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Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

WORKING TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE AND TRANSPARENT PUBLIC PLANNING PROCESS  
IN COMPLIANCE WITH CALIFORNIA'S LOCAL CONTROL FUNDING FORMULA

A dissertation manuscript submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership  
by  
McKenzie Tarango  
June, 2018  
Stephen Kirnon, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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## DEDICATION

To my husband and children who have provided unwavering love and support throughout this journey. To my father and mother who have always believed and preached I could achieve whatever I put my mind to. Most importantly to my father in heaven, who showers me with blessing everyday of my life, may my continued work always reflect his righteousness.

VITA

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VICTOR VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT	July 2015-June 2016
Secondary Assistant Principal	
SILVER VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT	September 2013-June 2015
Interim Elementary Principal and Secondary Assistant Principal	
HESPERIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT	August 2010-September 2013
U.S. History Teacher	
LEWIS CENTER: AAE	January 2008-August 2010
American Government & Economics Teacher	
OTHER EXPERIENCE	
CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE	January 2007-April 2013
Field Representative	
VICTORVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	March 2005-December 2011
Legislative Affairs Representative	
DESERT COMMUNITY BANK	September 2001-March 2005
Loan Representative	

## ABSTRACT

The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) dispensation requires a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) in which the public participates in a Public Planning Process (PPP) with the district. The problem this qualitative phenomenographic study addressed is how the LCAP's omission of a definition for the inclusive and transparent PPP may unintentionally lead to disproportionate inclusion of individual participants or stakeholder groups. Therefore, the researcher examined 10 California school district superintendents' or their designees' conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open PPP. For the purposes of this study, the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) Quality Assurance Standards, specifically the 7 core values, served as the conceptual framework.

The objective of the research was twofold, first to identify how local educational agency (LEA) leaders conceive the use of the IAP2's core values to define successful public stakeholder engagement for the LCAP in terms of inclusivity, fairness, and openness. The second goal was to determine what measures, guidelines, and techniques these leaders believe can contribute to the inclusiveness, fairness, and openness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process.

This study resulted in 3 conclusions study. First, the interviewees accepted the IAP2 core values as a foundation for best practices in the LCAP's stakeholder engagement process. Second, data from the study clearly suggest that each interviewee has his/her own conception of what measures, guidelines, and techniques contribute to the inclusiveness, fairness, and openness of the LCAP stakeholder engagement process. Third, authentic participation, communication, equity, facilitation, local control, and trust are suggested as imperative to an inclusive, fair, and open stakeholder engagement PPP.

The researcher made three recommendations. First, the California Department of Education (CDE) should adopt a set of stakeholder engagement PPP core values for districts to use as a foundation. Second, the CDE should seek out a district or districts to pilot a set of core values to guide the stakeholder engagement component of the LCAP. Third, until the CDE is able to establish a rubric or set of core values to guide the stakeholder engagement PPP, districts should identify their own set of core values based on current research such as IAP2.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

People tend to associate educational expenditure with educational quality; although there is a strong relationship between these two variables, educational quality requires more than adequate money spent on students (Coleman, 1966; Hanushek, 1986; Hill & Kiewiet, 2015). Hanushek (1986) asserted that the ways in which funds are spent are more important than how much is spent because large expenditures do not necessarily account for education quality. Tow (2006) conducted a study on the educational system in California and found “class size, poverty, student ethnicity, and teacher characteristics to be important indicators of student achievement” (p. 27), suggesting that “additional funding should go specifically towards the programs that are more effective” (p. 27).

The U.S. educational funding system is complicated, and no clear-cut funding policy exists (Howell & Miller, 1997). Howell and Miller (1997) asserted that the “school finance mechanisms (are) designed to promote equality, adequacy, and efficiency” (p. 39) in each state. Educational funding stems from three funds—federal, state, and local government—that contribute at different levels (Wong & Casing, 2010). Distributing the money fairly and equitably between districts and schools is a major task that is typically accomplished via student based budgeting (SBB; Baker & Elmer, 2009). The SBB system uses weighted pupil funding to distribute financial resources to districts and schools. Students are weighted in accordance with their educational needs and the financial implications of teaching them (Levin et al., 2013). In the majority of districts, staff is allocated according to staffing ratios. For example, the staffing ratios may determine that one teacher be appointed for 25 students, and when the school has 350 students a vice principal can be appointed. The goals of SBB are to instill fiscal equity and benefit students’ achievement (Curtis, Sinclair, & Malen, 2014). Furthermore, the SBB system

provides principals more autonomy to allocate funds where it is most needed, thus facilitating more effective resource allocation and utilization to improve student achievement (Levin et al., 2013).

### **Background of the Study**

On July 1, 2013, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law legislation that brought significant changes to the funding of kindergarten-12 (K-12) public education. The new legislation changed the 40-year-old category model with the new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). This legislation aims to redistribute available funding to areas where it is needed most, namely to students from poor backgrounds, English learners, and foster children (Humphrey & Koppich, 2014). The State Board of Education identified eight priorities toward which LCFF funding should be directed. A requirement of the new funding system is that districts should host “inclusive and transparent public planning process” (Menefee-Libey & Kerchner, 2015, p. 4) during which budgetary priorities and educational goals to address the eight state priorities must be formulated collaboratively. Therefore, an integral part of the LCFF is the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), a 3-year, district level plan updated annually through a public planning process, identifying the school district’s key goals for students as well as the specific actions and expenditures the district will need to take to achieve the goals. The LCFF streamlines the previous funding system of state categorical programs through the introduction of a student-weighted model. The LCFF requires student numbers and identification of how many students belong to the following groups: (a) low income, (b) English learners, and (c) foster care. After receiving these figures from the different districts, the education department applies the formula, which then allocates funds to the districts. Although this new formula seems easier than the former categorical model, and did away with hours of deliberation to determine

the schools' needs, the allocation of the funds to various programs must now be done at a district and school level, which brings its own set of difficulties (Menefee-Libey & Kerchner, 2015).

**How the LCFF works.** According to Miles and Feinberg (2014), in 2013 California's educational spending ranked 49th in the nation. With the implementation of the LCFF, which is being phased in over 8 years, another \$25 billion will be added to the state's education budget. For the 2013-2014 budget, an additional \$2.1 billion became available for educational spending, representing an increase of 4.7% per district or \$338 per learner. The new dispensation benefits needy students; therefore, districts with a larger percentage of needy students will receive 6.4% more funding on average through LCFF. Therefore, 15% of the districts with a low percentage of needy students will not receive more funding, as their funding ratio is already high. In the final analysis, no district will receive less funding than in the 2012-2013 budget. This new funding dispensation will move California to the 45th position—its former national position of per pupil funding before the recession in 2007. The funding allocation stands on three pillars—equity, transparency, and flexibility. The LCAP plays a key role in each of these pillars.

**Equity.** Apart from increased funding, the allocation of funds will be more transparent and done according to a formula based on two aspects of the learner population in a district: (a) basic per student allocation; and (b) supplementary allocation for the English learner (EL), low income (LI), and foster youth (FY) subgroups. Students in these subgroups—EL/LI/FY—get an extra 20% funding per student, and those students who fall within more than one subgroup are only counted once (Fuller & Tobben, 2014). An extra funding allocation, the “concentration funding” (Miles & Feinberg, 2014, p. 2), is reserved for districts with more than 55% EL or LI students. The LCAP provides a forum for the district to describe how they intend to expend

supplemental funds to meet annual goals for all students and each student group for each state priorities.

**Transparency.** In contrast with the previous system that was extremely hard to understand, the LCFF is easily understandable: number of students in district (base grant + supplementary grant + concentration grant = monetary funding). Transparency goes, further as the LCFF Act requires the districts to join forces with parents and community groups to create an annual expenditure LCAP. The LCAP was designed with the intention of being easily understandable by all stakeholders, as well as readily accessible to the public so that all stakeholders know where the funds are being spent (Miles & Feinberg, 2014).

**Flexibility.** The new dispensation did away with the 32 categorical programs (pre-determined funding allocations), and in the future these funds will be added to the base funds of districts to spend at their discretion (Miles & Feinberg, 2014). In sum, by means of changing the funding allocation and distribution and channeling additional funds to needy students, the California education funding system empowers districts and the public to exercise more control over educational spending through the LCAP process. How this newfound freedom and responsibilities will play out in the future remains to be seen.

**Funding.** The LCFF funding is to be directed toward achieving the state's eight priorities. Each district will develop goals, identify actions, and allocate LCFF funding through the LCAP's "inclusive and transparent public planning process" (Menefee-Libey & Kerchner, 2015, p. 4). The LCFF Act identified eight state priorities. These priorities are:

- Basic Services
- Common Core State Standards – focus on deep knowledge and problem solving skills
- Parent Involvement

- Student Achievement
- Student Engagement
- School Climate
- Access to a Broad Curriculum
- Other School Outcomes

**Local control accountability plan (LCAP).** Districts are not alone in distributing LCFF funds for different programs; the act requires collaboration with public participants through a LCAP to determine priorities and allocate funds. To date the regulations relating to the public planning process (PPP) are vague, but the LCAP template provided by the educational state board requires districts to reflect on the districts' recorded collaborative goal setting and budgeting activities (Fuller & Tobben, 2014). Fuller and Tobben (2014) posed a series of questions in their review of the LCFF. A pressing concern is how the extra funds allocated to vulnerable groups and districts serving high percentages of these groups will be moved to these targeted groups. Another question revolves around the LCAP—how the collaborative process of goal setting and budgeting will grow in the districts and whether a range of public participants will be engaged in the process.

In fact, more needs to be done than just the reflective narrative. After 2 years of LCFF implementation, Humphrey and Koppich (2014) and Menefee-Libey and Kerchner (2015) published studies about the implementation of the LCFF and the LCAP process. Both studies found the required PPP in need of further exploration. Humphrey and Koppich pointed out the tendency to have uneven representation of stakeholders. Representation is often loaded toward the more opinionated and domineering individuals to the detriment of minority and vulnerable groups. Menefee-Libey and Kerchner asserted that, should the California legislature be serious

about the inclusive PPP, more clarity would be needed to ensure that it complies with the requirements of the law. In October 2016, the Policy Analysis for California Education, the same agency that published Humphrey and Koppich's research in 2014, released a study identifying seven key priority areas in bringing the equity potential of LCFF to fruition. One of the seven key priorities was "deeply engaging families and communities" (p. 7), acknowledging that districts throughout the state are struggling with how to engage stakeholders consistently and meaningfully in the ongoing transparency, communication, and shared decision making.

California Education Code 35035 designates district superintendents and or their designees as responsible for the preparation, submission, and implementation of the LCAP. The superintendent is ultimately responsible for the LCAP planning process and is charged with ensuring the obligation to conduct an inclusive, fair, and open planning process is met. The superintendent is responsible for ensuring both employee organizations and community groups are consulted in the planning process and is required to respond in writing to their questions. After the community planning component has been met, the superintendent is charged with formally recommending the LCAP to the district's board of education. Once the board of education adopts the plan, the superintendent leads the cabinet in identifying implementation strategies and provides the professional expertise to implement the LCAP, assess the progress, and make recommendations for LCAP revisions.

Many questions have arisen since the implementation of the new LCAP. Some of these questions pertain to the decision-making process at the district level, the PPP, establishing inclusive and open participation in this process, opportunities and challenges districts face in allocating the funds, and the stakeholder process in determining accountability measures to hold educators accountable (Humphrey & Koppich, 2014). With a focus on the PPP, the researcher

aimed to explore some of the basic questions pertaining to the nature of a fair and inclusive PPP. Currently the LCFF specifies who should be part of the LCAP PPP; however, it allows local control in identifying how to conduct an inclusive, fair, and open PPP. Therefore, an opportunity existed to study and analyze the superintendents' or their designees' practices, experiences and conceptions of what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open PPP.

### **Problem Statement**

Executing the PPP in an inclusive and transparent manner as mandated by the new LCFF Act and the LCAP is challenging (Affeldt, 2015; Fuller & Tobben, 2014; Knudson, 2014). According to the requirements of the new funding system, districts should host an “inclusive and transparent public planning process” (Menefee-Libey & Kerchner, 2015, p. 4) during which budgetary district administrators and the public should collaboratively formulate priorities and targets. However the legislation does not explain what constitutes an inclusive, fair and open PPP (Affeldt, 2015). Taylor (2013) provided a detailed account of the LCFF and discussed the requirement for districts to consult with the schools, parents, and bargaining units. Although Taylor’s account of the LCFF provided an overview of stakeholder groups that should be consulted (i.e., school personnel, parents, and bargaining units), specificity is lacking regarding the new legislation’s reference to the inclusion of numerous individuals and groups with diverse points of view and interests who are impacted by funding allocation.

Although the LCAP guidelines stipulate that the PPP for the allocation of funding should be undertaken every 3 years, the guidelines do not describe how public participation should be measured. Arguing that the 3-year planning process is problematic, Warren (2014) called for an annual planning and revision process. The LCFF addresses the necessity for school districts to facilitative inclusive processes but does not provide an explanation for how this is to be achieved

and, likewise, does not propose criteria for measuring success or failure in terms of *inclusivity* and *transparency* (Affeldt, 2015; Humphrey & Koppich, 2014). The problem this study addressed is how the LCAP's omission of a definition for the inclusive and transparent PPP may unintentionally lead to disproportionate inclusion of individual participants or stakeholder groups. This imbalance could result in dominating individual voices overpowering those vulnerable groups for whom this legislation was intended (Koppich, Humphrey, & Marsh, 2015). Therefore, both an opportunity and a need existed to examine California school district superintendents' or their designees' conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open PPP as mandated by the LCAP.

### **Purpose Statement**

California Education Code 35035 designates school district superintendents as responsible for the preparation, submission, and implementation of the LCAP. The superintendent is ultimately responsible for the LCAP planning process and is charged with ensuring that it is conducted in an inclusive, fair, and open manner. Each school district board upon the recommendation of the Superintendent can designate a superintendent designee. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenographic study was to examine conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open LCAP PPP among superintendents in San Bernardino County, a high poverty county in Southern California. For the purposes of this study, the International Association for Public Participation's Quality Assurance Standards, specifically the seven core values, served as the conceptual framework that defines the public engagement/participation planning process.

## **Importance of Study**

The new LCFF dispensation requires a LCAP in which the public participates in collaboration with the district. However, the dispensation does not provide guidelines on conducting an inclusive, fair, and open planning process or how the process should be evaluated. Since the LCFF and LCAP are only 4 years old, only a few studies exist to determine their implementation success (Humphrey & Koppich, 2014; Knudson, 2014; Menefee-Libey & Kerchner, 2015). Concerns, complaints, and lawsuits have already emerged regarding the PPP; this study served to address the gap in the LCFF regulations regarding the inclusion of the public and evaluation of the openness and fairness of the planning process (Koppich et al., 2015). This study addressed this identified gap and contributes to the body of knowledge by providing guidelines via which to perform and evaluate the PPP to determine its openness and fairness. The findings of this study can be utilized on a district and state level to address the important community aspect of the LCFF and its requirement of an inclusive, fair, and open PPP. Clarity as to what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open planning process will assist the state and districts in assessing practices, thus ensuring that the intent of the LCFF and LCAP is being implemented with fidelity. Moreover, the findings of this study can assist in further developing and solidifying the voices of stakeholders, specifically, students, parents, minorities, and vulnerable groups.

## **Definition of Terms**

The following acronyms and terms are used frequently throughout the dissertation. Many of the acronyms come from the California State Department of Education, whereas other definitions were gathered from varied sources including the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2, 2015a), as this organization is globally recognized as a leader in public participation.

*Community engagement:* According to the Government of Western Australia, Department of Local Government (2012),

Community engagement ensures communities can participate in decisions that affect them, and at a level that meets their expectations. It helps strengthen the relationship between communities and government, enabling stakeholders to become part of the process, while assisting to build consensus. (p. 1)

*Community planning:* “Community planning is a process that seeks to engage all members of a community to create more prosperous, convenient, equitable, healthy and attractive places for present and future generations” (Arnstein, 1969, p. 13).

*English-language learner (ELL) or English Learner (EL):*

A pupil who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English or who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual the ability to meet the state’s proficient level of achievement on state assessments, the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English, or the opportunity to participate fully in society. (English Learner and Immigrant Pupil Federal Conformity Act, 2002, p. 1)

*Family:* Epstein (2016) viewed *family* as the parents of a child as well as other caregivers such as grandparents or foster parents who are responsible for and involved in building a relationship with the school and teachers.

