

Senate Bill 997 Gives Students a Voice in the LCAP Process

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Senate Bill (SB) 997 requires that, by July 1, 2024, all school districts and county offices of education serving students in middle or high school include students in the local control and accountability plan (LCAP) update process.

Background

The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) refers broadly to the methods that primarily determine the level of funding California school districts receive from the State. As a component of the LCFF system, local educational agencies (LEAs) are required to adopt and periodically update LCAPs, which describe the LEA's priorities and goals for pupil achievement and how the LEA intends to meet those goals and address State priorities. As part of the process for developing and updating the LCAP, LEAs are required to establish a parent advisory committee to provide input and advise the LEA on community concerns and priorities.

Including Student Input in the LCAP Process

On September 30, 2022, the Governor signed SB 997, guaranteeing students a seat at the advisory table. SB 997 recognizes that "pupils provide unique and invaluable insight into educational experiences, and input from pupils cannot be substituted with input from adult stakeholders."

Beyond a commitment to include diverse student perspectives, the new law gives minimal instruction on how LEAs are to create or maintain these student advisory roles, providing some flexibility for implementation.

Subject LEAs are required to either:

1. Include at least two students as full members of the parent advisory committee; or
2. Establish a student advisory committee.

Student members of parent advisory committees are to serve year-long, renewable terms. School districts and county superintendents must ensure that students serving on either parent or student advisory committees represent the geographical, socioeconomic, cultural, physical and educational diversity of the student population. In addition, the new law requires that "particular effort" be

made to include at-risk or disadvantaged students in these advisory roles but does not define what “particular effort” means.

SB 997 does not prescribe the size, governance, or oversight structure of its newly proposed student advisory committees.

Takeaways

Unified, middle, and high school district boards, and county superintendents will have until July 2024 to decide which method of student participation to utilize and to create policies and procedures for doing so. School leaders may wish to consult legal counsel in ensuring these policies and procedures, including student recruitment and selection processes, comply with all relevant legal requirements.

If you have questions about SB 997 or the LCAP development, adoption, or update process in general, please contact the authors of this Client News Brief or an attorney at one of our [eight offices](#) located statewide. You can also subscribe to our [podcasts](#), follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) or download our [mobile app](#).

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