

District Budget & Planning Timeline Where LCFF and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Fit In

Engaging your school district at the right time with the right information is critical to having an impact on **Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)**-based budgets and the development of the **Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)** at the district level. The district budget process is complex and is driven by many inputs and requirements, such as the availability of the state budget and requirements to submit certain reports and plans. As importantly, a deadline for a local board to take an action may require several months of internal processes by various school and district players be executed in advance.

To guide your participation and maximize your impact, begin by creating a **calendar** that captures critical deadlines related to the development of your district's budget and LCAP. The timeline below includes many of the critical processes within each year's budget and accountability cycles in a typical school district, although dates and specific actions will vary by district.

Late Summer — Fall

The beginning of a school year in late summer/early fall is when key data on the prior school year becomes available to support internal analysis that can drive decision-making for the next year. This is the optimal time to begin community engagement in planning and budgeting processes for the district.

Events:

- Year-end fiscal report for the prior year is received;
- State assessment data is released;**

Districts should:

- Identify & engage stakeholders who must participate in LCFF/LCAP processes to ensure broad community representation and meaningful engagement. Form required budget/accountability advisory committees;
- Begin LCFF/LCAP community input sessions;
- Articulate the LCFF/LCAP process to be used and establish goals for stakeholder engagement;
- Collaboratively perform a district needs assessment;
- Review data related to current-year goals identified in the LCAP - including student achievement, prior levels of community engagement, and past expenditures;
- Review the comprehensive set of current school and district plans, which may be interconnected with the LCAP;

- Monitor current year progress and determine whether adjustments to funding decisions and anticipated activities in the LCAP for years 2 and 3 are needed;

What you can do:

- Watch for district notifications regarding the planning and budgeting processes. If necessary, ask district personnel for this information;
- Familiarize yourself with relevant district outcomes data, plans, and financial priorities;
- Become familiar with research that supports NGSS;
- Talk to district leaders about your interest in participating on committees;
- Identify community assets and partnerships; and
- Attend any public hearings prepared to actively participate.

Winter

In winter, key aspects of state budget and allocation processes provide districts with meaningful information that shapes current school year budget adjustments. Districts also begin developing formal projections for the upcoming school year. Together, this information guides initial plans for the next school year.

Events:

- December, review prior year audit report**
- By Dec 15, certify first interim budget report**;
- District fiscal and enrollment data for next year provided;
- January: Governor proposes state budget;** Dept of Finance projections estimate districts' LCFF revenue;

Winter, *continued*

Districts should:

- Evaluate changes to current year enrollment, revenue & expenditure projections; determine needed adjustments;
- Evaluate changes to the next year's enrollment, revenue & expenditure projections;
- Review personnel needs and staffing plans;
- Use LCFF/LCAP community input sessions to set a local vision and prioritize strategies into a multi-year blueprint;

What you can do:

- Attend hearings, monitor district website and communications to understand data and planning;
- Participate actively in the public processes for establishing district priorities for the three-year LCAP including;
- Advocate for inclusion of NGSS within the comprehensive scope of district plans/budget;
- Articulate a vision for NGSS investment.

Spring

In spring, districts receive information from the state regarding the current school year's allocations and finalize their projections for the next school year. Districts are required to provide notice of possible layoffs for the next school year, so staffing projections are considered months in advance of the summer's budget adoption. Thus, spring is critical for determining program and spending priorities.

Events:

- March 15, district certifies 2nd interim budget report;**
- May: Governor revises budget proposal for next year;
- Any required school site plans are submitted to board;

Districts should:

- Use LCFF/LCAP community input sessions to shape investment strategies into draft LCAP;
- By March 15, send preliminary layoff notices; project final revenues & expenses; draft initial budget;**
- May: send final notices of certificated layoffs;**
- May: prepare final LCFF budget and LCAP;

What you can do

- Participate actively in the public processes for establishing the preliminary and final LCAP including:
 - Advocate for inclusion of NGSS within the comprehensive scope of district plans/budget;
 - Articulate a vision for NGSS investment; and
- Review layoff plans to understand preliminary priorities and key tradeoffs the district is prepared to make.

Summer

Early summer sees the finalization of several budget, planning, and accountability processes at both the state and local levels. This is a period to observe the initial rollout of school and district plans.

Events:

- June 30, final state budget adopted^{1**} (governs next school year)

Districts should:

- By July 1, adopt final budget for next year;**
- By July 1, approve LCAP for the next three years;**
- Begin implementation of school site plans;
- Late August-September, hold public hearings to review any changes in projected income/expenditures and county superintendent's recommendations;**

What you can do:

- Attend public hearings regarding district budget changes;
- Monitor district information sources regarding rollout of plan;
- **Remember this is a continuous improvement cycle!**

** indicates statutorily required process