*K-12:* This acronym generally defines school grades of kindergarten, primary, and secondary schools through grade 12 (Hew & Cheung, 2013).

*Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP):* A plan developed by each local educational agency (LEA) to set out how local educational funds will be spent. The LEA must present the LCAP annually on July 1 for approval to the County Office of Education (COE). Initial approval of the LCAP occurred on July 1, 2014 (EdSource, 2016).

*Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF):* Governor Brown formulated and proposed the LCFF, which is the most comprehensive educational funding reform in decades, representing a complete change in school funding in California. The LCFF was approved by state legislature in June of 2013. The LCFF is focused on local decision making, equity, accountability, and transparency, and provides the basic building blocks for LEAs to enhance student achievement and close the achievement gap. It will take 8 years to implement the new system. Transitioning to the new system commenced in 2013-2014 (EdSource, 2016).

*Local Education Agency (LEA):*

A public board of education or other public authority within a state that maintains administrative control of public elementary or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a state. School districts and county offices of education are both LEAs. Sometimes charter schools function as LEAs. (EdSource, n.d., p. 1)

*Stakeholders:* “Any individual, group of individuals, organisation or politics entity with an interest or stake in the outcome of a decision” (IAP2, 2015a, p. 8). Freeman (1984) depicted stakeholders as “those groups and individuals who can affect or be affected” (p. 25) by an organization and its objectives or achievements.

*Stakeholder engagement:* “The terms public participation and community and/or stakeholder engagement are interchangeable” (IAP2, 2015a, p. 6).

*Superintendent:* A state superintendent of public instruction serves a 4-year term and is the chief representative of public schools, providing education policy and direction to the local school districts (California Voter Foundation, 1994). According to Martens (2012), a school superintendent is “the top executive (‘CEO’) in the school district. The superintendent implements the school board’s vision by making day-to-day decisions about educational programs, spending, staff, and facilities. The superintendent hires, supervises, and manages the central staff and principals” (p. 1). See Appendix A for a full job description.

*Public Participation:* “A process that involves the public in problem-solving or decision-making and that uses public input to make better decisions” (IAP2, 2015a, p. 8).

### **Conceptual and Theoretical Framework Introduction**

There is a growing body of evidence supporting the link between stakeholder engagement and positive community change. In his 1984 publication of *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, R. Edward Freeman introduced stakeholder theory, which was used as a theoretical framework in this study in determining an inclusive planning process. Stakeholder theory was originally formulated to study the “principle of who or what really counts” (p. 412) in corporations and was validated through research conducted by Donaldson and Preston (1995). Donaldson and Preston presented evidence supporting stakeholder theory as it pertains to descriptive, instrumental, normative, and managerial aspects. Jones and Wicks (1999), who introduced convergent stakeholder theory, a combination of the normative and instrumental aspects of stakeholder theory, later expanded upon stakeholder theory. The normative and instrumental aspects of convergent stakeholder theory are centered on the management of stakeholders; *normative* refers to how businesses should operate in relation to moral principles, and *instrumental* refers to how to obtain organizational goals through stakeholder management.

The normative and instrumental aspects of convergent stakeholder theory as presented by Jones and Wicks served as the focus of this study, as they provide a lens through which to view the management of stakeholders to achieve the goals of the district and the eight state priorities.

IAP2's framework of Quality Assurance Standards, specifically the seven core values was used as a conceptual framework in determining fairness and openness in conducting the PPP. This framework was an appropriate lens through which to view the problem because it explores the discourse process of groups in terms of the fairness and openness in deeper engagement of stakeholders throughout the educational decision-making process, including planning and evaluation of impact. The core values of IAP2 (2004), designed in 2004, include factors such as: (a) everyone who is influenced by a resolution is entitled to be involved in the decision-making process (b) the stakeholders' opinions will be used in the final decision, (c) the needs and interests of the participants and decision-makers are recognized, (d) the decision-makers actively seeks for and involved everyone who is affected by the decision, (e) the design of the process focuses on enabling participation of all participants, (f) the stakeholders will receive all needed information, and (g) feedback to stakeholders will include the effect of their input in the final decision. Kania and Kramer's (2011) theory of collective impact, which outlines the conditions for effective collaborations for positive community change, will further inform these stakeholder theories in combination with IAP2.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions (RQs) provided guidance for this study:

- RQ1. How do local education agency leaders conceive the use of the IAP2's core values to define successful public stakeholder engagement for the LCAP in terms of inclusivity, fairness, and openness?

- RQ2. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local education agency leaders conceive can contribute to the *inclusiveness* of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?
- RQ3. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local education agency leaders conceive can contribute to the *fairness* of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?
- RQ4. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local educational agency leaders conceive can contribute to the *openness* of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?

### **Limitations**

As with any study, certain limitations outside the researcher's control arise. The internal validity of the study may be impacted by the structure of the interview questions, the schools identified for the study, the personal experience of the interviewee, and the degree to which the interviewee is comfortable speaking openly and honestly. Lastly, percentage of participants within the region is a limitation.

### **Delimitations**

There are seven delimitations to this study. First, this study was delimited up to 10 current K-12 public school district Superintendents or his/her designee in San Bernardino County who have been in the position for a minimum of 2 years. Second, the study was limited to superintendents or his/her designee, as California Education Code specifically identifies superintendents as solely responsible for the implementation of the LCAP. Third, understanding the LCAP process is fairly new, the study was limited to current superintendents or his/her designee in an effort to ensure they have had experience in the LCAP process. Fourth, the study

was limited to superintendents or his/her designee who have been in their position for at least 2 years to ensure the subject has gone through an entire cycle of the LCAP process. Fifth, the study was limited to superintendents or his/her designee of K-12 districts to provide a common student grade variation to assure subjects have experienced the same phenomenon. Sixth, the sample size of the study was limited to assist the researcher in conducting the research in a timely manner while maintaining reliability in the sample size. Seventh, the geographical location of the study was limited to San Bernardino County to provide the researcher reasonable access to the subjects.

### **Assumptions**

An assumption of this study was that superintendents or his/her designee have knowledge of and experience in the LCAP process, as they are deemed responsible for it in California's education code. The second assumption was that the participating superintendents or his/her designee would answer the interview questions in an honest and candid manner. The third assumption was that the inclusion criteria of the sample are appropriate and, therefore, assure that the participants have all experienced the same or similar phenomenon of the study.

### **Organization of the Study**

This research paper is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the topic and problem, reviews the purpose of the study, presents the research questions, discusses the research's limitations, and defines the key terms. Chapter 2 consists of a literature review covering the pertinent areas relevant to this study, including stakeholder engagement, success strategies, obstacles to success, and the purpose of stakeholder engagement in the LCAP development. Chapter 3 consists of the research design and approach, a description of the population, data collection method, protection of human subjects, the role of the researcher, and

the data analysis process. Chapter 4 reports the findings of the study. Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes the study by inferring conclusions based on the research findings. Recommendations for future study are considered in this final chapter.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The new LCFF dispensation requires a LCAP, a 3-year, district level plan updated annually through a PPP, identifying the school district's key goals for students as well as the specific actions and expenditures the district will need to take to achieve the goals. However, besides the necessity for districts to host inclusive processes, the LCFF does not explain how this is to be achieved and, likewise, does not propose criteria for measuring the success or failure in terms of inclusivity and transparency (Affeldt, 2015; Humphrey & Koppich, 2014). The purpose of this study is to examine conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open LCAP PPP and explore stakeholder engagement to determine what practices constitute an inclusive, fair, and open PPP. For the purposes of this study, stakeholder engagement theory served as the theoretical framework and the IAP2's Quality Assurance Standards, specifically the seven core values, served as the conceptual framework that defines the public engagement/participation planning process. The variables reviewed in this literature review include: (a) stakeholders; and (b) a fair, inclusive, and open PPP. As such this literature review includes the following elements: (a) a historical background of the LCFF; (b) the LCAP structure; (c) the theoretical framework for the study; (d) the conceptual framework of the study; (e) the elements of a successful school, parent, and community inclusive process; and (f) a chapter summary.

### **Historical Background of the LCFF**

The United States' K-12 public education funding system is complicated, and no clear-cut funding policy exists (Howell & Miller, 1997). K-12 public education funding stems from three sources—federal, state, and local government—all of which contribute at different levels using different methods to determine funding allocations (Wong & Casing, 2010).

In looking at the federal government's approach in allocating funds to educational programs, it appears the SBB system is used most frequently to perform this task (Baker & Elmer, 2009). The SBB system uses weighted pupil funding to distribute financial resources to districts and schools (Miles & Feinberg, 2014). In the SBB model students are weighted in accordance with their educational needs and the financial implications of teaching the students (Levin et al., 2013). In the SBB model the funding follows the student based on the students' need (Education Resource Strategies, 2014). According to Education Resource Strategies (2014), "This differs fundamentally from the traditional funding model still employed by most American school districts, which distribute resources to schools in the form of staff and dollars" (p. 6) often determined by the quantity of students being served.

The goals of SBB are to instill fiscal equity and support student achievement (Curtis et al., 2014). Furthermore, the SBB system provides principals more autonomy to allocate funds where it is most needed, thus facilitating even more effective resource allocation and utilization to improve student achievement (Levin et al., 2013). Apart from the SBB system's complicated calculations that take significant time to perform, allocation of funds where it is needed most is left to LEAs a practice intended to benefit minority groups such as ELs, LI students, FY, or students with disabilities.

In contrast to the federal government's SBB system, many states still embrace the traditional funding model (Education Resource Strategies, 2014), which is employed by the majority of districts across the United States. In this model, funding follows the student regardless of individual student need. The traditional model is most notably observed through the district practice wherein staff is allocated according to staffing ratios. For example, the staffing ratios may determine that one teacher be appointed for 25 students and when the school has 350

students a vice principal can be appointed (Curtis et al., 2014). People tend to associate educational expenditure with educational quality; although there is a strong relationship between these two variables, educational quality requires more than adequate money spent on students (Coleman, 1966; Hanushek, 1986; Hill & Kiewiet, 2015). Hanushek (1986) asserted that the way funds are spent is more important than how much is spent, since large amounts spent do not necessarily account for education quality. The traditional funding model does not address the needs of individual students or provide equity in school funding, both of which are necessary in order to ensure each student's need is met (National Education Association [NEA], 2005). Tow (2006) conducted a study on the educational system in California and found that “class size, poverty, student ethnicity, and teacher characteristics to be important indicators of student achievement.” (p. 27). As a result, Tow suggested “additional funding should go specifically towards the programs that are more effective” (p. 27). According to the National Education Association (NEA, 2005), “There is a growing body of research that supports the implementation of a relatively new system of allocating resources within a school district based on individual student needs” (p. 5).

California has long embraced the traditional funding model, but after years of research by policy advisors, the California State Legislature, with the full support of Governor Jerry Brown, introduced a plan to shift the long-term accountability focus from fiscal compliance to educational outcomes in an effort to support schools “so they improve rather than punishing them for failing” (Fuller & Tobben, 2014, p. 5). In 2013, California eliminated the vast majority of state imposed categorical spending criteria in public education and embraced the SBB model when the state legislature passed Assembly Bill 97, thus creating the LCFF “to enable educators to overcome the barriers that confront non-English speaking families and those with low and

very modest incomes” (Brown, 2016, para. 23). The LCFF redistributed available funding to areas where it is needed most, namely students from poor backgrounds, ELs, and FY (Humphrey & Koppich, 2014; Legislative Analyst’s Office [LAO], 2013). This transition was a clear move from the traditional funding model of categorical funding, in which the state provided districts money for specific purposes and programs, to a SBB model, in which the state allocated funds based on student needs.

### **The LCAP Structure**

State funds for K-12 public education are distributed to LEAs through the LCFF. The LCFF requires the LEA to determine how to best expend the funds to benefit students using a LCAP. The LCAP is a 3-year, district level plan updated annually through a PPP, identifying the school district’s key goals for students as well as the specific actions and expenditures the district will need to take to achieve the goals (CDE, n.d.). The CDE provides LEAs a specific timeline to follow in developing and implementing the LCAP and a template to display the plan.

**LCAP development cycle and approval timeline.** California Education Code 52070 and LCFF legislation provide a specific timeline for the LCAP cycle (see Appendix B) and approval process (see Appendix C). The LCFF indicates that districts should prepare a preliminary LCAP that the public should scrutinize. Children Now (2014) suggested a timeframe for preparing all the LCFF steps; by March the LCFF/LCAP should convene a community process to outline financing strategies into a preliminary LCAP. Taylor (2013) wrote a comprehensive analysis of the LCFF/LCAP in which he set out the LCAP process. According to Taylor, districts must conduct a minimum of two public hearings to discuss/adopt/update the LCAP. One hearing should be dedicated to receiving suggestions and observations from the public about the expenditures proposed in the LCAP. The follow-up hearing is tasked with either

the LEA's Board of Trustees adopting or updating the LCAP. The 2016 annual California School Board Association (CSBA) conference was dedicated to discuss the implementation of the LCFF and the approval process for the LCAP. After 5 days the district must present the plan to its COE for appraisal, which must respond within 15 days after receipt of the LCAP. The district has 15 days to respond to the COE recommendations during which period another public hearing should be held. Although the district must consider the advice of the COE, it does not have to alter its LCAP. By October, the COE must approve the district's LCAP provided that (a) it is in keeping with the LCAP template, (b) the budgetary allocations are sufficient for the activities set out in the LCAP, and (c) the supplemental and concentration funding allocations observes the spending obligations.

**LCAP template.** The template was designed with the intention of being easily understandable by all stakeholders, as well as readily accessible to the public so that all stakeholders know where the funds are being spent (Miles & Feinberg, 2014). The LCAP template has been developed and modified various times to streamline the examining and assessing of the LCAP by stakeholders. Most recently in November 2016, the State Board of Education adopted a new LCAP template to be implemented in the 2017/2018 school year. The LCAP template attached in Appendix D includes five key sections. The first section is the Plan Summary, an Introduction incorporating five components: (a) district overview, (b) LCAP highlights, (c) review of performance, (d) increased or improved services, and (e) budget summary. The second section is the Annual Update, which includes three components: (a) annual measurable outcomes, (b) actions/services, and (c) analysis. The third section, Stakeholder Engagement, is designed to provide a reflective narrative describing the Stakeholder Engagement process used to develop the LCAP. In the fourth section—Goals, Actions, and

Services— the LEA describes annual goals that address each of the eight LCFF state priorities. Although each LEA has discretion in determining where to allocate spending, LCFF requires districts to direct allocations toward achieving the state’s eight educational priorities: (a) basic services, (b) Common Core State Standards—focus on deep knowledge and problem solving skills, (c) parent involvement, (d) student achievement, (e) student engagement, (f) school climate, (g) access to a broad curriculum, and (g) other school outcomes. Section four also provides an area for the LEA to list the action steps required to achieve the goal, the required budget expenditures, the scope of services, and what students will be served. The fifth section, the Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Pupils, requires the district to describe services for unduplicated pupils and how those services are increased or improved. Each of the five sections within the LCAP plays a key role in the implementation of the LCFF. Because this study explores stakeholder engagement to determine what practices constitute an inclusive, fair, and open PPP, there is a need to further explore the third section of the LCAP, Stakeholder Engagement, as it was designed to capture and make available to others a glimpse of the PPP used in the development of the LCAP for that specific LEA.

**Stakeholder engagement in the LCAP.** When introducing the LCAP, a key component of LCFF, Governor Brown (2013) stated, “We are bringing government closer to the people, to the classroom where real decisions are made, and directing the money where the need and the challenge is greatest” (p. 1). LCFF tasks each district with developing goals, identifying actions, and allocating funding. However, districts are not alone in distributing LCFF funds for different programs; the act requires collaboration with public participants through a LCAP to determine priorities and allocate funds. By means of changing the funding allocation and distribution, and channeling additional funds to needy students, the California education funding system

empowers districts and the public to exercise more control over educational spending through the LCAP process, which requires public planning. To date the regulations relating to the PPP and stakeholder engagement are vague, but the LCAP template provided by the educational state board requires districts to reflect on the districts' recorded collaborative goal setting and budgeting activities (Fuller & Tobben, 2014). The LCAP template provides a forum for the district to identify how they intend to expend supplemental funds to meet annual goals for all students and each student group for each state priority and describe how the LEA engaged its stakeholders in the PPP (CDE, n.d.).

