered, to communicate the changes to the most impacted parents once a decision is reached, and to report them in the LCAP in order to document the changes and state the rationale behind the change.
2. All school districts are required to use the CDE's self-reflection tool as the Local Indicator for Parent Engagement. Districts must follow all the steps when completing the self-reflection tool and first identify and engage a diverse stakeholder group that will work collectively with the district to review data. Together they will assess the district's progress, strengths, weaknesses and modifications needed to improve the district's family engagement policies, programs and practices.

The tool asks school districts to reflect on how they've met state requirements and implemented practices in three specific categories: relationship building between families and school staff, building partnerships for student outcomes, and seeking input for decision-making. The tool is designed to help school districts transition to the "*Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships*". This self-reflection exercise is part of "the continuous improvement process and needs to happen prior to updating their LCAP" to "modify future goals, actions, and services in the LCAP¹²".

Finding 2: The LCAP goal is connected to metrics and resources. When school districts explicitly integrate family engagement goals with school climate or student outcomes, more local and state metrics are monitored in relation to parent activities and more resources are provided.

Broad LCAP Goals from Two Districts

- Increase Parent & Student Leadership, Engagement, and Positive Perceptions
- Support and promote parent and community engagement and each school will facilitate a positive climate that ensures students feel a part of the school and feel that adults care about them in order to increase student achievement in all of our schools. Attendance rates will increase at all schools. All parents, teachers, students and staff will feel welcome and respected in our schools. Schools will adopt a theme or make progress towards adopting a theme that will serve to engage parents and the greater school community and increase enrollment in our schools.

Narrow LCAP Goals from Two Districts

- Parent participation at school and district events will increase annually.
- Parents and guardians feel welcomed at their school, have sufficient two-way communication with their school and are provided with knowledge and skills to successfully support and advocate for their child.

Highlight: Azusa Unified School District’s goal to “Increase Parent & Student Leadership, Engagement, and Positive Perceptions” as reported in their LCAP:

1. Increase and improve communication and community outreach.
2. Provide professional development to both parents and staff using the Families in Schools program.
3. Provide foster youth and parent services.
4. Implement a parent and student engagement plan based on school climate and safety surveys (CHKS).
5. Improve school safety through professional development.
6. Improve and increase use of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support to support unduplicated students.
Provide additional professional development on topics like Restorative Justice.
7. Provide a Community Liaison at each school (full time in high schools, at least 6 hours in middle schools, at least 3 hours in elementary schools). Provide special training and support to all community liaisons.
8. Provide the Student Opportunity for Academic Recovery program for those with greatest academic and behavioral need.
9. Provide counseling and behavior intervention for English Learners, low-income students and foster youth.
10. Provide increased health support for students.
11. Continue and increase participation in before-and-after-school programs (Think Together), K/TK gap hour care.
12. Provide a director to improve and oversee the LCAP process, including use of all data, metrics, actions, & services.
13. Provide increased and improved support through an outreach consultant, a homeless liaison, and office support staff to improve pupil engagement.

6	Goals provide resources to support and engage students	6	Goals include professional development or support for parents and/or staff to support students	2	Goals on data collection to monitor improvement and inform decision-making
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PON Recommendations

Currently the family engagement movement calls for school districts to shift their practice from activity-driven to systemic engagement and from isolation to integration into the district's structure, plan and budget to achieve student goals. This can be achieved with both broad and narrow goals, although broader well-defined goals can make the connection to student achievement clearer and imply greater collaboration among school staff. Whether this collaboration actually exists depends on if and how family engagement is implemented in coordination with other district units or departments to ensure alignment with goals and to create feedback loops to gauge and improve parents' experience with their children's schools as needed.

Recommendations:

Whether the district has a broad or narrow goal they must strengthen communication and relationships among district units or departments to continue to break down silos.

It is important to note that from the first PLN Report we learned that all four school districts improved relationships and communication between district personnel and departments to facilitate the implementation of family engagement work. However, improving communication is a work in progress since 75% of LCAP directors and 40% of family engagement specialists reported that two-way communication was the norm, and the level, frequency, and quality was commendable. Another 40% of family engagement specialists and 25% of LCAP Administrators felt communication was adequate but could be improved. Improving relationships and communication is an ongoing process in most organizations but is worth the investment as research shows increased employee satisfaction and more effective systems to improve outcomes for students.

