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Audit Finds Local Control Formula Flaws

SACRAMENTO – Sacramento lawmakers now have proof school districts and local bureaucrats cannot demonstrate billions of extra dollars they received from the State for high-need students were ever spent as intended to close achievement gaps. The State Audit [report](#) reveals what parents have suspected for several years: the promises of the Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) and Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) supplement and concentration grant allocations are not resulting in extra help or additional resources on effective programming where it's needed the most.

The state sends billions of dollars every year to school districts to provide extra help for kids in poverty, English Learners and foster youth. But student outcomes and assessment scores have flatlined on recent state test scores and the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) and California continues to have some of the largest achievement gaps in the country. "With the latest state and federal assessment results released last month, we already knew there was evidence of an academic stagnation crisis," said Bill Lucia, President of EdVoice.

"If the money isn't going towards closing the achievement gaps and creating equitable opportunity to learn, then where are the billions of dollars going? Billions of taxpayer dollars the state invested in education for needy students did not reach them. That should be a wakeup call to all the politicians in Sacramento who say they care about closing achievement gaps. This audit uncovered serious control deficiencies lawmakers need to address immediately. If not, the California Constitution's guarantee of a fundamental right to a basic education and equitable opportunity to learn for all students, particularly the neediest, is nothing more than empty words," Lucia continued.

The audit found in 3 districts alone, out of over 2,000 statewide, over \$320 million of extra help for needy students was reclassified as base funding. That means billions of dollars statewide. The audit also discovered serious flaws in tracking actual expenditures with planning documents and student outcomes. And, importantly, the audit uncovered a sleight of hand massive accounting loophole that allows districts to initially allocate the extra funds for needy students into reserves so in the following year the funds could be used for any purpose in even the most affluent schools and neighborhoods.

About EdVoice

EdVoice is a nonprofit grassroots network of over 50,000 parents, community leaders, educators, and the state's leading education philanthropists, working together to dramatically increase measurable student achievement and eliminate educational inequality for all children.