Each LEA is responsible for redistributing LCFF funds through the LCAP by engaging stakeholders in the decision-making process. The LCFF requires LEAs to allocate funds to action steps that will achieve district goals aligned to the eight state priorities while funding measurable actions that will improve and increase the learning opportunities of the students, especially the unduplicated students (ELs, students in poverty, and students in foster care), as stipulated by the LCAP. Stakeholder engagement receives a prominent position in the LCAP process, with an emphasis on building partnerships between the stakeholders so that everyone can collaborate, benefit, and share the responsibility of effective decision-making.

According to the LCAP template (CDE, n.d.), section three of the LCAP, Stakeholder Engagement, is reserved for districts to

Describe the process used to consult with the Parent Advisory Committee, the English Learner Parent Advisory Committee, parents, students, school personnel, the LEA's local bargaining units, and the community to inform the development of the LCAP and the annual review and analysis for the indicated LCAP year. (p. 9)

After the LEA details the involvement process with “how, when, and with whom did the LEA consult as part of the planning process for this LCAP/Annual Review and Analysis” (p. 6) the LEA is then tasked with describing “how...these consultations impact the LCAP for the upcoming year” (p. 6). The stakeholder engagement requirement of the LCAP creates avenues for districts to grow through better understanding of the community’s beliefs, values, challenges, and desires, while generating community buy-in and support, thus fostering an environment of trust and confidence. However, this opportunity is also accompanied by its own set of challenges (Institute for Local Government, 2014).

**Stakeholder engagement challenges.** In the Legislature’s attempt to bring government closer to the people, “community groups were disappointed with the lack of capacity in district offices to fulfill the new demands of meaningful engagement and the frequent failure to address basic requirements for parent and student engagement” (Affeldt, 2015, p. 10). The *Education Analysis Archives*, a peer reviewed journal, published a study by John Affeldt (2015) of Public Advocates, Inc. This study identified five challenges in the stakeholder engagement component of the LCAP: (a) setting meetings at times parents and students can make; (b) providing sufficient notice to target populations of the meetings and their purpose; (c) offering child care and food; (d) providing translation and interpretation; and (e) providing trainings on LCFF, LCAP, and budgets so that parents and students can participate meaningfully. Another recent study stated that “too many districts approach LCAP community engagement as a checkbox, instead of a meaningful exercise in shared decision making” (Jongco, 2016, p. 3).

Waner (2016) conducted several LCAP meetings during the 2013-14 and 2015-16 school years, sharing lessons learned from these experiences. During the initial phases of the LCAP meetings, the stakeholders moved from uncharted territory and experienced challenges such as

cultural differences. Early on during the follow-up process, the organizers realized that it was essential to validate input from stakeholders; they also recognized the necessity of gathering feedback on how their input served to effect change. During the 2015-16 meetings there was better cultural buy-in of the process, improved focus, using data to base decisions on, and valuing every stakeholder's input.

In the absence of regulations on how to conduct LCAP engagement, Waner (2016) gave the following guidelines:

- Provide an equal opportunity for participation to all stakeholders by using various innovative methods (tools).
- Provide feedback on how the stakeholders' input served to change the school system.
- Provide information in small chunks and easy to follow language.
- Refrain from using acronyms and educational terms as it serves to alienate the stakeholders and not promote mutual understanding.
- Show respect to the stakeholders and their time.
- Meet the stakeholders where they are—in the communities.
- Promote an open door and quick response culture.
- Create a friendly atmosphere by providing refreshments.

The LCFF legislation outlining specific stakeholder engagement meetings may fall short of providing the follow through to ensure fidelity of implementation. A parent advisory committee that includes unduplicated students (EL, LI, and FY students) must be established and provide input to the superintendent and governing board relating to the LCAP (CDE, 2017). The requirement that the superintendent has to provide a written response to the parent advisory committee's advice serves to validate the committee's input. However, the requirements do not

include a written response from the superintendent regarding comments made during engagement meetings. Following the stakeholder engagement consultations, at least one public hearing has to follow during which input from the public is gathered on the allocation of funds as set out in the LCAP. The California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA; 2014) cautions COEs that the aforementioned process could easily represent the customary top-down involvement where the stakeholders have to rubber-stamp decisions already made by administrators. Public participation has different tools or techniques to facilitate stakeholder participation and the suggested public hearings may not be sufficient. Waner (2016) suggested that successful engagement of the public needs to engage the public in discussions of forums during which opinions and suggestions could be noted.

Community and stakeholder groups are not the only ones who have identified challenges in current stakeholder engagement practices and understandings. Section three of the LCAP template, Stakeholder Engagement, also asks the LEA to describe how the consultation process impacted the development of the LCAP, including its goals, actions, services, and expenditures. Section three creates an avenue to reflect upon the stakeholder engagement process that was used during the cycle; however, there is no mechanism in place to determine if the engagement was “meaningful.” a component said to be “critical to the development of the LCAP” (CDE, n.d., p. 9). Nor is there a mechanism in place to determine if the PPP was inclusive, fair, and open. The first component of the third section of the LCAP template, Stakeholder Engagement, requires LEAs to provide information on the process followed to engage stakeholders such as parents, students and the community. Understanding that the LEA’s COE must approve the LEA’s proposed LCAP and acknowledging that there is no specific rubric to guide the approval process, it may be prudent to review the approval process resources provided to COEs by the

CCSESA. The 2014 CCSESA manual stated that meaningful engagement with stakeholders was a requirement in the LCAP process and that the COE will review the LCAP documentation to ascertain whether the requirement of meaningful stakeholder engagement was met. While there is no specific rubric to assist in determining whether a district engaged in *meaningful* stakeholder engagement the CCSESA provides section-by-section guidelines for a COE LCAP reviewer to verify that the LEA's LCAP requirements have been met. As it pertains to Section 3, Stakeholder Engagement, CCSESA proposes that reporting on engagement could simply include meeting dates and a summary of the involvement process to meet the district goals.

California's shift from the traditional public education funding model to the SBB model embedded into the LCFF redistributed available funding to areas where it is needed most. The LCFF's LCAP requirement ensures stakeholders have a substantial role in the PPP by requiring collaboration with stakeholders through the LCAP process to determine priorities and allocate funds. The third section of the LCAP template, Stakeholder Engagement, is designed to provide a reflective narrative describing the Stakeholder Engagement process used to develop the LCAP. Although the stakeholder engagement component of the LCAP creates avenues for districts to grow in their service to the community it has also brought challenges (Institute for Local Government, 2014). To facilitate collaboration it is important to build relationships among the different stakeholders, in this process mutual trust and open communication is essential (Knudson, 2014).

### **Theoretical Framework**

**Stakeholder theory.** Freeman first proposed the stakeholder theory in 1984; since that time, both Freeman and other researchers have expanded upon the theory. Freeman (1984) defined stakeholders as “any group or individual who is affected by or can affect the

achievement of an organization's objectives" (p. 46). Freeman introduced the idea that business organizations have stakeholders and that businesses should pay more attention to those stakeholders. In fact, organizations that pay attention to their stakeholders persistently will benefit in the long run by creating more value. Freeman's stakeholder theory has been applied to various disciplines, including health care and legal practice (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, & de Colle, 2010). Despite several researchers' efforts, there are still differences in opinion regarding the fundamental question of "Who or What Really Counts" (Freeman, 1984, p. 46). Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997) pointed out that the identification of stakeholders involves both normative and descriptive qualities. The normative aspect centers on who the stakeholders should be, whereas the descriptive aspect describes the conditions to be fulfilled under which a manager would consider a group to be stakeholders (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). In the current study the LCFF/LCAP law broadly indicated which basic groups should be considered stakeholders and to whom the superintendent should pay attention. California Education Code 52060 specifically identifies "teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, local bargaining units of the school district, parents, and pupils" as stakeholders who should be consulted with in the development of the local control and accountability plan.

The stakeholder theory advocates a useful, effective, successful, and ethical way to manage businesses in an environment that is complex and disordered (Freeman, 1984). Its usefulness lies in the fact that organizations have to manage stakeholders whether they like it or not and whether they are successful or not (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Stakeholders who are handled well will react positively toward the organization by remaining loyal and participating in a manner that will benefit the organization. The stakeholder approach is successful, in the sense that it channels the stakeholders' energy toward achieving the organizational goals. Furthermore,

stakeholder theory is useful in a complex and disordered environment as organizations that manage their stakeholders successfully receive useful insights from the stakeholders that can be used in strategic decision making, which gives them a competitive advantage (Harrison, Freeman, & de Abreu, 2015). The LCAP was designed to embrace the idea that stakeholder insight in the development of the strategic plan will lead to a competitive advantage within educational entities. According to Phillips, Freeman, and Wicks (2003) and Phillips and Margolis (1999), humans are responsible for themselves and should engage in actions that are not harmful to those around them. This principle, then, constitutes the ethical realm of stakeholder theory: namely that managers are responsible for their actions and decisions in the organization which should not be harmful to either the stakeholders or the organization (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). This phenomenon is reciprocal, as the same responsibility rests with the stakeholders toward the manager and organization (Harrison et al., 2015).

It is the responsibility of managers to manage for stakeholders by attending to their needs and best interests (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Stakeholder theory advises that all stakeholders should be treated with “fairness, honesty, and even generosity” (Harrison et al., 2015, p. 859). Organizations that manage for stakeholders will use more resources than needed to benefit the stakeholders and in turn will receive the stakeholders’ trust and sharing of information, which benefits the organization (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Not all managers manage for stakeholders, as they fear doing so might be counterproductive (Harrison et al., 2015); however, many researchers have found organizations that value their stakeholders have a competitive advantage. With the development and implementation of the LCAP and its requirement of stakeholder engagement, it is evident that elected leadership within California is now embracing this concept of valuing and including stakeholders in planning and implementation processes.

A core value of stakeholder theory is trust, and Jones (1995) pointed out that the trust relationship between the organization and stakeholders leads to better cooperation, a greater willingness of the stakeholders to disclose personal information, and a competitive advantage (Harrison & Wicks, 2013). The normative and instrumental aspects of convergent stakeholder theory as presented by Jones and Wicks (1999) provide a lens through which to view the management of stakeholders to achieve the goals of the district and the eight state priorities. Harrison and Wicks (2013) pointed out that trust implies the willingness of one party to become vulnerable to the other and is reciprocal in nature. Trust is built upon the expectation that both parties will be fair in their relationship. It is highly doubtful that stakeholders will demonstrate behaviors such as openness, kindness, and loyalty towards the organization if they are not treated fairly and if they cannot in real terms expect the organization to redistribute some of the profits created, back to the stakeholder.

Although several researchers have addressed the notion of trust (Pirson, Martin, & Parmar, 2014), distrust has not received much attention (Laude, Weibel, Sachs, & Schafheitle, 2017). Unfortunately not all organizations have proven to be trustworthy—for instance, Volkswagen’s emissions damages, British Petroleum’s (BP’s) Deepwater Horizon oil spill—thereby corroding stakeholders’ trust. Similar to the effect of trust, distrust also has implications for the continued success of the organization. Distrust is not simply the absence of trust or a very low degree of trust; it has its own multidimensional composition (Bijlsma-Frankema, Sitkin, & Weibel, 2015). Distrust has therefore completely different precursors and outcomes compared to trust (Guo, Lumineau, & Lewicki, 2017). The precursors of distrust are value incongruence, outgroup bias and malevolence, all of which lead to a reduction in value creation. Laude et al. (2017) asserted that people hold protected values such as religion and other values that elicit a

strong emotional reaction when violated. The authors pointed out that certain ethical issues exist (e.g., growing popularity of tobacco use in developing countries linked with too little information on the dangers of smoking) that are hard to resolve, requiring superior problem solving skills and group management skills. The theory of distrust has links with social identity theory, which asserts that people organize themselves in groups depending on their interests, similar needs, etc. Those with similar interests will belong to a specific group (the in-group) and membership in this group is regarded in a positive light. The outgroup is made up of those who do not belong to the in-group and the outgroup is perceived negatively; this tendency leads to an outgroup bias exists, which leads to distrust of the outgroup (Laude et al., 2017).

This notion of distrust and attitude toward in-groups and outgroups has implications for the LCAP stakeholder engagement. The LCFF law stipulates that unduplicated students (EL, FY, and LI children) should receive a greater portion of the budget and that special programs should be designed and followed to close the achievement gap. The students belonging to these groups are also known as minority students or, as suggested by Laude et al. (2017), *outgroup* students. These outgroup students and their parents were found to be lacking in parent-teacher participation, which establishes them as outgroup students (Menefee-Libey & Kerchner, 2015). As suggested by Laude et al., this outgroup status can trigger outgroup bias, which may lead to distrust of the outgroup. The literature suggests that the well-meaning isolation of the unduplicated students and allocation of more resources to this outgroup students could elicit negativity from the in-group stakeholders, which might complicate stakeholder engagement. Furthermore, the literature suggests that outgroup parents might face cultural biases prohibiting them from voicing their opinions in the greater forum, especially in the presence of persons with higher social standing, such as superintendents and teachers. Additionally, the literature suggests

that this situation could lead to animosity, distrust, poor cooperation, and little to no disclosure. Given the findings of Laude et al.'s study it could be asserted that the facilitator of the stakeholder engagement sessions should be very skilled in handling such situations diplomatically.

Harrison and Wicks (2013) debated the fact that value in business centers on finances, with the question of who earns more dividends at the core. This assumption violates the basic principle of stakeholder theory, which is focused on the similarity or joint-ness of stakeholders. In the current study, the stakeholder focus is on the identification of who the stakeholders are on the one hand, and the particular interests or needs of the stakeholder groups on the other hand, as the LCFF indicates that unduplicated pupils (e.g., EL, FY, and LI pupils) are to receive additional funding (Taylor, 2013). Although the stakeholders are unified via their interest and participation in education of the students, they are also potentially divided due to their particular interests or grouping (regular student group [in-group] versus unduplicated pupils group [outgroup]), which may lead to dissonance during meetings. The literature suggests that the leaders and managers of the LCAP PPP who chair these meetings might need a range of facilitation tools to manage different opinions and conflicting situations.

Mitchell et al. (1997) classified stakeholders according to their salience and potential impact. Stakeholder salience refers to the “degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholder claims” (p. 868). To identify the most salient stakeholders, Mitchell et al. considered their “power, legitimacy and urgency” (Leisyte, Westerheijden, Epping, Faber & de Weert, 2013, p. 84). In the current study, the saliency of the unduplicated students’ parents could speak to the criteria of legitimacy and urgency since they are identified by law, and addressing their needs is urgent for the sake of the state assessments and the need to bridge the achievement gap.

According to the classification of Mitchell et al., groups that satisfy only two criteria are moderately salient and are more likely to draw attention from the manager (superintendent). The most salient group exhibits all three attributes and enjoys the highest degree of manager attention. As it pertains to schools this may be parents who can contribute financially or by means of services to the schools. When considering the unduplicated students and their parents in the light of Mitchell et al.'s classification, the literature suggests that they are seen as less important. In addition, the literature recommends ensuring that these students and their parents are represented in a fair and inclusive manner and that their opinions count during the participatory meetings. Harrison et al. (2015) asked whether managing for stakeholders would be similar or different in other cultures and suggested that research on this subject should be conducted to add to the existing body of knowledge. The conceptual framework used in this study explores Harrison et al.'s question and provides further insight to the study of fairness and openness in the PPP and stakeholder engagement across cultures.

### **Conceptual Framework**

**Quality assurance standards (IAP2).** The International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2's) Quality Assurance Standards, the conceptual framework used in this study, explores Harrison et al.'s question and provides further insight to the study of fairness and openness in the PPP and stakeholder engagement across cultures. Key aspects of stakeholder engagement include the ability to create added value for stakeholders and how to evaluate or measure it.

Founded in 1990, IAP2 is a leading international professional organization centered on advancing the global practice of public participation. As of 2016, IAP2 has over 5,600 members across Australia, Asia, Canada, Indonesia, Italy, South Africa, and the United States. IAP2 has

over 200 Ambassadors who are leaders in the field of public participation and have been practicing community and stakeholder engagement for more than 7 years. IAP2 Ambassadors have experience in various sectors including: communications, education, engineering, emergency services, environment, health, infrastructure, planning, transportation, and across all levels of government. In 2016, IAP2 Ambassadors held four national conferences and multiple workshops helping over 10,000 people understand the importance of community and stakeholder engagement and how it can lead to more sustainable decision-making. At the end of 2016, IAP2 had provided PPP training to over 18,500 practitioners across the globe, with International Associates in Guyana, Iceland, Israel, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom (IAP2, 2016).