B. Findings on the Budget

Finding 3: School districts' allocation and expenditures for family engagement goals ranged between .4% and 3.0% of the budget. Districts with broader, integrated goals budgeted and spent from 1.6% to 3.0% of the budget, while those with narrower goals budgeted and spent from 0.5% to 1.2%.

The two school districts with broader engagement goals and higher budget percentages extended their family engagement efforts beyond parent workshops, centers, and Parent/Community Liaisons, to pay for additional staff and costs related to improving school climate, socio-emotional supports, and/or reducing chronic absenteeism, suspensions and expulsions.

Two districts reduced budget allocations. One reduced the allocation and expenditures for family engagement from 1.2% to .6% due to budget cuts. The other district reduced the budget from 0.7% to 0.5%. In the second case the allocation often was greater than the actual expenses, so an adjustment was made by lowering the allocation. For these districts, their family engagement goals were or became solely focused on family engagement activities and staff directly working with parents (i.e., trainings, events, parent centers, community liaisons) without adding other students, school climate or attendance components.

District 1

The budget for family engagement increased over the three-year period, growing from 1.6% to 1.9%, or \$.93M to \$1.5M. Their family engagement goal includes actions and allocations beyond parent workshops and liaisons, and includes expenses related to chronic absenteeism that include staff and consultants.

	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20
ALL EXPENDITURES	\$56.8M	\$61.6M	\$64.1M
BUDGET FOR GOAL 4	\$.93M* (1.6%)	\$1.2M (1.9%)	\$1.5 M (2.3%)
ACTUALS FOR GOAL 4	\$0.93M (1.6%)	\$1.2M (1.9%)	N/A

*Data Source from 2017|18 LCAP, the rest of the figures are from 2019|20 LCAP.

District 2

Overall, the allocation for family engagement remained constant between 0.4% and .7% of the budget and was underspent in two of the three years reported. In 2018|19, \$616K were allocated but only \$369K was spent. While it was reported that the underspent funds from the past year would be used for parent centers, the budget wasn't restored to the original \$600K. The budget currently covers parent involvement specialists, community liaisons, and interpreters in general and for special education and board meetings, parent workshops and supplies. In 2017|18 a major expenditure was a parent conference, costing about \$180K.

	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20
ALL EXPENDITURES	\$91.4M	\$88.8M	\$91.2M
BUDGET FOR GOAL 4	\$668.4K* (0.7%)	\$616.4K (0.7%)	\$482.7K (0.5%)
ACTUALS FOR GOAL 4	\$489.4K* (0.5%)	\$369.6K (0.4%)	N/A

*Data Source from 2018|19 LCAP, the rest of the figures are from 2019|20 LCAP.

District 3

In 2018, the Los Angeles County Office of Education intervened in the operations of the school district when the district experienced fiscal destabilization and depletion of budget reserves below the required 3%. This instability was due to several factors including “the uncertainty of future federal funding, declining revenue, declining student enrollment and Average Daily Attendance (ADA), and rising Special Education costs”.¹³ To regain fiscal stability, the school board approved budget cuts which included closing schools. While in 2017|18 the school district operated 28 schools, in 2018|19 they reduced the number to 26. In 2019|20, the school district Board voted to close an additional three schools.¹⁴

Consequently, the budget cuts led to drastic changes in the family engagement plan, primarily consolidating goals which reduced the plan from ten to four goals, eliminating the Conflict Resolution Ombud’s Office, and transferring interpretation/translation responsibilities to another department. Decision-making authority over hiring Community Assistants was transferred to local school sites thereby making the position optional and ultimately reducing the number of positions and the hours to work in schools. During this budgeting process, the initial references to professional development for teachers and staff in 2018|19 disappeared, and parent training, volunteer processing and community engagement activities for the LCAP process were prioritized.

Given budget cuts, the allocation for family engagement decreased from \$1.74M to \$1.1M or 1.2% to 0.6%. The budget covers staff and costs related to training parents and parent leaders, surveying communities, processing, orienting and placing volunteers in schools, translation/interpreting services, and communications staff. Please note that at the same time the district had been stabilizing the budget, LCAP budget revenue and expenditures increased during the three-year period, yet funding for family engagement has not been restored.