According to this frontline public participation organization, community engagement is widely accepted and required in a wide range of projects and also more general disciplines such as planning and implementation. IAP2 uses the terms *participation* and *engagement* interchangeably. Different levels of engagement can be distinguished and applied appropriately to any given situation. Due to the development of the profession and its full-fledged global presence, the IAP2 deemed it necessary to develop a framework of professional standards. This research-based framework was designed to guide the public, practitioners, and governments to give them the confidence that engagement will be practiced effectively (IAP2, 2015a). In 2015, the IAP2 Board of Directors approved and published its Practice Development Committee's Quality Assurance Standards. Led by Lucy Cole-Edelstein, Kimbra White, Mark Ritch, Keith Greaves, and Carla Leversedge, the Practice Development Committee worked for over 2 years reviewing case studies and processes, as well as interviewing practitioners in an effort to develop IAP2's research based framework, the Quality Assurance Standards. The Quality Assurance

Standards embrace the same themes and principles of engagement laid out in the 2005 United Nations Inaugural Conference. At this conference, the “Brisbane Declaration on Community Engagement” called for “transparent and accountable governance through community engagement and acknowledged the potential for human development and fostering of relationships as a result of effective engagement” (IAP2, 2015b, p. 6). IAP2 (2015b) began to develop Quality Assurance Standards in 2011 for the purpose of describing the important elements of any community engagement process and to ensure consistency in quality and support for practitioners. However the Quality Assurance Standards are not entirely new; rather, they are a collection and presentation of 2 decades of work by hundreds of public participation practitioners and experts across the globe. The Quality Assurance Standards provide practitioners a means to audit and evaluate a PPP for quality.

IAP2 (2015b) developed the Quality Assurance Standards, a framework to promote and improve the practice of public participation and engagement processes as a result of international practitioner and member collaboration, review, feedback, and expert input across religious, cultural, and national lines. The framework is made up of four distinct yet interrelated components developed by the IAP2 at different times over a 20-year span. These four components include: (a) core values, (b) a code of ethics, (c) a public participation spectrum, and (d) a community engagement model. IAP2’s Quality Assurance Standards are used in this study as the conceptual framework to study fairness and openness in conducting the LCAP’s PPP.

***Core values.*** The IAP2 framework explores the discourse process of groups in terms of the fairness and openness in deeper engagement of stakeholders throughout the educational decision-making process, including planning and evaluation of impact. Designed in 2004, the core values of IAP2 include elements such as: (a) public participation is based on the belief that

those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process; (b) public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision; (c) public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers; (d) public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision; (e) public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate; (f) public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way; and (g) public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision. These core values were developed over a 2-year period with broad international input to identify those aspects of public participation that cross national, cultural, and religious boundaries. The purpose of these core values is to help make better decisions that reflect the interests and concerns of potentially affected people and entities.

IAP2 asserts that by adhering to the Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation, fairness and openness can be achieved in the participation process. According to IAP2's Quality Assurance Standards the public participation officer or facilitator who follows these values ensures that:

- Everyone who is affected by a decision will be afforded the opportunity to participate in the decision-making.
- The stakeholders' inputs and insights will be used to influence the decision.
- All parties' interests and needs will be taken into account.
- Stakeholders who are potentially affected will especially be involved in the process.
- Stakeholders will be allowed to give input in designing the engagement opportunity/opportunities.

- All needed information will be given to the stakeholders in an understandable and meaningful manner.
- The stakeholder engagement process includes steps to illustrate to the stakeholders how their input influenced the decisions (IAP2, 2015a).

The Core Values and Code of Ethics of the IAP2 can also be applied to evaluate adherence and it therefore serves as an assessment tool that should be utilized before, during, and after the stakeholder engagement process to determine effectiveness and success.

*Code of ethics.* Although the Core Values formalize the expectations of the public participation process, the Code of Ethics guides practitioners' actions. IAP2's Code of Ethics is made up of the following eight principles: (a) purpose, (b) role of practitioner, (c) trust, (d) defining public's role, (e) openness, (f) access to the process, (g) respect for communities, and (h) advocacy (see Table 1). The IAP2 Core Values and Code of Ethics focus on the authenticity of the public participation officer who has accepted these statements as a true reflection of what they stand for. According to Roberts, Cha, Hewlin, and Settles (2009), the moral criteria that people stand for and embrace must align with their self-defining characteristics when the person is authentic and true to himself/herself. Western society approves the quality of authenticity as an ideal way to conduct oneself. When conducting stakeholder engagement the public participation officer should endeavor to stay true to self, the process, and the public in order to conduct an authentic process.

Table 1

*Code of Ethics*

Principle	Explanation
Purpose	We support public participation as a process to make better decisions that incorporate the interests and concerns of all affected stakeholders and meet the needs of the decision-making body.
Role of Practitioner	We will enhance the public’s participation in the decision making process and assist decision-makers in being responsive to the public’s concerns and suggestions.
Trust	We will carefully consider and accurately portray the public’s role in the decision-making process.
Defining the Public’s Role	We will carefully consider and accurately portray the public’s understanding and evaluation of a decision.
Openness	We will encourage the disclosure of all information relevant to the public’s understanding and evaluation of a decision.
Access to the Process	We will ensure that stakeholders have fair and equal access to the public participation process and the opportunity to influence decisions.
Respect For Communities	We will avoid strategies that risk polarizing community interests or that appear to “divide and conquer”

***Public participation spectrum.*** Apart from values, the public participation process provides different levels of participation and it is important the districts be aware of the possibilities to design a process that is aimed at the correct level of participation. IAP2’s public participation spectrum includes the following categories, each with its own goal and promise to the public: inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower (IAP2, 2014). The IAP2 (2014) Public Participation Spectrum, included in Appendix E, calls for a promise to inform the public with the goal of providing objective information to assist the public in understanding and guiding them in the decision making process. The spectrum includes a promise to consult the public in the decision making process with the goal of providing feedback on the public’s influence in the process. The goal in involving the public is to ensure their concerns and aspirations are understood. The goal of collaboration is “To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred

solution” (p. 1). The corresponding promise of collaboration to the public is “We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible” (p. 1). According to the spectrum, the public has the most impact on the public participation process when they are empowered. The goal of empowerment on the spectrum is to “place final decision making in the hands of the public” (p. 1) through the promise of doing what the public decides. Possible techniques that could be used include: “citizen advisory committees, consensus building, and participatory decision-making” (p. 1).

Table 2

*Level of Public Participation with Recommended Tools*

Participation level	Participatory Tool
Inform	Fact sheets; Websites; Open houses
Consult	Public comment; Focus groups; Surveys; Public meetings
Involve	Workshops; Deliberate polling
Collaborate	Citizen advisory committees, Consensus building, Participatory decision-making
Empower	Citizen advisory committees, Consensus building, Participatory decision-making

*Note.* Adapted from “Foundations of Public Participation,” by the International Association for Public Participation, n.d. (retrieved from [https://www.iap2.org.au/resource-bank/command/download\\_file/id/62/filename/IAP2\\_Foundations\\_of\\_Public\\_Participation.pdf](https://www.iap2.org.au/resource-bank/command/download_file/id/62/filename/IAP2_Foundations_of_Public_Participation.pdf)). Copyright 2017 by the author.

**Community engagement.** Stakeholder engagement is a requirement in developing the LCAP. The LCAP template requires the LEA to speak to the engagement process by identifying which stakeholders were involved, as well as when and how often these stakeholders were consulted. IAP2 has identified guidelines for conducting a participation or community engagement process: equal representation of all the stakeholder groups, equal opportunity to express views—use different processes to ensure each person has a *voice* (e.g., voting and polling techniques to allow quiet and shy participants a say), determine a process framework and

stick to it, develop stakeholder relationships based on openness and trust, and give regular feedback to all stakeholders together with opportunities to leave comments. Other guidelines include: (a) determine the level of satisfaction on the process via an opinion poll, (b) establish whether the project has met its objectives, (c) determine the engagement/participation of stakeholders against the initial level of engagement aimed for, (d) determine the level of change and the impact thereof achieved due to the engagement process, and (e) determine the need for a follow-up or ongoing process due to the nature of the project (IAP2, 2015a).

**Stakeholder identification.** In terms of the LCAP, IAP2 (2015b) guidelines presented in the Quality Assurance Standards highlight the importance of identifying all stakeholders that (a) are directly involved—e.g., parents, teachers, sponsors, voluntary service providers; (b) are likely to be affected—e.g., non-essential service that might be terminated due to funding restrictions; and (c) need a voice—e.g., parents of EL students who are not fluent in English and may not feel empowered to attend let alone participate in the process. Seeing that this new LCFF singles out the vulnerable and marginalized groups, these persons must be afforded every possible opportunity to participate. Through systematic identification of the various groups, the district will be able to conduct a thorough process.

IAP2 (2015a) provided a list of activities to ensure that all the stakeholders are identified, including but not limited to: (a) identifying groups or individuals that are interdependent or have links with other group members; (b) determining various levels of authority—e.g., not only high ranking parents should be involved; and (c) taking into account any existing conflicts between stakeholder groups, etc. According to IAP2, stakeholders may face obstacles in attending or participating in the process; those obstacles should be identified and a way to mitigate hurdles must be found. IAP2 stresses the importance that all stakeholders are equally welcome, well

informed, and confident to express ideas, as well as experience an environment where their views are appreciated..

Different methods of identifying and inviting stakeholders exist. A popular method is to put the responsibility for attending meetings on the stakeholder by expecting self-selection or volunteering to attend meetings. Typically the upcoming meetings will be advertised in public spaces and the public is expected to self-select. Unfortunately with this mechanism it is often only the more affluent and educated section of society that tends to react and this method therefore favors high-status individuals who:

are typically more well-off – wealthy, educated, and professional – than the population from which they come. Nearly all forms of political participation exhibit participation patterns favoring high-status persons, and more demanding forms [of participation] tend to exacerbate that bias. (Fung, 2003, p. 342)

Hong (2015) reported that the Korean government uses an open recruitment process to recruit stakeholders for inclusion in public participation such as budgeting meetings. Hong found that the openness of the recruitment process is met with positivity from the larger public. Although theoretically anybody can apply to become part of the recruited stakeholders, the government selects stakeholders based on specific inclusion criteria. It is possible that the openness of the system instills trust in the citizens who then tend to accept the recruited members more willingly. Fung (2003) described a method where stakeholders are targeted in a demographic area with the aim to replicate the general population in targeting the stakeholders. To entice low-income participants to attend meetings, structural incentives can be used to engage people from marginalized or outgroup environments. The public participation officer should aim to deeply isolate and understand the values about a specific issue as this will help them

understand the public. In fact, Fung stated that the engagement process should be designed to facilitate understanding of public values at a deeper level. Therefore the processes should:

- Be interest-based;
- Use deliberative communication modes;
- Have higher levels of shared decision authority;
- Use small table formats with trained facilitators;
- Engage the public as defined broadly (rather than for example just stakeholders);
- Utilize recruitment strategies that reach out to disadvantaged or marginalized communities; and
- Have more than one session. (p. 23)

In terms of the LCAP requirement of an inclusive process, this researcher interprets it as being indicative of the representation of the different stakeholder groups and the degree of meaningful participation during the engagement process.

**Effective participation or engagement.** The tools and methods to be used during the participation process can be chosen based on the judgment of the public participation practitioner to best suit the goals of participation. The practitioner must collect evidence to show that the opinions and suggestions of the stakeholders and opposing views were taken into account during the decision-making process. When stakeholder engagement is successful, all risks and issues are identified in a timely manner and addressed in the mitigatory plan drafted for the project. Even though there might not have been consensus among the different parties, the public must feel that they were heard and that their issues were taken seriously. This process will provide the participation team the opportunity to become familiar with all the public's issues and perceptions. Effective engagement aims to include all the IAP2 professional standards and

principles in a balanced manner. These include: (a) understandable, appropriate communication within a timely time frame inviting the stakeholders to participate constructively; (b) clear decision making and feedback procedures that include all stakeholders; (c) inclusivity—identifying, inviting, involving, and respecting all relevant stakeholders and fostering participation; (d) partnership and cooperation in an atmosphere of truly seeking outcomes that will benefit everyone; and (e) truthfulness by identifying mutual beliefs and values, facilitating respect amongst the groups, and aiming for outcomes that benefit all (Consult Australia, 2015; IAP2, n.d.a). It is not an easy task to design a process that successfully promotes open sharing of stakeholders' opinions and values while focusing on the overall goals of the process.

Stakeholders and communities differ in opinions on a variety of issues, and also in goals and values, thus making the engagement process highly complex. The facilitator has to find a way to manage these differences and possible conflict areas so that constructive mitigatory processes are formulated (Meikle & Jones, 2013).

**How to plan engagement.** IAP2 (2015b) developed the following steps to develop an engagement process: (a) problem definition, (b) agreement of purpose/context and identify negotiables and non-negotiables, (c) lever of participation/engagement, (d) stakeholder identification and relationship development, (e) project requirements, (f) development and approval of engagement plan, (g) feedback, (h) evaluation and review, (i) monitoring, and (j) documentation of evidence. By initially defining the problem to be addressed, the purpose of and reasons for engagement are sharply outlined. In the LCAP, the overall purpose and reason are the requirements of the LCFF regulations that stipulate the need for community engagement in allocating funds and determining programs to benefit unduplicated students. However, this does not address the purpose specific to the district and its schools. The literature suggests it

needs to include the stakeholders specific to the problem and identify ways to determine whether a solution was found.

The identification of non-negotiables that cannot be influenced by the engagement process is vital to its success. In the LCAP it may include variables such as available budget, set expenses such as teacher salaries, focus on unduplicated students, and so on. The literature suggests that the context statement also needs to describe roles and responsibilities, key performance indicators, overall culture and values involved in the process, communication channels, accountability issues, and risks (IAP2, 2015b). According to IAP2 (2015b), the outcome of this step should be a clear and concise statement of how these components will relate to each other and be managed.

The literature suggests that the LEA should decide on the appropriate level of participation as described by IAP2's (2014) spectrum of participation: inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower. Furthermore, the literature suggests that the LEA should develop a plan to both identify and develop open and trusting relationships with the stakeholders while determining the specific requirements for each project, e.g. timeline, resources. The engagement plan should be signed off by the stakeholder and once executed the process should be evaluated and stakeholders should provide feedback, which should to be documented by the LEA.

### **The Elements of a Successful School, Parent, and Community Inclusive Process**

When discussing the paradigms for the successful inclusion of stakeholders in K-12 public education as it pertains to LCFF and LCAP, the works of Kania and Kramer's (2011) collective impact theory, Comer's (2005) whole child approach, and Epstein's (2011) theory of overlapping spheres stand out. These approaches will be discussed in turn.

**Collective impact.** Projects that are individually funded and executed by large organizations such as the Pew Charitable Trust do not necessarily show evidence of impact beyond the duration of the project (Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012). Collective impact projects represent a new approach to structuring and executing projects in a highly structured and collaborative manner. Collective impact occurs “when a group of actors from different sectors commit to a common agenda for solving a complex social or environmental problem” (Preskill, Parkhurst, & Splansky-Juster, 2014, p. 4).

Five essential conditions characterize collective impact projects and distinguish them from less impactful collaborative efforts. These conditions include: “(a) common agenda, (b) shared measurement systems, (c) mutually reinforcing activities, (d) continuous communication, and (e) backbone support” (Hanleybrown et al., 2012, p. 1). The collective impact approach to solving large-scale social issues has gained popularity and organizations are increasingly embarking on this route to make a difference (Hanleybrown et al., 2012). Apart from a shared vision of the change that is built on a common understanding of the existing problems, the partners must agree on a joint approach to address the issues. Furthermore, three prerequisites need to be in place, namely (a) a respected champion who is influential and can engage leaders across different sectors and who focuses on addressing the problem; (b) urgency—the stakeholders are spurred on by the critical community problem, realize that previous attempts failed to solve the problem and various stakeholders are rallying to successfully solve the problem; and (c) financial support to fund the project for a minimum of 2-3 years (Hanleybrown et al., 2012; Kania & Kramer, 2013).

Kania and Kramer (2011) discussed the Strive project, situated in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, which endeavors to unite schools and community stakeholders in an effort to

improve student achievement. This large project incorporates private and corporate organizations and non-profit groups with the full range of educational offerings in the region with the goal of impacting the whole continuum of education simultaneously. The approach was termed “cradle to career” (p. 36), as it focused on every stage of the students’ school and academic career.

The goal of the Strive project was to provide more access and experiences to students that would enrich them, engage them, and focus on career development from an early age. This was achieved by developing a range of learning opportunities addressing academic, personal, and social success indicators. In keeping with the characteristics of the collective impact approach, all the stakeholders of the educational system from grades kindergarten-16 (K-16) planned the process collaboratively (Kania & Kramer, 2011). Through the common goal and understanding of the problem, the stakeholders blended available resources to benefit the students. The overarching benefits of such projects go beyond the fiscal level to reach all aspects of the students’ lives—family, social, and, most importantly, hope for a better future (Harwood, 2014).

The LACP process necessitating public participation does not solely call for a collective impact approach. However, it is suggested that elements of the IAP2 public participation process and collective impact could be combined to develop an impactful process that will be fair, open, engage all the stakeholders and address the unique problems of a school district. Table 3 demonstrates possible integration of the two approaches.

The difference between traditional and collaborative participation is important to note. The traditional model focuses on conforming to legal obligations and aims to inform and educate the public whilst also lobbying for support. In contrast, the collaborative model aims to develop a climate for learning together and solving problems as a group. In the traditional model the participants will not participate willingly in the discussions or share power and responsibility, as

the model implies that leadership (managers or organizers) are the experts. The two concepts of governance are compared in Table 4 (Innes, 2010).

Table 3

*Possible Integration of IAP2 Public Participation and Collective Impact Steps*

Component for Success	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Governance and Infrastructure	Identify champions and form cross sector group	Create infrastructure (backbone and processes)	Facilitate and refine
Strategic Planning	IAP2: Stakeholder identification	IAP2: Plan public participation & decide on tools	IAP2: Execute plan
	Map the landscape and use data to make case	Create common agenda (goals and strategy)	Support implementation
Community Involvement	IAP2: Public Participation plan	IAP2: Planning – screening/exploratory meetings towards refinement & level of participation	IAP2: Align participation and strategies
	Facilitate community outreach	Engage community and build public will	Continue engagement and conduct advocacy
Evaluation and Improvement	IAP2: Implement plan – conduct meetings (use 7 principles of core values; implement phases 1-3)	IAP2: Add tools & methodology, apply level of participation & appropriate tools	IAP2: Ensure engagement over long time
	Analyze baseline data to identify key issues and gaps	Establish shared metrics	Collect, track, and report progress
	IAP2: Analyze how improve process	IAP2: Indicators, measurements, and approach	IAP2: Process information to learn and improve participation

Table 4

*Traditional and Collaborative Governance*

Governance dimension	Traditional governance	Collaborative governance
Structure	Top down hierarchy	Interdependent network clusters
Source of direction	Central control	Distributed control
Boundary condition	Closed	Open
Organizational context	Single authority	Divided authority
Leadership approach	Directive	Generative
Role of manager	Organization controller	Mediator, process manager
Managerial tasks	Planning and guiding organizational processes	Guiding interactions, providing opportunity
Managerial activities	Planning, designing, and leading	Selecting agents and resources, influencing conditions
Goals	Clear with defined problems	Various and changing
Criterion of success	Attainment of goals of formal policy	Realization of collective action and conditions for future collaboration
Nature of planning	Linear	Nonlinear
Public participation objective	Legal conformity, inform and educate, gain support of public for agency policies	Create conditions for social learning and problem-solving capacity
Democratic legitimacy	Representative democracy	Deliberative democracy
Source of system behavior	Determined by component participant roles	Determined by interactions of participants

*Note.* Adapted from *Planning with Complexity: An Introduction to Collaborative Rationality for Public Policy*, by J. E. Innes, 2010, p. 202, New York, NY: Routledge. Copyright 2010 by the author.

**Whole child approach.** In 1968, Comer, a child psychiatrist at the Child Study Center of Yale University, developed the whole child approach, also known as the Comer School Development Program (SDP), Comer Process or Comer Model. The aims of the SDP was to enhance the school learning experiences of poor African American (ethnic minority) students by increasing collaboration between the school and family. Comer believed that the school-family relationship forms the basis of poor children's success (Saucier & Goldberg, 1996). After piloting the program in New Haven, Brenton Harbor, and Norfolk, the initial gains of the students led other schools to adopt the SDP as well; since then, it has been implemented in more than 1,150 schools in 25 states (Lunenburg, 2011).

Comer emphasized the importance of close ties among parents and children, the larger community and school, stating that the termination of the community bonds that used to tie community members tightly together led to a loss of parental and adults' ability to influence the children. The SDP was developed as a means to reestablish the links among school, family, and community. Furthermore, it aimed to redeploy decision-making power between parents and school for the academic and overarching developmental benefit of the children (Lunenburg, 2011).

The program consisted of a different organizational and managerial system that Comer and his coworkers based on children's developmental issues. The aim was to inspire teachers, school administrators, and parents to work together in addressing the children's needs. The initial implementation phase focused on building relationships between teacher training centers and local schools that participated in the program; subsequently, regional professional development centers were established to further teachers' training and practical skills (Comer, Haynes, Joyner, & Ben-Avie, 1996). Each participating school established a Planning Management Group that consisted of nine components, as illustrated in Figure 1.

The schools develop their own teaching strategies and curriculum; for instance, the initial SDP schools in New Haven focused their curriculum on teaching inner-city children how to participate in society. Coworkers at Yale developed a supplementary curriculum that centered on building caring relationships, creating social facilities, and acquiring skills dealing with banking, obtaining employment, and politics (Comer, Haynes, & Hamilton-Lee, 1988). The key principle of the approach is that academic development, emotional stability and moral development should all be integrated to support and nurture the children. Doing so will change their outlook on life and positively influence their academic performance (Lunenburg, 2011). SDP students'

achievements were compared with those of non-SDP students; the participants showed showing significant gains in academic achievement, behavior, school attendance, and general adjustment (Comer et al., 1988; Haynes & Comer, 1990). The SDP schools and district administrators offer an opportunity to the whole community to work together in finding solutions to the students' problems and needs. This approach can be described as *bottom-up* or *inside-out*.

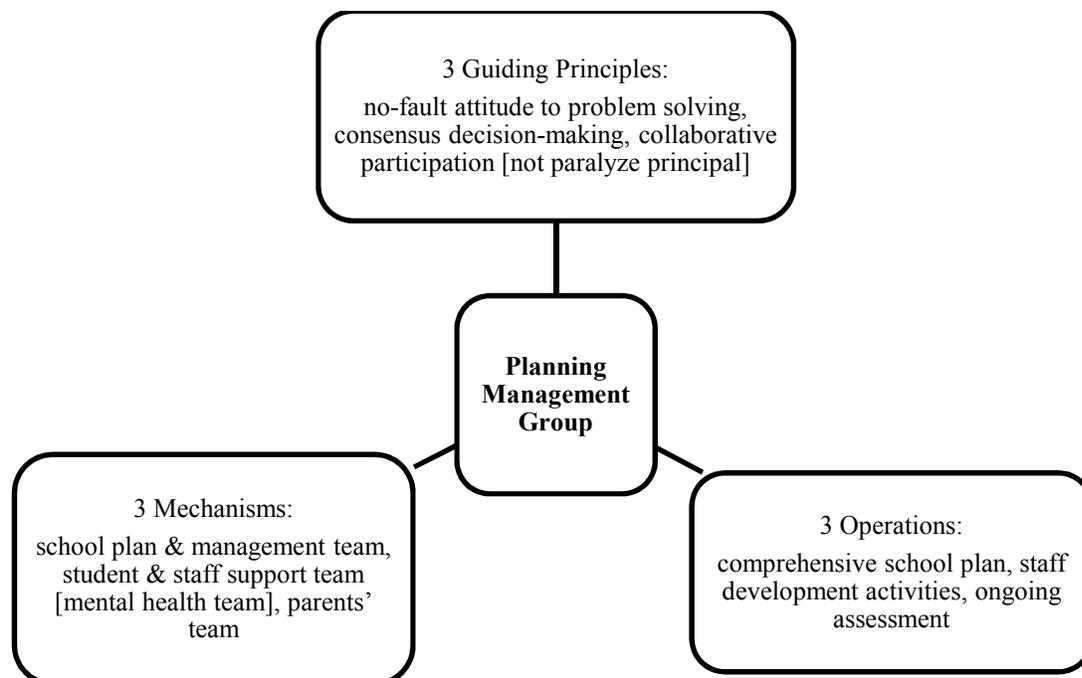


Figure 1. Nine components of the planning management group. Adapted from *Rallying the Whole Village: The Comer process for Reforming Education*, by J. P. Comer, N. M. Haynes, E. T. Joyner, & M. Ben-Avie, M. (Eds.), 1996, New York, NY: Teachers' College Press. Copyright 1996 by the authors.

Another instance of integrating school and community to benefit the whole child is the whole school, whole community, whole child (WSCC) approach. The WSCC makes use of the concept of collaboration among stakeholders—school, community, and child—but does not utilize the full spectrum of Comer's SDP approach (Lewallen, Hunt, Potts-Datema, Zaza, & Giles, 2015). The WSCC is the outcome of collaboration between school health and the Whole child approach in an effort to achieve the educational outcome of students who are “successful, learners who are knowledgeable, emotionally and physically healthy, civically active, artistically

engaged, prepared for economic self-sufficiency, and ready for adulthood” (p. 730). The WSCC puts the child in the center, emphasizing collaboration among the different stakeholders, policy, and practice for the benefit of the whole child. This model integrates health and nutrition with the educational and community aspects to offer a holistic approach to the child, educational staff, and the (Lewallen et al., 2015). It is important to note that this model includes the different stakeholders but does not offer them an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process; therefore, it is a top-down model.

**Theory of overlapping spheres.** Another approach that also puts the students’ success in the center is Epstein’s (2016) model of overlapping spheres. In attempting to discern where children learn, three spheres were identified: school, home, and community. Epstein and her coworkers identified six types of involvement when attempting to answer the questions, What is parent involvement and what constitute effective parent-school-community practices? The six types of involvement are as follows: (a) help parents understand child/adolescent development and effective parenting practices, (b) institute communication between school and parents about the programs offered and student success, (c) encourage volunteering of parents to support school activities, (d) promote a culture of learning at home by encouraging parent support with homework and extracurricular skills development, (e) allow and urge parents to participate in decision-making that could affect the child and school climate, and (f) work in partnership with the community by locating resources that could assist in addressing the needs of the child and create new experiences for the children. Let the children reciprocate by identifying opportunities where they can provide a service to the community.

When the activities in the three overlapping spheres of home, school, and community complement one another, the likely discord between the three spheres should be minimized,

which in turn will improve the quality of learning and of the child's life. This external theory of interrelating circles of influence rests on the degree of sharing among school, home, and community vis-à-vis the child's academic success. A complex internal set of relationships between the role players and spheres exists, functioning in a framework of six kinds of involvement. Schools utilizing this theory form an action team for partnerships (ATP) to develop a planning, implementing, and evaluation program in which school, family, and community join forces to benefit the child's learning and overall development (Epstein & Sheldon, 2016).

The No Child Left Behind act required school district administrators to involve parents in program development that would benefit all children to better succeed at school and to monitor school compliance (Epstein, Galindo, & Sheldon, 2011). Vygotsky proposed sociocultural learning theory in 1978, explaining how the social interaction between colleagues of groups influenced the whole organization. By working together, individuals and groups can change ideas and create a *community of practice* to facilitate goal attainment of the whole organization. When implementing the constructs of social learning theory in educational policy, the emphasis falls on pooled actions by district administrators and school staff to develop everyone's expertise. This approach leads to a bottom-up change in which everybody works toward changing the system instead of the usual top-down situation where directives go from the district to the schools (Epstein et al., 2011).

In a study to determine the function and effectiveness of districts in facilitating change at schools, Epstein et al. (2011) found that a bottom-up capacity building program rendered good results as it allowed everyone to grow together. Instead of the usual list of directives and monitoring for compliance function of the district, all the partners were working together under the district's facilitators who assisted the educational staff via problem-solving and capacity

building. Epstein et al. advised that districts should not monitor schools for compliance but rather focus on building relationships and partnerships with the schools to bring about change and compliance. This recommendation resonates with the LCAP approach where all stakeholders work together to find a solution to the identified problems and needs, taking joint responsibility for implementation as well as utilizing the available funding in a responsible manner.

### **Chapter Summary**

The adoption and implementation of LCFF and LCAP brought historic change to the traditional Californian school funding system. Due to the fact that it has only been in use for 4 years, there are some issues to be addressed. One such issue is the collaborative PPP that is a requirement of the new act. The stipulations of the law do not shed much light on exactly how the process is to be conducted and various districts interpreted the existing regulations differently. A gap in the regulations was identified, namely how the engagement process should be measured so that the public can hold the schools and districts accountable as required by law. The literature study brought to light that public participation is a growing concern in different organizations and activities. The IAP2 is an international organization that promotes, trains, and evaluates the principles of public participation and the execution thereof by practitioners. In this study, some of the documents developed by the IAP2 were used to guide the thoughts regarding this important factor. Public participation is going to be more important in the future, and from the various winners of the IAP2 annual competition there is evidence that excellent results emerge as a result of participatory involvement, which would otherwise not be the case. This exciting journey on which the LCAP is taking districts and stakeholders is perhaps not an easy one, but based on the literature, it appears to be one that will put California education in high standing in future.

### Chapter 3: Methodology

The LCAP's omission of a definition of the inclusive and transparent PPP is problematic in that it may lead to disproportionate inclusion of individual participants or stakeholder groups, resulting in dominating individual voices overpowering those vulnerable groups for whom the legislation was intended (Koppich et al., 2015). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative phenomenographic study was to examine conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open PPP among superintendents or his/her designee in San Bernardino County, a high poverty county in Southern California. For the purposes of this study, IAP2's Quality Assurance Standards, specifically the seven core values, served as the conceptual framework that defines the public engagement/participation planning process.

Four research questions provide guidance for this study:

- RQ1. How do local education agency leaders conceive the use of the IAP2's core values to define successful public stakeholder engagement for the LCAP in terms of inclusivity, fairness, and openness?
- RQ2. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local education agency leaders conceive can contribute to the *inclusiveness* of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?
- RQ3: What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local education agency leaders conceive can contribute to the *fairness* of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?
- RQ4. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local educational agency leaders conceive can contribute to the *openness* of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?

## Research Design and Rationale

This qualitative study utilizes the research design of phenomenography, which is a subset of phenomenology (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016). According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research involves the “collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study” (p. 44). Creswell further explained that both inductive and deductive data analysis methods are used in qualitative research for the purpose of identifying “patterns and themes” (p. 44) in the data.

The use of qualitative research in social sciences increased in the latter half of the 20th century, allowing researchers to seek a more in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). However, critics of qualitative research argue that the data is not statistically representative and generalizable to a population. A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate for this study that is focused on gaining an understanding of California school district superintendents’ or their designees’ conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open PPP for the LCAP.

Phenomenology is an approach focused on revealing a particular phenomenon through descriptions of people’s lived experiences of the phenomenon. However, the focus in phenomenography is on describing people’s varying conceptions of a particular phenomenon. An important distinction is that a phenomenographical approach does *not* focus on the phenomenon itself; rather the focus is on people’s conceptions about the phenomenon (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016). In other words, a researcher uses a phenomenographic approach in order to describe the different ways people understand a particular phenomenon (Marton, 1981).

In the case of this study, there was no need to reveal the phenomenon of inquiry through descriptions of people’s lived experience; the phenomenon is already known—an inclusive, fair,

and open PPP per the LCAP guidelines. However, this phenomenon is not well defined. Therefore, this study sought to determine if the IAP2 core values for public engagement/participation can provide the lacking definition and examine superintendents' or their designees' conceptions about the measures, guidelines, and techniques that can contribute to an inclusive, fair, and open PPP.

### **Researcher Positionality**

The researcher is a current educator and district administrator within San Bernardino County. As a district administrator, the researcher is one of various staff members who participate in the LCAP process and whose programs are financially dependent upon the results of the process. The researcher has participated in the LCAP process in multiple districts in San Bernardino County within the past 4 years. In addition, the researcher has attended various LCAP trainings hosted by the Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team (FCMAT), California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, and the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools.

### **Selection of Data Sources**

The target population for this study was superintendents or his/her designees of K-12 school districts within the geographical boundaries of San Bernardino County. San Bernardino County is comprised of 33 school districts, representing a mixture of elementary, high school, and unified K-12 districts. Geographically, San Bernardino County, the largest county in California, encompasses over 20,000 square miles with a population of 101.5 per square mile. According to 2015 U.S. Census data, 2,140,096 people reside in San Bernardino County, of which 26.9% are under the age of 18. The median household income is \$53,435, while the median value of an owner occupied home is \$236,700 with an average of 3.33 persons to a

household (U.S. Census, 2015). Of the population 25 or over, 78.6% have a high school education or higher and 19% have a bachelor's degree or higher. San Bernardino County's population is ethnically diverse, with 52.2% of the population identifying as Hispanic or Latino, 30% as White, 9.5% as African American, and 7.4% as Asian.