	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20
ALL EXPENDITURES	\$144.6M*	\$181.3M	\$195.6M
BUDGET FOR GOAL 4	\$1.65M*(1.1%)	\$1.50M (0.8%)	\$1.11M (0.8%)
ACTUALS FOR GOAL 4	\$1.74M* (1.2%)	\$1.45M (0.8%)	N/A

*Data Source from 2018|19 LCAP, the rest of the figures are from 2019|20 LCAP.

13 Board of Education of Pasadena Unified School District (2018), February 26) Board Meeting: Report No. 87-B, Topic: Fiscal Stabilization Plan Required by Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) Based on First Interim Reporting. https://the.school.district.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=15&-clip=6499&meta_id=101777.

14 Pasadena News now (10/10/2019). The school district Parents Confront School Board, Council Members, Demand School Closures Be Recinded. <http://www.pasadenanow.com/main/the.school.district-parents-confront-school-board-council-members-demand-school-closures-be-recinded/#.XaIGF2ZICb>.

District 4

The budget for Goal 4 – “Increase Parent & Student Leadership, Engagement, and Positive Perceptions” remained between \$2.1M – \$2.5M or 2.6% and 3.0% of the total budget over the three years. This allocation is higher than in the other three school districts in this report, however the goal is broader and covers expenses beyond Community Liaisons and parent programs to include a metrics director and supports for students, parents and staff.

	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20
ALL EXPENDITURES	\$79.5M	\$82.2M	\$86.7M
BUDGET FOR GOAL 4	\$2M* (2.7%)	\$2.5M* (3.0%)	\$2.5M (2.9%)
ACTUALS FOR GOAL 4	\$2.1M (2.6%)	\$2.5M (3.0%)	N/A

*Data Source from 2017|18 LCAP, the rest of the figures are from 2019|20 LCAP.

PON Recommendations

Achieving and sustaining systemic family engagement means planning the desired changes (staff training to change practice, improve policy, and/or establish systems), investing adequate resources beyond current parent programming, and sustaining the investment over time while measuring growth or improvement.

Recommendations:

To shift family engagement goals and actions to a Dual Capacity-Building Framework, districts should make the following investments if not already in place:

1. Prioritize, invest in, and provide family engagement training for all staff including administrators, family engagement staff, teachers, counselors, and classified staff;
2. Designate an administrator to further develop and oversee the school district’s engagement system for students, families, and community members or stakeholders;
3. Continue strengthening knowledge and practice of continuous improvement science (and measuring of family engagement) to move toward systemic engagement; and
4. Evolve the role of family engagement staff from event coordinators and workshop facilitators to systems thinkers and process facilitators. Together with families and other staff, they can develop or update policies and structures for dual-capacity building, including building systems for data collection to ensure continuous improvement along the way.
5. Continue building parents’ capacity to support children’s learning at home and investing in leadership development for parents to lead in school committees and beyond.



C. Findings on Metrics

Finding 4. While all four school districts have basic metrics measuring inputs and outputs (i.e., participation rates, number of workshops offered, perception data), three of the four now include new local metrics on inputs and outputs and collect additional demographic information in surveys to be able to disaggregate and analyze the data. All PLN participant school districts still need to add metrics on impact outcomes from family engagement activities (e.g., increasing parent knowledge, efficacy, whether they use strategies at home).

Every district uses different metrics to measure family engagement activities. There are no standardized metrics, in part, because activities are designed to achieve different goals and outcomes. While most districts report achieving their stated goals to increase participation rates in meetings or survey responses, there is a gap between achieving input/output goals with those that measure if the district’s activities correlate to the impact on student performance, and critically, measuring the impact of the activities on the parents.

To show the expansion on metrics please see the table below. The table is a compilation of family engagement metrics PLN districts use to measure and monitor progress on goals. The “Basic” column describes customary or typical metrics PLN districts use to describe what they’ve done in the past. The “New” column describes new metrics used by PLN districts to document what was accomplished and the positive impact of their efforts on families.