According to the California Department of Education's DataQuest records, San Bernardino County—the focus of this study—had a student enrollment of 408,948 in the 2015-2016 school year. Students attending K-12 public schools in San Bernardino County during 2015-2016 came from diverse ethnic groups of which the largest ethnic group of students who attended schools in San Bernardino County were Hispanic/Latino at 262,507 (64%), 10% higher than the state student enrollment, followed by White non-Hispanic at 75,156 (18%), 6.1% less than the state student enrollment, African American at 35,711 (8%), 2.19% higher than the state student enrollment, and Asian at 14,039 (3%), 5.85% lower than the state student enrollment. Of the 408,948 students enrolled in K-12 public schools in San Bernardino County during 2015-2016 77,324 (18%) were designated ELs, 4% lower than the state student enrollment; 288,935 (70.6%) were identified as LI, 11.7% higher than state student enrollment, and 6,756 (1.6%) were identified as enrolled in a foster care program, .6% higher than the state student enrollment.

The researcher utilized purposive sampling techniques to recruit K-12 superintendents or his/her designee within San Bernardino County who meet the eligibility requirements. Specifically, homogeneous sampling procedures were used. Homogeneous sampling is the selection of participants who are similar in experience, thus producing a narrow sample. In the case of this study, homogeneous sampling procedures narrowed the selection to up to 10 of the available 21 unified K-12 superintendents or his/her designee, eliminating high school district and elementary district superintendents. Furthermore, the researcher engaged in criterion

sampling, wherein the researcher selected participants who met specific eligibility criteria (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). Participants for this study were purposefully selected based on the following eligibility criteria:

1. K-12 public school superintendents or his/her designee who are currently employed within San Bernardino County and listed on the CDE website;
2. Superintendents or his/her designee should have at least 2 consecutive years' experience and have experienced an entire cycle of the LCAP process; and
3. Only superintendents or his/her designee who agreed to audio recordings of the interview process were included in the study.

For qualitative studies, it is important to ensure that the sample size is not too small in order to avoid difficulty in achieving data saturation. Moreover, the sample should not be too large because analysis becomes cumbersome (Mason, 2010). Creswell (2013) suggested that the appropriate sample size for a phenomenological/phenomenographical study in order to achieve data saturation ranges from 3 to 10 participants.

### **Data Collection Instrument and Procedures**

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with study participants. When conducting semi-structured interviews, the researcher posed the same set of open-ended questions to all participants. Additionally, the researcher used a variety of probes to guide each interview, ensuring that thick, rich data recollected for the purpose of answering the study's research questions (Bernard, Wutich, & Ryan, 2017). This approach allowed the researcher to obtain reasonably standard data across all study participants while allowing the flexibility needed to further inquire or seek clarification in answers (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

**Instrumentation.** The study's data collection instrument was an interview guide. The interview guide included 13 questions developed for the purpose of answering the study's research questions. The development of the 13 interview questions was guided by the study's conceptual framework, the core values of the IAP2 Quality Assurance Standards, and the literature specific to stakeholder theory and the LCFF and LCAP guidelines for inclusivity, fairness, and openness in the public engagement/participation planning process. Table 5 shows the relationships among the study research questions, interview questions, and supporting literature.

**Issues of validity and reliability.** Creswell and Miller (2000) defined validity as how accurately the participant's response represents their realities of the phenomenon. Creswell and Miller uses validity to refer not to the data but the inferences drawn from the data. The validity of the information that has been gathered is vital to the entire process, misinterpreted and incorrect data had the potential to undermine the research.

Creswell and Miller (2000) identified key procedures for establishing validity in qualitative studies. Some of the most common procedures include member checking; triangulation; thick, rich description; peer debriefing; and external audits. This study relied upon peer debriefing to ensure validity. By using peer debriefing the researcher can enhance the accuracy of the research by having a peer provide an external check of the research process (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). The peer debriefing process took place throughout the study, wherein the researcher and the peer engaged in multiple peer debriefing sessions. During the peer debriefing process the peer asked hard questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations, with the goal of ensuring the account was accurate and would resonate with the audience (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Table 5

*Relationships Between Research Questions, Interview Questions, and Literature*

Research Questions	Interview Questions	Literature
RQ1. How do local education agency leaders conceive the use of the IAP2’s core values to define successful public stakeholder engagement for the LCAP in terms of inclusivity, fairness, and openness?	<p>IQ.1. The LCAP requires that school districts engage local stakeholders in facilitating a public planning process that is inclusive, fair, and open. These stakeholders have been generally identified as teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, local bargaining units of the school district, parents, sponsors, voluntary service providers, students, and others who are likely to be affected by decisions. Yet definitions are lacking for what denotes successful stakeholder engagement in terms of inclusiveness, fairness, and openness. Based on the handout I sent you that provides an overview of the IAP2’s seven core values, what do you think about the use of these core values for defining successful stakeholder engagement as pertaining to the LCAP?</p> <p>Probe: Do the core values apply to community stakeholders who should be engaged in the LCAP public planning process? If not, which core values do not apply and why?</p> <p>Probe: Of the core values that do not apply to LCAP stakeholders, are there changes that could be made to make them applicable? If so, what changes come to mind for you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affeldt (2015)</li> <li>▪ California Education Code 52060</li> <li>▪ CCSESA (2014)</li> <li>▪ Consult Australia (2015)</li> <li>▪ Fuller &amp; Tobben (2014)</li> <li>▪ Gelsomini &amp; Ishida (2014)</li> <li>▪ Harrison et al. (2015)</li> <li>▪ International Association for Public Participation (2015, n.d.a)</li> <li>▪ Jones &amp; Wicks (1999)</li> <li>▪ Knudson (2014)</li> <li>▪ Menefee-Libby &amp; Kerchner (2015)</li> <li>▪ Miles &amp; Feinberg (2014)</li> <li>▪ Taylor (2013)</li> <li>▪ Waner (2016)</li> </ul>
RQ2. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local education agency leaders conceive can contribute to the <i>inclusiveness</i> of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?	<p>The IAP2 core values specific to <i>inclusiveness</i> state the following about public engagement/participation: (a) those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process, (b) professional practitioners/leaders should seek out the engagement/participation of those who are potentially affected by or interested in a decision, and (c) the contributions of those who are affected should influence the decisions made. Based on these three core values of inclusiveness:</p> <p>IQ.2. What measures do you think could be effective for determining the inclusiveness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?</p> <p>IQ.3. What guidelines do you think could be effective for determining whether the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process is inclusive?</p> <p>IQ.4. Can you think of specific techniques that could hinder inclusiveness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.</p> <p>IQ.5. Can you think of specific techniques that could facilitate greater inclusiveness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affeldt (2015)</li> <li>▪ Consult Australia (2015)</li> <li>▪ Gelsomini &amp; Ishida (2014)</li> <li>▪ International Association for Public Participation (2015): Core Values #1, #2, and #4</li> <li>▪ International Association for Public Participation (n.d.a)</li> <li>▪ Knudson (2014)</li> </ul>

(continued)

Research Questions	Interview Questions	Literature
RQ3. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local education agency leaders conceive can contribute to the <i>fairness</i> of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?	<p>The ICAP2 core values specific to <i>fairness</i> state the following about public engagement/participation: (a) recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all stakeholders promotes sustainable decisions, (b) professional practitioners/leaders should facilitate the engagement/participation of those who are potentially affected by or interested in a decision, and (c) professional practitioners/leaders should seek stakeholders input about how they would like to be engaged/participate.</p> <p>IQ.6. What measures do you think could be effective for ensuring fairness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?</p> <p>IQ.7. What guidelines do you think could be effective for ensuring that the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process is designed with fairness in mind?</p> <p>IQ.8. Can you think of specific techniques that could hinder fairness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.</p> <p>IQ.9. Can you think of specific techniques that could facilitate fairness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consult Australia (2015)</li> <li>▪ Gelsomini &amp; Ishida (2014)</li> <li>▪ International Association for Public Participation (2015): Core Values #3, #4 and #5</li> <li>▪ International Association for Public Participation (n.d.a)</li> <li>▪ Knudson (2014)</li> </ul>
RQ4. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local educational agency leaders conceive can contribute to the <i>openness</i> of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?	<p>The ICAP2 core values specific to <i>openness</i> state the following about public engagement/participation: (a) stakeholders should be provided the information they need to participate in a meaningful way, and (b) professional practitioners/leaders should communicate to engaged/participating stakeholders how their input affected decisions.</p> <p>IQ.10. What measures do you think could be effective for ensuring openness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?</p> <p>IQ.11. What guidelines do you think could be effective for ensuring that the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process is designed with openness in mind?</p> <p>IQ.12. Can you think of specific techniques that could hinder openness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.</p> <p>IQ.13. Can you think of specific techniques that could facilitate openness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consult Australia (2015)</li> <li>▪ Gelsomini &amp; Ishida (2014)</li> <li>▪ International Association for Public Participation (2015): Core Values #6 and #7</li> <li>▪ International Association for Public Participation (n.d.a)</li> <li>▪ Knudson (2014)</li> </ul>

Regarding the validity and reliability of the data collection instrument, the researcher recruited a subject matter expert (SME) panel of three public education administrators to review the interview guide. All members of the SME panel are directly engaged in the LCAP PPP. Panel members provided professional insight as to how the interview questions could be modified or enhanced to better capture the superintendents' or their designees' conceptions about measures, guidelines, and techniques for ensuring an inclusive, fair, and open LCAP PPP. Vetting by the

panel assisted in ensuring that each interview question was clear and focused on addressing the study's research questions. With respect to the instrument guide, the expert panel determined the number of questions did not need to be reduced. Furthermore, the SME panel vetting assisted in ensuring the content validity/reliability of the interview questions. Once the expert panel validated the interview guide, the researcher piloted the interview to determine time parameters.

**Data gathering procedures.** The interviews were conducted at the school districts of the participating superintendents. Although the specific location of the interview varied by district, all interviews took place in a quiet and private setting such as the superintendent's office or conference room. However, it was not possible to meet two participants face-to-face within the given timeframe, thus these interviews were conducted and recorded over the phone. All school districts represented by the superintendents within the study were located geographically in San Bernardino County.

Data collection did not begin until the researcher obtained approval to conduct the study from the Pepperdine University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Once IRB approval was obtained, the researcher created a database of email, phone number, and district address contact information for all K-12 superintendents in San Bernardino County. Next, the researcher contacted a district superintendent within the region who has no administrative authority over the district superintendents and is not an interviewee participant in this study and requested that he email superintendents with information about the study.

One day after the superintendent emailed potential participants, the researcher emailed a study introduction letter, informed consent form, and background of the study to each of the superintendents. The body of the email, Appendix 63, contained and served as the introduction letter, introducing the researcher, the study, the nature of participation in the study. Attached to

the introductory email was an informed consent form, background of the study, eligibility requirements, and an invitation to participate in the study. There was a SignUpGenius link in the email allowing superintendents who confirm eligibility requirements and choose to participate in the study to pick an interview day and time as well as identify the location of the interview. The link took superintendents or his/her designee to an online scheduling page that displayed available interview days and times, with the first opportunity starting 5 days after the initial email. Once a participant choose a day and time, it no longer showed as available to other participants. Only the researcher had access to view who has signed up on the online scheduling page. Participant who were unable to access the online scheduling page, were provided an alternative method for responding. All superintendents or his/her designee were requested to indicate acceptance or denial of the invitation to participate in the study within 20 days of the original email invitation. The researcher sent an email to superintendents or his/her designee who accepted or declined the invitation confirming their choice. For those who choose to participate, the researcher confirmed the day, time, and location of the interview.

Follow-up participant recruitment began within 7 days from the researcher's initial email. The researcher sent a reminder email to all participants who had yet to respond. The email restated all information from the initial invitation and reminded potential participants of the response window. Within 14 days from the researcher's initial invitation, the researcher called superintendents who had yet to respond to verbally invite them to participate in the study; the phone call was followed by an email of the initial invitation. Recruitment efforts continued until the target of up to 10 superintendents was achieved. Superintendents or his/her designee who agreed to participate choose a location and scheduled a day and time to interview as available in the SignUpGenius link. The interview window began 5 days from the initial email invitation and

was extended for 30 days. There was no need to extend the 30 day window for participants as 9 interviews were conducted within the first 30 days.

Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher emailed the participants the interview guide and a brief overview of the IAP2 core values upon which the interview questions are based. The interviews were conducted in a comfortable setting of the participants' choice so they can freely provide their opinions and ideas regarding the phenomenon. All interviews were recorded with the consent of the participant in order to facilitate easy transcription. All participants who provide verbal consent to be audio recorded were included in the study. During each interview, the researcher maintained a field journal of reflective notes about the experience. These field notes facilitated a better understanding of the participants' perspectives and enabled better interpretations of their behaviors and beliefs (Janesick, 2011). Patton (1990) emphasized that it is important to record detailed and reflective notes to perform the analysis as accurately as possible.

Because the interview questions were not personally invasive, a debriefing process was not needed. The researcher thanked the participants for their time and openness, then verified the email address to which the participant would like the results of the study to be emailed if he/she chooses to receive the results of the study. The interview audio recordings were transcribed professionally and reviewed by the researcher in preparation for data analysis.

**Data management.** The researcher informed participants of human subjects' protections, particularly steps to ensure confidentiality, by providing them with a Pepperdine University IRB approved informed consent form. Participants were informed the interview session would be audio recorded to ensure accuracy during transcription. Participants were asked to refrain from using identifiable information such as names in their answers. However, any personally

identifiable information such as school or district names that were revealed during the interview, were removed from the transcripts. Participants were notified that any identifying information would be concealed and only the researcher and the dissertation chair had access to raw data. Research data is stored on the researcher's personal computer in password-protected files. All field notes and sensitive material will be kept in locked storage at the researcher's home office for 5 years. After 5 years, the researcher will shred hard copies and delete electronic files storing information collected in the study.

### **Data Analysis**

To answer the study's guiding research questions, the researcher gathered data from interviews of 9 K-12 superintendents in San Bernardino County. The interviews were transcribed into written documents. The transcribed data was analyzed using coding and thematic analysis techniques.

**Qualitative data.** Participants were asked 13 semi-structured open-ended questions in a face-to-face or virtual interview. The questions were qualitative in nature and developed to obtain data relative to LEA leaders' conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open LCAP PPP. The researcher engaged in procedural fidelity through investigator triangulation by using experienced coders in the coding process. Data was analyzed for similarities and differences using coding and thematic categorizing techniques (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). Data was then reported using tables accompanied by a supportive narrative. The following eight steps were followed when analyzing the data:

1. The interview audio recordings were checked for confidentiality and de-identified when necessary. After an interview had been conducted the interview audio recordings were transcribed.

2. Once the audio recordings from the interviews were transcribed, the researcher re-listened to the audio recordings and read the interview transcriptions for accuracy, making any necessary changes.
3. The analysis process was aided by the use of qualitative data analysis (QDA) software, specific NVivo, which is typically used to store large quantities of data in qualitative studies to enable researchers to perform a systematical analysis (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). The researcher uploaded the interview transcriptions into the QDA software for analysis.
4. The data was categorized by developing a coding scheme. In the interpretation of the interview responses, each transcript was coded as a whole, not on a per-question basis, to create categories to group relevant information by topic. The coded data was grouped into similar ideas, phrases or appropriate information on the topic to form themes (Bernard et al., 2017). The researcher collaborated with an experienced coder to create a codebook containing category codes, thematic codes, and memos using both data and theory.
5. The codebook was reviewed by a peer who is experienced in both the content knowledge and qualitative data coding.
6. The researcher engaged the services of an experienced qualitative data coder to code the open-ended question responses using the same coding procedures as the researcher. If there was a discrepancies between the work of the experienced coder and the researcher it would have been resolved through discussions with the experienced coder and, if necessary, the counsel of the dissertation chair.
7. The researcher developed a description for each theme.

8. The researcher compared the study results to findings in the existing literature regarding conducting inclusive, fair, and open public stakeholder engagement. This comparison helped the researcher establish theoretical, practical, and future implications, which is described in Chapter 5.

### **Institutional Review Board Human Subject Considerations**

The researcher submitted the research proposal to Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional School Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB) for review and approval prior to conducting research. The education research met both the categorical and minimal risk required to be considered an exempt study. The researcher followed all policies and protocols set forth by Pepperdine's University's GPS IRB in adherence with federal regulations 45 CFR 46.102, Protection of Human Subjects 2009.