Parent Training/ Workshop Participation

BASIC METRICS	NEW METRICS USED BY PLN OR IN THE FIELD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of trainings offered at the district level and by school site. (input/output) • Number of parents who participate in one or more trainings, workshops, or conference per academic year based on sign-in sheets. (input/output) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking the number of unduplicated parents that participate. (input/output)

School Meetings, Events

BASIC METRICS	NEW METRICS USED BY PLN OR IN THE FIELD
<p>Average parent participation (input/output) in school events including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back to School Night • Parent Teacher Conferences • Open House 	<p>Schools in other districts are using data from school meetings and events to analyze the number of events attended by each student’s family. This helps local staff identify families that have not attended any events to prioritize relationship building. Some of the school districts in the PLN are considering using a similar tool.</p>

Committees

BASIC METRICS

- Number of leaders per school site. (input/output)
- Number of meetings attended per year. (input/output)
- Average parent participation in advisory school committees: School Site Councils and ELA. (input/output)
- Average parent participating in advisory school district committees: DELAC, DAC. (input/output)

NEW METRICS USED BY PLN OR IN THE FIELD

- Percentage of parents on committees that receive training on their duties. (input/output)
- Percentage of parents on committees that participate in advance leadership development training. (input/output)
- Parent Decision-Making: Percentage of parents from advisory committees that agree or strongly agree that they have a say in the school decision-making process. (impact outcome)
- The percentage of parents who participate in ELAC and DELAC that represents the total population of English Learners for each school site and district. (input/output)
- The percentage of parents who participate in the School Site Council that represents the total population of students at the school site. (input/output)

Surveys

BASIC METRICS

- Number of surveys collected (input/output)
- Percentage of parents taking the survey. (input/output)

(Impact Outcomes)

- Percentage of parents feeling welcomed at schools.
- Parent satisfaction with school safety and connectedness.
- Percentage of parents agreeing that school/district encourages parent involvement.
- Percentage of parents agreeing that the district allows input and welcomes parent contributions.
- Percentage of parents that agreed or strongly agreed that schools actively seek the input of parents before making important decisions.
- Percentage of parents that agreed that their child's school did well at involving parents. (when using CHSKS Parent Survey)

NEW METRICS USED BY PLN OR IN THE FIELD

Most school districts are beginning to collect more demographic data from parent surveys to be able to disaggregate it and analyze differences across communities. The additional information collected varies per school district, but these are common additions:

- Participation by primary language
- Participation by English learner classification
- Participation by level of engagement in school activities and meetings

Volunteers

Only two districts mentioned tracking the number of volunteers.

BASIC METRICS

- Number of volunteers processed.
- Number of volunteers at each school.

NEW METRICS USED BY PLN OR IN THE FIELD

- Number of volunteers trained.

Model School Volunteer System

Pasadena Unified School District has developed a system to recruit, process, and train or orient volunteers before they are placed in schools. About 1,500 volunteers are processed each year. The system includes a policy that recognizes different types of volunteers, and provides a volunteer handbook and application forms. All the resources are on their website at: <https://www.psud.us/Page/764>.

Other Indicators

The two districts that integrated family engagement into broader climate and/or student goals, also monitored progress on other student indicators such as:

- Student enrollment
- Attendance rates
- Chronic absenteeism rates
- Suspension and expulsion rates
- Percentage of students who received 6 or more office discipline referrals
- Number of student recognition ceremonies
- Middle and high school dropout rate
- Student survey responses on questions about feeling safe at school

Considering student indicators when planning family engagement activities may help link these to student learning, goals, and outcomes. This may also increase communication and strengthen relationships among staff in order to coordinate actions and reach desired goals to more positively impact families and students.

PON Recommendations

It is exciting that school districts are developing new metrics to measure their family engagement work and are leading a field that is still evolving.

Recommendations:

1. The next step is for school districts to begin adding metrics on impact outcomes for family engagement activities (e.g., increasing capabilities: skills and knowledge; connections: strengthening networks; cognition: shifting beliefs and values; and confidence: self-efficacy and whether parents use strategies at home) to then possibly correlate if the activities support student outcomes.
2. As school district personnel increase their efforts to train school staff on family engagement, we recommend measuring and evaluating changes in beliefs and perceptions about families, increasing self-efficacy to engage parents.