Since the California K-12 public school superintendents' contact information is made available publically on the CDE website and individual district websites, no permission was needed to contact the superintendents within San Bernardino County. In order to inform participants of all regulatory elements, the researcher provided each potential participant a GPS IRB approved informed consent form. Informed consent forms are not legally binding; instead, they serve as a record of what has been communicated to a prospective subject and are required in studies wherein conversations are recorded (Pepperdine University, n.d.). The informed consent form is included in this proposal as Appendix G. The informed consent form includes the nature of the study, description of participation, researcher contact information, and a statement detailing confidentiality. Participants were informed that the interview session would be audio recorded to ensure accuracy during transcription (Bernard et al., 2017). However, it was ensured that any identifiable information regarding the participants would remain confidential

throughout the study. The informed consent form also made participants knowledgeable about their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence and/or loss on their part. Furthermore, eligible participants were informed that the current study may be published in a peer-reviewed and nationally recognized journal.

All participant identification as well as the interview recordings were kept confidential. Eligible participants were assured that partaking in the current study as an interviewee does not pose any foreseeable risks on their part. According to Pepperdine's GPS IRB guidelines, participants were notified of the voluntary nature of the study and made aware that they may withdraw from the study or refrain from answering questions should they wish to without any adverse consequences. Participants were also informed that their identities would be concealed and that pseudonyms would be used for any direct reference. Furthermore, the data collected was kept confidential and safely stored on a password-protected computer and will be deleted permanently after the prescribed period of 5 years. Participants were informed that they may request the results of the study; if they choose this option, results of the study would be emailed to them. The researcher took all measures to ensure that the data collected during the interview process was and would continue to be kept confidential. However, participants were made aware that the researcher cannot guarantee confidentiality. To make sure that participant identification is not disclosed, strict confidentiality was maintained throughout the study. In an effort to ensure participants were not disclosed to the public, participants were cautioned not to share information outside the data collection setting (CITI Program, n.d.). To protect the participants' confidentiality, all the documents containing data gathered, both physical and electronic, are secured under a personal identification number (PIN) or password protection. Assuring

participants of their confidentiality encouraged participants to be honest when responding to interview questions (Merriam, 2009).

During the course of the interview audio recording, participants were asked to refrain from providing any personal information such as city or district name or other pertinent details that could be used to identify and locate them. All data and documentation that was used for the study will be retained and kept for 5 years from the date the study is approved after submittal. All data and information collected will be deleted or shredded should a particular participant requests that their interview responses be removed from the study during or after the completion of the study. In order to ensure the confidentiality of participants, only aggregate and verbatim responses that have no information about respondent identity were reported in the study.

Conducting face-to-face interviews was the main data collection procedure used for the study. However, two interviews were conducted and recorded over the telephone in order to meet the schedule demands of the two Superintendents. According to CITI, interviews are considered to involve minimal risk. Pepperdine University's (n.d.) GPS IRB states, "Minimal risk is defined by the federal regulations as the probability and magnitude of physical or psychological harm that is normally encountered in the daily lives, or in the routine medical, dental, or psychological examination of healthy persons" (p. 1). The study required participants to engage in an approximate 45-minute semi-structured interview. The informed consent form described and identified all anticipated risks during the course of the study.

One possible risk was fatigue related to the extra task of being interviewed. The interview was targeted to 45 minutes with an anticipated completion time of 60 minutes. Superintendents or his/her designee were also able to pick a date and time within a given frame for their convenience. If fatigue occurred, participants would have had the options of taking a break and

continuing with the interview or discontinuing participation without repercussion. Another potential risk may have been the sensitivity experienced by the superintendents or his/her designee who felt that the way they conduct the PPP was less than what they desired for themselves. The researcher maintained a peaceful atmosphere during the interviews and used authentic verbal and body language to encourage truthful and detailed responses from the participants. Moreover, the interviewer gave the interviewee an opportunity to add further comments once the interview was completed (Janesick, 2011).

Semi-structured questions were developed to ensure that interviews would generate answers that are aligned with the research questions posed in this study (see Appendix A). Semi-structured questions are open-ended questions that do not have any pre-defined answer options, and the respondents provided their own responses (Bynner & Stribley, 2010). Participants were notified of the nature of the study before they consented to participate. No compensation of any kind was offered to participants.

When potential participants responded on the posted invitation via email expressing interest in participating in the study, their name, email, and contact number together with the interview booking was noted. Screening details to determine their eligibility as a participant were entered on the invitation to participate. Within 2 weeks after the preliminary booking of an interview slot, the researcher emailed and called the participant to confirm participation, eligibility, interview day, time, and venue. The confirmation email included an attachment of the informed consent form with a brief description of the study, purpose, data collection procedures, the role of the participants, and confirmation of the interview date, time and venue. The informed consent form ensured the participants was aware of the conditions during the data collection.

## **Chapter 4: Results**

This chapter presents the findings of this research study. The chapter begins by restating the purpose, research question, and the study design, including individual conceptions of nine K-12 superintendents and one K-12 superintendent designee from within San Bernardino County. The discussion of the findings will be organized by a review of each of the 13 interview questions and the subthemes identified from the interviewees' responses to the respective questions. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key themes that emerged from these subthemes.

### **Restatement of the Purpose**

California Education Code 35035 designates school district superintendents as responsible for the preparation, submission, and implementation of the LCAP. The superintendent is ultimately responsible for the LCAP planning process and is charged with ensuring that it is conducted in an inclusive, fair, and open manner. Upon the recommendation of the superintendent, each school district board can designate a superintendent designee. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenographic study was to examine conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open LCAP PPP among superintendents in San Bernardino County, a high poverty county in Southern California. For the purposes of this study, the IAP2's Quality Assurance Standards, specifically the seven core values, served as the conceptual framework that defines the public engagement/participation planning process.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions provided guidance for this study:

- RQ1. How do local education agency leaders conceive the use of the IAP2's core values to define successful public stakeholder engagement for the LCAP in terms of inclusivity, fairness, and openness?
- RQ2. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local education agency leaders conceive can contribute to the inclusiveness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?
- RQ3. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local education agency leaders conceive can contribute to the fairness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?
- RQ4. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local educational agency leaders conceive can contribute to the openness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?

### **Research Design**

This qualitative study utilized the research design of phenomenography, which is a subset of phenomenology (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016). According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research involves the “collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study” (p. 44). Creswell further explained that both inductive and deductive data analysis methods are used in qualitative research for the purpose of identifying “patterns and themes” (p. 44) in the data.

The use of qualitative research in social sciences increased in the latter half of the 20th century, allowing researchers to seek a more in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). However, critics of qualitative research argue that the data are not statistically representative and generalizable to a population. A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate

for this study as it focused on gaining an understanding of California school district superintendents' or their designees' conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open PPP for the LCAP.

Phenomenology is an approach focused on revealing a particular phenomenon through descriptions of people's lived experiences of the phenomenon. However, the focus in phenomenography is on describing people's varying conceptions of a particular phenomenon. An important distinction is that a phenomenographical approach does not focus on the phenomenon itself; rather the focus is on people's conceptions about the phenomenon (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016). In other words, a researcher uses a phenomenographic approach in order to describe the different ways people understand a particular phenomenon (Marton, 1981).

In the case of this study, there was no need to reveal the phenomenon of inquiry through descriptions of people's lived experience; the phenomenon was already known—an inclusive, fair, and open PPP per the LCAP guidelines. However, this phenomenon was not well defined. Therefore, this study aimed to determine if the IAP2 core values for public engagement/participation can provide the lacking definition and examine superintendents' or their designee conceptions about the measures, guidelines, and techniques that can contribute to an inclusive, fair, and open PPP.

### **The Interviews**

The researcher interviewed nine K-12 superintendents and one K-12 superintendent designee from within San Bernardino County. The superintendents were asked 13 semi-structured, open-ended questions in a face-to-face or virtual interview. The 13 questions were designed to provide an answer to the four guiding questions of this phenomenographic study. Of the 10 interviews, eight were conducted face-to-face and two were conducted over the phone.

The questions were qualitative in nature and developed to obtain data relative to LEA leaders' conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open LCAP PPP. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed.

The researcher engaged in procedural fidelity through investigator triangulation by using experienced coders during the coding process. The researcher collaborated with an experienced coder to create a codebook containing category codes, thematic codes, and memos using both data and theory. The codebook was peer-reviewed to assure reliable and accurate data interpretation. These codes were grouped by concepts that described the conceptions of the K-12 superintendents and or their designees. During the second phase of analysis, the researcher and experienced coder applied axial coding to the existing codebook and re-coded when necessary. Six key themes emerged from the study. Table 6 provides a list of the six themes selected as pertaining to the measures, guidelines, and techniques that LEA leaders believe can contribute to the inclusiveness, fairness, and openness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process. 40 subthemes were derived from the interviewees these subthemes were then categorized in to 20 categories taking into consideration the literature presented in Chapter 2 and further condensed in to the six key themes.

Of the 13 interview questions, four were specific to the measures, guidelines, and techniques of inclusiveness; four were specific to the measures, guidelines, and techniques of fairness; four were specific to the measures, guidelines, and techniques of openness; and one question addressed the use of IAP2's seven core values for defining successful stakeholder engagement pertaining to the LCAP. The findings of the interviews will be organized utilizing the 13 interview questions. Table 7 provides an overview of the interview findings of which the subthemes will be reviewed in greater detail in the following section. The last question

pertaining to IAP2 was analyzed for general agreement or disagreement; thematic coding was not used for the responses to this question. Because the interviewees remained anonymous, their quotes will be identified by interviewee number; for example, a quote from the first superintendent interviewed will be identified as I1, a quote from the second interviewee will be identified as I2; this method will be repeated to identify quotes from all 10 interviewees.

Table 6

*Themes Pertaining to the Measures, Guidelines, and Techniques for Inclusiveness, Fairness, and Openness*

Themes	Categories	Subthemes
Authentic Participation	Diversity	Checking attendance diversity, Diversity in attendance, Engaging the same people every time, Ensuring stakeholders' diversity, Ensuring attendees contribute, Restricting participation
	Attendees Participation	
Communication	Instructions	Capture each stakeholder's voice, Clarity in communication, Collecting feedback, Conducting Comprehensive surveys, Continual assessment, Continuous and clear Communication, Ignoring stakeholders' input, Informing stakeholders of progress, Open-ended communication, Poor communication, Sharing outcome with stakeholders, Standardizing, Use of unclear language
	Clarity	
	Assess	
	Questions	
Equity	Integrity	Equal Access, Lack of equity, Individual needs
	Equal	
	Fair	
Facilitation	Access	More than one avenue for engagement and feedback, Setting expectations, Not going to the stakeholders, Inconvenient meeting times and locations, Climate, Multiple venues, Facilitator, Poor facilitation
	Environment	
	Comfort	
	Tone	
	Norms	
Local Control Trust	Organizing	Customizing Fostering Trust with Stakeholders, Student Achievement, Independent oversight, Compliance document, Continuous trust development, Make it the norm, Transparency in data, Receive Data, Lay a foundation, Not sharing all data
	Customization	
	Honesty	
	Transparency	
	Expectations	

Table 7

*Interview Findings by Component, Theme, and Subtheme*

Components	Themes	Subthemes
Inclusiveness	Authentic Participation Communication Facilitation Local Control Trust	Checking attendance diversity
		Climate
		Collecting feedback
		Compliance document
		Conducting Comprehensive Surveys
		Continuous trust development
		Customizing
		Diversity in attendance
		Engaging the same people every time
		Ensuring attendees contribute
		Facilitator
		Inconvenient meeting times and locations
		Independent oversight
		Make it the norm
		Multiple venues
Fairness	Authentic Participation Communication Equity Facilitation Local Control Trust	Not going to the stakeholders
		Poor communication
		Setting expectations
		Student Achievement
		Capture each stakeholder's voice
		Continual assessment
		Collecting Feedback
		Customizing
		Ensuring stakeholders' diversity
		Equal Access
		Facilitator
		Individual Needs
		Lack of equity
		Poor communication
		Poor facilitation
Openness	Communication Facilitation Trust	Restricting participation
		Standardizing
		Clarity in communication
		Collecting Feedback
		Continuous and clear Communication
		Fostering Trust with Stakeholders
		Ignoring Stakeholders' Input
		Informing stakeholders of progress
		Lay a foundation
		More than One Avenue for Engagement and Feedback
		Not Sharing All Data
		Open-ended communication
		Receive Data
		Sharing Outcome with Stakeholders
		Transparency in data
Use of Unclear Language		

## Summary of Interview Findings

**Inclusiveness.** Over the course of the 10 interviews, 20 subthemes were identified from the interviewees' responses, of which five themes emerged pertaining to the measures, guidelines, and techniques LEA leaders believe can contribute to the inclusiveness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process. These themes include: authentic participation, trust, facilitation, local control, and communication. A summary of the five themes will be addressed at the conclusion of Chapter 4; this section will discuss the 20 identified subthemes.

*What measures do you think could be effective for determining the inclusiveness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?* The analysis of the data is organized into three subthemes: (a) checking attendance diversity, (b) ensuring attendees contribute, and (c) student achievement. Figure 2 demonstrates the number of interviewees who commented about the various subthemes related to measures to determine inclusiveness.

*Checking attendance diversity.* The diversity of those who attend the meetings is a measure of inclusiveness. This means all stakeholder groups are to be included, even “the students themselves, since they are the ones affected by the decisions made” (I3). In addition to students, the interviewees collectively look for participation from parents, staff, community organizations, service organizations, local government, faith based organizations, and district and site committees, such as the English learning advisory committee (ELAC), distance learning advisory committee (DLAC), and the school site council. The LEA should be checking attendance diversity “while asking, ‘Who else should be here?’” (I1)? Assessing who is participating and who is not helps in terms of actions to be taken to improve inclusive engagement among stakeholders. Participants differed in their identification of how many people

should or do attend LCAP meetings but agreed it is important to have representation from all groups in order to ensure all voices are present during the discussions and planning.

*Ensuring attendees contribute.* Making sure every person that attends the LCAP meetings is given a chance to give their opinion emerged as one of the measures to ensure inclusiveness. LCAP meeting attendance can be large, but that does not necessarily translate to inclusiveness if the attendees do not contribute to the agenda in discussion. As one interviewee stated,

I'm not sure you can work on pure numbers of people but more quality of the input, you can have a meeting of four hundred folks but if their voices aren't being heard and we're not sitting down and listening I'm not sure that's the most effective measure of inclusiveness. (I8)

Understanding that the stakeholder groups have diverse needs, wants, and levels of comfort necessitates providing “multiple ways to engage the community with multiple avenues for stakeholders to contribute” (I7). These avenues need to be assessed to determine relevance and success, and “stakeholders need to be asked, ‘How do you want to participate’” (I10)?

*Student achievement.* How students perform in school and even later on in careers was also mentioned as a measure that can be used to determine inclusiveness. The LCFF 8 state indicator results published on the Dashboard for districts, sites, and subgroups can potentially be used as a measure to determine inclusiveness. For example,

How successful our kids are in college career readiness component might be one indicator very important for our communities. And so if that is established, then monitoring that, then in my opinion is one way to maybe a little bit more indirectly determine how effective our stakeholder engagement is. (I3)

Looking at the outcomes of the whole process will determine whether there was openness or not,

Again the dashboard and all the other long-term outcomes that we're trying to achieve would be measures of inclusiveness because I think the research is very clear that if we have you know openness, inclusiveness and fairness with our stakeholders that the research shows that students will achieve more. (I3)

However, one interviewee cautioned that student success data are often 2 years behind and generally not tracked after high school, and therefore may be a poor indication of inclusiveness in stakeholder engagement.