For example, the Panorama Teacher Survey includes questions to measure teachers' perceptions on family engagement. Here is a sample of some of their questions¹⁵:

- How friendly are your school's families towards you?"
- How often do you meet in person with the families of your students?
- When you face challenges with particular students, how supportive are the families?
- How challenging is it to communicate with the families of your students?

At the same time, PON parents caution in over-relying on perception survey data as they have seen first-hand a disconnect between survey results and actual experiences in schools. Typically, survey results are overly positive. Parents point out that most survey formats do not allow for "other" answers or optional spaces where they could add background information or explain their rationale, nor do most districts follow up with parent or focus groups to interpret findings. Integrating additional data collection methods, including qualitative measures, is needed in order to get more comprehensive and accurate data.

¹⁵ Panorama (2020) *Teacher Survey*. <https://www.panoramaed.com/panorama-teacher-survey>.

D. Findings on “Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Students”

Finding 5: As with most districts outside PON’s PLN, the “Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Students” section by participant districts was often a copy or restatement of what was mentioned in the Goals and Actions section. Descriptions did not provide the rationale for activities or report the actions’ effectiveness.

To meet this requirement the four school districts explained the connection between each activity and how that impacted unduplicated students. In general, the Plan did not include other options considered and the rationale behind selecting the current activity, research on evidence-based practices, or assessment or statements on effectiveness.

However, we did find a few examples of statements that demonstrated the data and research that were considered when deciding how to best meet the needs of unduplicated students, and a statement declaring an action effective at achieving the desired result:

Considering Parents and Students’ Background When Designing an Activity

“The majority of the district’s 94% of our unduplicated students will be the first in their family to attend college.” Consequently, to assist families to better navigate this new horizon, the family engagement activities “provide parent training on college requirements and how parents can guide and support their children to prepare them for college” (Lynwood Unified School District (2019). 2019-2020 LCAP, Page. 172).

Citing Research-Based Practices

To address school climate issues and justify increasing school safety professional development and school safety supplies to increase positive safety perception among parents and students, this district cited:

“This service is principally directed to meeting the needs of English learners, low-income, and foster students. According to The Center for Poverty Research at the University of California, Davis, ‘For students who felt very safe at school, their odds of being truant were about 44% lower than for students reporting unsafe school conditions. School-wide initiatives emphasizing school safety and connectedness have the potential to improve school attendance at the most disadvantaged schools.’ Increasing school safety is important for the community and staff and adds to an effective learning environment for our English learners, low-income, and foster students. We will increase school safety professional development and school safety supplies. This LEA-wide goal will support English learner, low-income, and foster students’ equity and access to a safe school environment.” (Azusa Unified School District (2019). 2019-2020 LCAP, Page. 210).

Impact of Activity in Family Engagement Goal Impacting Student Achievement

“District-wide [Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support] (PBIS) data demonstrates that the number of Office Discipline referrals and Suspensions have decreased dramatically since the implementation of the PBIS program. WCSD will continue to improve the school climate and increase student engagement through the implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) at each school.” (Whittier City School District, (2019). 2019-2020 LCAP, Page 220).

PON Recommendations

Parents and other advocates are disappointed that school districts are not using the “Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Students” section to record theories, not including rationale (or theories of change behind the actions), nor reporting growth and effectiveness for each action outlined in the LCAP. Providing details in this section is critical to achieve and sustain continuous improvement and ultimately to learn if LCFF is having the intended benefit for unduplicated students.

Recommendations:

Given that County Offices of Education and the California Department of Education review LCAPs annually, compiling examples or exemplars would guide school districts in completing this section.

E. Findings on Stakeholder Engagement

To effectively engage stakeholders, efforts must be made to ensure diverse representation of community members whose voices have been historically excluded from this dialogue. Best practices also must include a transparent process, with clear timelines, and how input or feedback is incorporated into plans or decisions. Engagement opportunities must be accessible to multiple audiences and information easily understood. Last but not least, responsible engagement requires a commitment to equity and continuous improvement to close achievement gaps.^{16,17}

Informing/Outreach

Finding 6: All four school districts refined or developed new processes to outreach, inform, or consult with more stakeholders or new stakeholder groups. Most report increasing survey participation numbers for parents and staff. All four school districts now survey students, three of them do so annually and reach between 15% to 57% of the population.

Defining Stakeholders and Purpose for Engagement

All school districts identify students, staff, parents, and community as stakeholder groups. Three of the four combined parents and community into one category. Given a history of civic engagement in Pasadena, the district categorizes community as a different subset of people and have tailored surveys for this group.

To be clear on the purpose for stakeholder engagement, Azusa Unified School District describes it as “highly focused on informing stakeholders about the LCAP, reporting district and site-level strategies for LCAP funds, and collecting input, feedback and recommendations.”

Capturing Student Input

LCFF law requires school districts to set up processes to engage students in the development of the LCAP. This includes the general student population, including low-income students, English learners, foster youth, and other numerically significant student subgroups. These processes could be surveys, forums, advisory committees or meetings with students or groups representing students.¹⁸

16 PTA (2017) *Six Keys to Engaging Families ESSA*. <http://www.pta.org/docs/defaultsource/uploadedfiles/advocacy/6-keys-to-engaging-families-in-essa.pdf>.

17 Council of Chief State School Officers and Partners for Each and Every Child (2017) *Meaningful Local Engagement Under ESSA*. http://partners-foreachandeverychild.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/LEA-andSL-Handbook_7.25.17.pdf.

18 California Education Code (2020). § 15495. Definitions. [https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/ID15CE2F908434BF5B833102CFDF00156?view-Type=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=\(sc.Default\)](https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/ID15CE2F908434BF5B833102CFDF00156?view-Type=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=(sc.Default)).

Two districts developed committees or surveys specific to measuring student outcomes or perception. One district improved their messaging and communications tools to report on the LCAP progress with the community-at-large. As a result, most districts reported successfully increasing the number of participants completing surveys.

Refining Communication Tools and Surveys to Capture New Voices or More Data

School districts achieve higher levels of engagement by requesting general input from stakeholders via surveys, online conversations, or large-scale public meetings or multi-stakeholder forums. The next table shows how the four school districts expanded their efforts to outreach and inform over the past three years.

SCHOOL DISTRICT	WHAT THEY DO	NEW
DISTRICT 1	Stakeholder Survey. The district has been responsive to issues identified by both parents and staff as needed.	A new survey was developed for students from 2nd through 8th grade. In 2018-19, 3,472 (56.8%) of students participated.
DISTRICT 2	Annual community survey. Youth Truth Survey: This survey is conducted every other year and collects perception data on student engagement, academic rigor, relationship with teachers and relationship with peers and is given to students in middle and high school.	The questions for parents in the community survey were revised in 2018 19.
DISTRICT 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff survey • Parent surveys • Student survey (3rd – 12th grade) • Community survey 	In addition to survey, the district conducted online conversations which are featured below.
DISTRICT 4	Annual LCAP survey for parents/community and students. Only students from 6th-12th grade are surveyed.	Tools to increase communication and transparency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCAP newsletter • LCAP updates report • A 2-page handout on how to get involved • Videos explaining LCFF and LCAP in English and Spanish. • A six-page info-graphic summarizing their LCAP plan and process. • A six-page infographic summarizing their LCAP plan and process. See Figure 4 on the next page.



At this stage of the family engagement process, specific input or feedback is requested from stakeholders. State law specifically requires consultations with parents in general, the Parent Advisory Committee, English Learner Parent Advisory Committee, teachers, principals and administrators, other school personnel, Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Administrators, Local Bargaining units and other stakeholder groups as applicable through committees, study groups, focus groups, or special meetings. Parents and students participating in the LCAP development process usually receive a review of the LCAP process during the fall. Additional training on the plan and budget development varies by district but that training is usually not reported in the LCAP. The level of engagement by the districts can be seen below.

Glossary of Terms:

District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC)
 English Learner Advisory Committee at school site (ELAC)
 School Site Council (SSC)
 District Advisory Committee (DAC)

Community Advisory Committee for children with special needs (CAC)
 Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

SCHOOL DISTRICT	GROUPS THEY CONSULT WITH	NEW
DISTRICT 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DAC: includes staff including classified, teachers, principals, and administrators • PAC: includes parents from each school and DELAC 	Added meetings with SELPA Administrators.
DISTRICT 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District African American Advisory Parent Council (DAAAPC), CAC, PAC, DELAC, DAC, SSCs, ELACs • Administrative retreat • School Board Presentations 	The parent committee's meeting frequency increased slightly in 2018 19.
DISTRICT 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCAP PAC, African American Parent Council, DAC, DELAC, CAC, Foster Youth Council (parents and students) • Employee Labor Associations • Special Education Local Plan Areas • Board of Education 	
DISTRICT 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DELAC, ELACs, SSCs • Board presentations 	LCAP Student Advisory Committee: teams of 10-12 students from three high schools, representing 9th-12th graders.



This section identifies the staff and/or committees that engage every year to provide input on the district’s plan and budget.

SCHOOL DISTRICT	GROUPS THEY INVOLVE	NEW
DISTRICT 1	All Stakeholder Committee: Includes representatives from both PAC & DAC as well as special education administrator and union leaders but open to others. They engage more deeply with the LCAP process over 3 meetings.	Added meetings with SELPA Administrators.
DISTRICT 2	The committee is composed of administrators, representatives from the California School Employee Association (CSEA), Lynwood Teacher’s Association (LTA), School Employees International Union (SEIU), students from high schools, and representatives from parent councils including: DAAAPC, DAC, DELAC, and the PAC. ²⁰ LCAP Stakeholder Committee meets six to seven times per year. Currently, student input is captured through surveys, and LCAP Stakeholder Committee.	In addition to the PON PLN, district administrators participated in another PLN facilitated by the California Association of African American Superintendents and Administrators (CAAASA) focused on equity and improving services for African American students.
DISTRICT 3	The school district Executive Leadership Team is composed of the Superintendent and the Chiefs of HR, Academics, Business, Technology, and Facilities.	Network Improvement Committees (each committee studies one of the following issue areas: EL, FY, Special Education, and Equity and Access). For more details see “Collaborate Section”.
DISTRICT 4	PAC+ is composed of parents, teachers, classified workers, and administrators. They meet 4 or 5 times a year in 5-hour meetings to review progress and provide recommendations.	Over the years, district staff have tested various meeting length and frequency. They concluded that it was necessary to meet 4 or 5 times in longer meetings to analyze and discuss all the information.

Highlight on Efforts to Increase & Improve Services for African Americans

While not reported in the LCAP, Lynwood Unified School District (LUSD) developed a three-year “Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan” and made some progress in its outreach efforts with African American students. For example, they developed an Equity Stakeholder group comprised of parents and staff to monitor and evaluate progress. Key strategies include requiring all staff (classified, certificated) to participate in 3-learning modules on race and culture, trauma informed classrooms, unconscious bias, and culturally responsive teaching; conducting equity walks with The Howard Group; providing parent training from the Southern Poverty Law Center; and continue building capacity by having district leaders participate in the ACSA Equity PLN, CAAASA PLN, conferences, and virtual equity conversations.²¹

20 Lynwood Unified School District (2017). *Lynwood Unified School District’s LCAP Process PowerPoint*.

21 Lynwood Unified School District (2018). *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan*.



Collaborate

This section highlights specific activities that more deeply engage staff and/or committees in a continuous improvement process to develop the plan and budget. Many times these groups meet more often, and by doing so, build and strengthen relationships among multiple stakeholders leading to increased collaboration, and ultimately having greater influence on the LCAP by having more input reflected in the LCAP.

Finding 7: School districts have developed structures to allow staff, parents and/or students to spend more time strengthening and applying the continuous improvement cycle to their work by identifying root causes, reporting progress on implementation, and then reflecting and adjusting their plan. These structures help foster greater levels of engagement and collaboration.

Three school districts develop the LCAP in collaboration with stakeholder structures they have developed (i.e., PAC +, All Stakeholder Committee, and LCAP Stakeholder Committee). The increased meeting frequency allows staff and stakeholders to build relationships, understand other points of view, and can lead to developing working agreements built upon collaboration and shared decision-making. These kinds of structures also can assure that the institutional memory, or the collective knowledge and learned experiences of a group, is retained as individual members transition.

Highlight on Network Improvement Committees

The remaining district, Pasadena USD, meets with each committee or stakeholder group separately. The Executive Leadership Team then approves recommendations and develops the plan and budget. To ensure stakeholders engage more deeply in a continuous improvement process, they have created workgroups on four specific areas the district finds particularly challenging: English Learners, Foster Youth, Special Education students, and Equity and Access. Each team is composed of about 30 participants representing students, parents, teachers, instructional coaches, administrators, school site staff, and service providers. Participants engage in root-cause analysis, identify performance gaps and promising practices, prioritize focus areas, and make recommendations for the LCAP. These teams met 14 times, with over 120 individuals participating. It is worth noting that to support staff working to better serve Foster Youth, district staff also participated in a CCEE PLN focused on that student subgroup.

In the initial LCAP, the The school district Executive Leadership Team viewed itself as the holder of the LCAP. The subsequent LCAPs mention and highlight the creation of the Network Improvement Committee and mention that their recommendations were considered in the final Plan.



Shared Leadership

The goal for shared leadership is aspirational and will require time for shifts in mindsets and practice to take place across the board: many school districts still struggle to view parents, community members, and students as equal partners and co-constructors of the plan and budget. Even school districts with leadership that embraces the concept of community engagement must still work toward changing deficit-oriented views about parents and/or improving feedback loops between school sites and the school district. Most districts, including the four districts that are the focus of this report, are not at this stage yet but they are making progress. Last, to fully assess where a district is on this continuum of engagement, we would need data from the stakeholders.

PON Recommendations

Key questions to consider as school districts transition to the shared leadership phase:

- To what extent is the final version of the LCAP a reflection of the stakeholders engaged in the process? Do stakeholders see their input in the final version of the LCAP?
- To what extent do stakeholders feel they developed a collective vision for the district?
- To what extent do stakeholders feel the implementation of actions and budget expenditures are aligned with the vision and the plan?

Districts are more likely to achieve shared leadership if they have a higher percentage of goals, actions, and budget allocations that can be tracked back to stakeholder input and they have a higher percentage of activities that are implemented accordingly in the spirit of the agreed-upon vision.

In addition to increasing greater knowledge about a district's LCAP, PON members recommend that districts:

1. **Add feedback loops to increase communication between district and school sites and increase participation at the school site level.** Currently, many of the parents elected or appointed to participate in district-level meetings are not formally required to report back to school sites. Although some principals or facilitators of advisory committees allow parents to report back, others see this duty as outside the scope of parents' roles or a tangent unrelated to other parent advisory committee responsibilities. The only official mechanism to report back is to use public comment. Parent leaders feel that reporting back, with guidance and support from school district officials, would not only be beneficial to build parent leaders' capacity but is an effective mechanism to spread the word about LCFF and increase collective ownership of the plan and the results.
2. **Increase transparency in how LCFF increases funding as well as support or services per school.** Parents in general, including active parents in School Site Councils and DELACs report they don't see increased funding or services or impact at the school or classroom level.

Conclusion

While the PON PLN was successful at increasing participants' knowledge, developing peer-learning, and strengthening their practice of family engagement, these changes are not consistently reflected in the districts' LCAP plans and budgets. But growth was detected in stakeholder engagement and in the metrics school districts are beginning to use as each district refines existing processes or develops new ways to increase engagement.

We attribute this growth, in part, to external factors such as the LCFF and ESSA laws requiring stakeholder engagement, the differentiated assistance process upholding this requirement, and recent updates in credentialing requirements for administrators that include family and community engagement. It is clear, however, that the PON PLN undoubtedly added to the districts' awareness of the need for these changes and informed their decision to move forward with them.

However, we didn't see the same growth to improve family engagement as we expected. To change current practice from family activities at school sites to districtwide family engagement continuous improvement efforts will require greater guidance from state agencies like the California Department of Education and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Helping to move things along is the development of the CDE self-reflection tool to assess the implementation of FE practices in school districts. And we are further encouraged that the State Board of Education approved this critical tool. The resultant data should be useful to inform both state agencies as they adopt their pre-service and in-service programs to further support meaningful and effective stakeholder engagement efforts.

For more details on the PON PLN process and content to increase knowledge and strengthen practice in family engagement, please read the companion report: **"PON Professional Learning Network I: Strengthening District Staff Capacity on Family and Community Engagement"**.

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