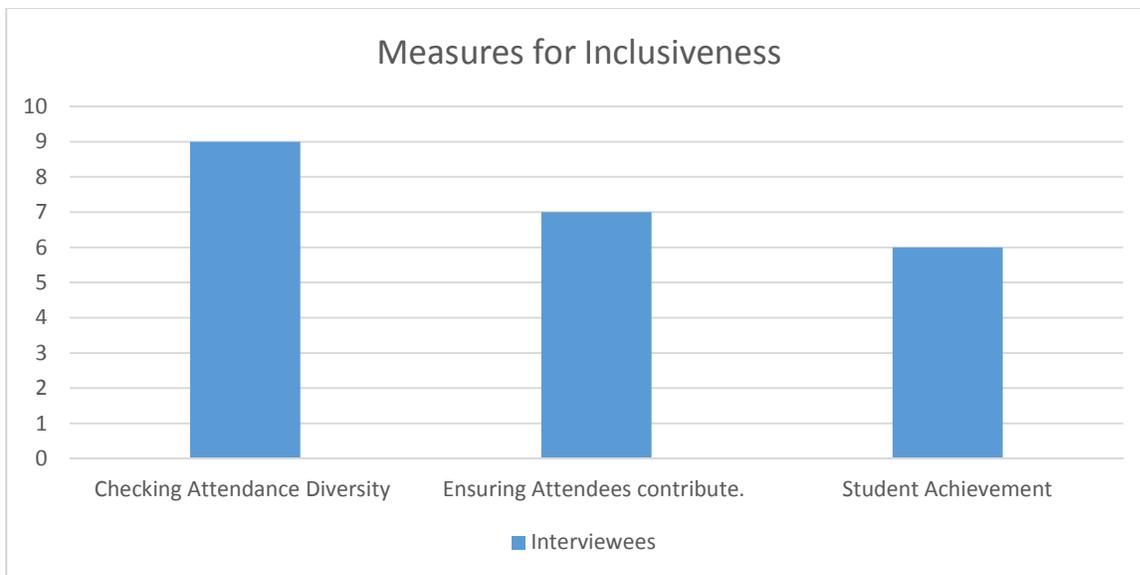


Figure 2. Number of interviewees who commented about the various subthemes related to measures to determine inclusiveness.

***What guidelines do you think could be effective for determining the inclusiveness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?*** The data analysis is organized into six subthemes: (a) customizing, (b) diversity in attendance, (c) collecting feedback, (d) climate, (e) setting expectations, and (f) independent oversight. Figure 3 demonstrates the number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to guidelines to determine inclusiveness.

*Customizing.* For the process to be effective, everything has to be customized to fit the relevant district since each district is different; “The same guideline that would work for a large district or a small district would look very different as well as rural to urban” (I1). Developing guidelines at a local level for inclusiveness is critical. As one interviewee stated, “For me here making sure that meetings and documents are bilingual would be a key component of inclusiveness but that may not be true 10 miles down the road” (I6).

*Diversity in attendance.* Different groups of people should be involved in the process, even those who may not be affected directly by the outcome. This should include people like the community leaders who might give a different perspective. As one interviewee recommended, “Include people in the community; different community leaders and things like that. So that even though someone may not have a student at the school, they’re still part of the process and planning” (I5). In order for the LCAP to be organic, the district needs to embrace meaningful inclusive engagement that involves “the loud and angry naysayers as much as those who support district initiatives and are happy with the current efforts” (I8).

*Collecting feedback.* Obtaining feedback on the engagement process from the stakeholders was one of the mentioned guidelines to ensure inclusiveness. As one interviewee stated, “It is imperative that we are assessing the stakeholders to find out how they want to be engaged, what we can do to make the process meaningful, easier or even just more comfortable for them” (I10). This means following up with the stakeholders and finding out what they thought about the process and what they think can be done to improve it. In addition, ask stakeholders about meeting or survey logistics, as well as if they feel heard in the respective forum or if they think their voice mattered to the process. This can be done in various ways; one example is through surveys; “Perhaps they get a follow-up survey or phone call, where they

would be able to tell if they felt like they were included or if it was meaningful or worth their time” (I8).

*Setting expectations.* The goals and objectives of the LCAP meetings, surveys, or other means of engagement need to be identified and communicated to the stakeholders. “The district should create and communicate a clear set of objectives for the meetings so people understand the purpose and function of what they’re doing” (I9).

*Independent oversight.* Having a committee that is independent of the individuals directly responsible for the stakeholder engagement component of the LCAP allows for objective and neutral analysis of the engagement process. As one interviewee noted, “Having perhaps an independent subcommittee, or a committee, that will then kind of give feedback on how the district’s LCAP committee is carrying out its expectations” will help ensure the process is not driven by “a personal agenda” (I8).

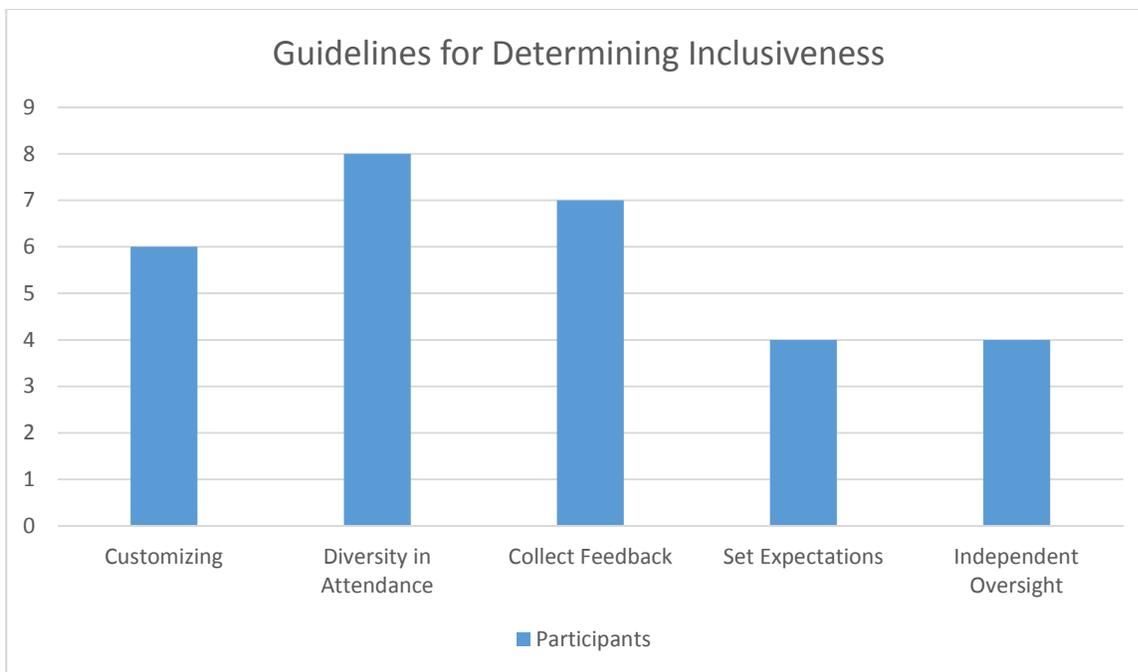


Figure 3. Number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to guidelines to determine inclusiveness.

***Can you think of specific techniques that could hinder inclusiveness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?*** The analysis of the data is organized into six subthemes: (a) engaging the same people every time, (b) not going to the stakeholders, (c) inconvenient meeting times and locations, (d) climate, (e) poor communication, and (f) compliance document. Figure 4 demonstrates the number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques hindering inclusiveness.

*Engaging the same people every time.* Too often districts tend to see the same faces at the LCAP meetings. This could be the people willing to put aside some time and come in for meetings, or it could be due to district design by seeking out the ELAC, DLAC, and school site council representatives. However,

If you focus just on those voices then what are you not hearing from the other parents or other community members, so I think that a potential trap is to rely on the folks that you know are willing to participate. (I8)

Balancing the stakeholders groups is also important when it comes to inclusiveness. If one group has a higher number than other groups, then the conversation becomes biased and unrepresentative. One interviewee stated, “lack of parent empathy at some of these meetings, meaning that there are more educators than there are parents” (I9). The converse is true as well. As one interviewee shared, “If we’re only meeting with parents then that’s not inclusive, so we have to be very broad in our approach” (I9).

*Not going to the stakeholders.* Holding meetings at the same and or central location prevents engagement from stakeholders who may not have the resources to travel, or are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with the location. LCAP stakeholder engagement can take place in various venues and events such as “other gatherings in the community, engaging them in other

arenas” (I9). As one interviewee remarked, “If you didn’t go to where you can find the people, I think that could hinder [participation]” (I4).

*Inconvenient meeting times and locations.* Some people are not going to be able to attend at the set dates and locations but are willing to participate in the process because the decided time or location may be inconvenient for them. This inconvenience depends on the type of engagement put in place. If the engagement process is in the form of surveys, it is important to remember that some people have no access to the internet; “Having an online survey, for me that is not inclusive so many of my families don’t have access to Internet in our area here” (I1). Therefore, this choice automatically means this population will not be able to participate in the process. Additionally, some people will not visit certain areas for LCAP meetings due to lack of citizenship documentation. This makes it nearly impossible to have diversity in attendance:

Our local community will go one on one but they will not gather and it’s hard to imagine for folks but they are truly afraid and so in our community because of the volume of undocumented community members, they will not participate that way any longer even though they trust us they say. (I1)

*Climate.* If the PPP is not facilitated well or not well moderated, this can be a hindrance to inclusiveness. Seemingly small details can prevent stakeholders from taking part in the engagement processes; for example, depending on how the seating is arranged, they could feel left out, feeling they were “at the wrong table” (I7). When stakeholders don’t feel satisfied with the authenticity of the engagement process and that their contribution was not valued, “They feel their time was wasted and nobody likes to waste their time” (I7). One of the main components of inclusiveness is clear communication, which means providing resources for stakeholders who may need translation services. As one interviewee stated, “I could see a technique that could

hinder inclusiveness is the lack of translation in terms of languages or education jargon” (I1). If people are not treated in a way that makes them feel welcome and comfortable, they may not feel like they are being allowed to be part of the process, or that they are not the intended audience. Instead, they may feel that they are an inconvenience; “even just the climate in the room matters” (I2). If the climate of the room is not right, inclusiveness will be hindered.

*Poor communication.* Stakeholders will not contribute to or take part in the LCAP process if they are unaware of the means to participate. Interviewees acknowledge this may be a result of students not relaying messages to their parents as requested. As one interviewee shared, “The word of mouth or the...note in the backpack never got out to them so they didn’t get the opportunity to fill out a survey” (I10) However, interviewees pointed out that the responsibility for notifying stakeholders of the meeting and surveys belongs to the district and not the students. Using limited techniques for communication can lead to a lack of inclusiveness. As one interviewee stated,

Social media, you know, you have parents that aren’t on social media then they don’t know about the meeting if that is the only way you advertise the meeting, or you have parents that are on it but you don’t use it then the district is going to miss out communicating to those parents. (I8)

*Compliance document.* Pertaining to the compliance document, one interviewee stated: I think what can hinder the inclusiveness of the LCAP is the approach that this is just a compliance document, I think if we look at it as just a compliance document, we send the wrong kind of message, we don’t authentically engage our families, we instead measure butts in seats instead of you know measuring authentic engagement. (I9)

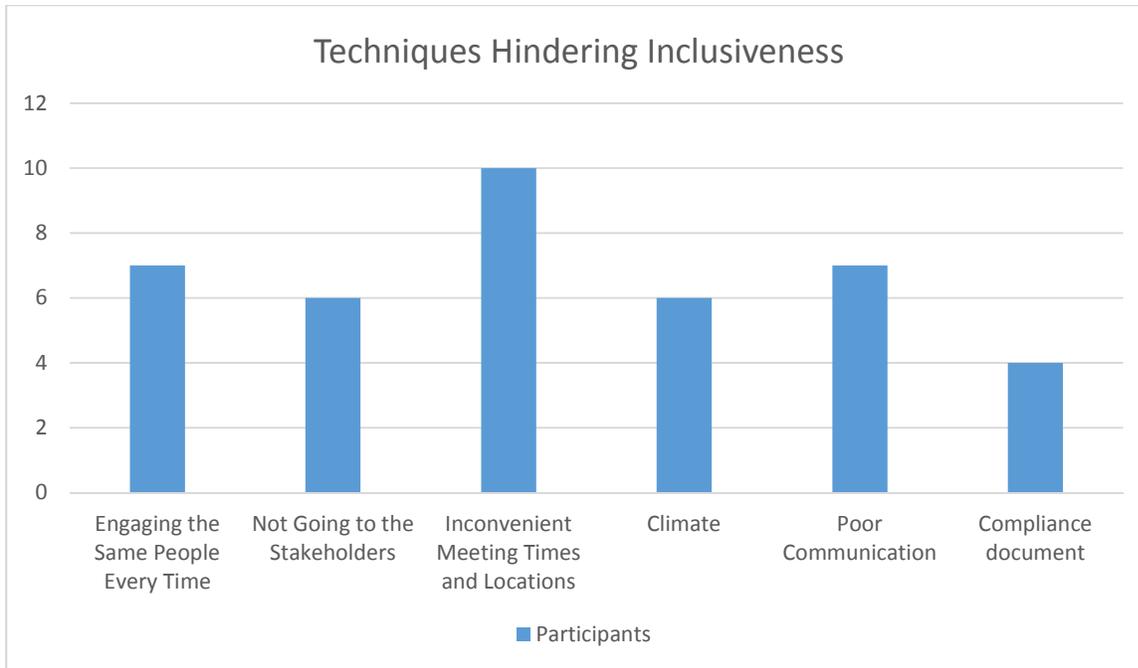


Figure 4. Number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques hindering inclusiveness.

***Can you think of specific techniques that could facilitate greater inclusiveness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?*** The analysis of the data is organized six subthemes: (a) continuous trust development, (b) make it the norm, (c) multiple venues, (d) customizing, (e) conducting comprehensive surveys, and (f) facilitator. Figure 5 demonstrates the number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques fostering maximum inclusiveness.

***Continuous trust development.*** Continually fostering a relationship of trust is essential to authentic and inclusive engagement. The relationship between the stakeholders and the district should have an inclusive nature, day in and day out, as trust is developed over time. Inclusiveness needs to be priority and practice in all stakeholder forums. As one interviewee noted,

If you're going to have openness with teachers, you can't only do so for two or three meetings a year and say; now this is your time to be open and honest with us and then have a closed door policy every other time of the year. (I6)

*Make it the norm.* “The more normal the LCAP becomes and the more frequently people are asked to participate in different ways the more people will feel comfortable and responsible to participate” (I10). LCAP stakeholder participation needs to exceed a monthly or quarterly meeting and or survey, and stakeholder engagement needs to be built in to all interactions. Stakeholder engagement should start before a parent registers his/her child for school; this can be done through district communications across the community and continue beyond that child's graduation through various means, times, and locations.

*Multiple venues.* Another means of encouraging inclusiveness in the LCAP process is by ensuring the stakeholder engagement takes place at multiple venues during a variety of times.

Providing multiple venues and times

increases awareness, as you know 93% of marketing is word of mouth that means all our advertisement is directed at 7% of the population so we need to ensure multiple people become aware of the LCAP so that word of mouth helps the other 93% of people become aware. (I10)

Having multiple venues and times provides choice to stakeholders who are restricted by schedules, responsibility, and or finances. As one interviewee stated, “So you would want to accommodate their schedule and needs like dinner, or babysitting, to be able to get that inclusiveness in participation” (I9). This includes going to the school sites to meet with the students and teachers and other staff members to hear their voices. Some interviewees spoke of taking the LCAP stakeholder engagement process on the road to different school sites,

community organizations and gatherings “and we’re even going door to door, canvassing parts of the community to be able to offer more opportunity” (I7).

*Customizing.* Inclusiveness varies from district to district simply because of the variability of demographics in different areas. What it means to be inclusive in one place may not necessarily be the same in a different place; as one participant noted, “It’s hard to concretely identify techniques, because what works for this district may not work for that district” (I4). Therefore, inclusiveness for a specific locale should be customized to fit that area and its people.

*Conducting comprehensive surveys.* Conducting surveys was identified as a way of ensuring maximum inclusiveness. Surveys can be formal or informal, electronic, paper-based, or even verbal. Surveys provide a tool for districts to collect data from stakeholders without demanding their presence. Surveys are tools that can be used at various venues through a variety of means, thereby reaching “everyone, including students, parents, district office staff and just the community members in general” (I6). Surveys can be used to collect formative and summative data. As one interviewee shared,

We ask everything from do you feel safe at your school or do you feel welcomed at your school, would you recommend your school, are you supported by your supervisor or teacher, do you feel you have the tools you need for success, did you like the meeting?  
(I9)

*Facilitator.* The individual(s) facilitating the LCAP engagement processes should be trained and not affected directly by the outcome. This means the facilitator should have “no horse in the race, only the goal of creating a safe environment where all voices can be heard” (I7). The facilitator should have an objective mind and not favor any side or group over another. The

facilitator should have knowledge of the district, community, and the LCAP process. This will make the process more impactful. One participant shared the importance of,

Making sure that those facilitating this process are, to some extent...I don't want to say detached, maybe that's the wrong word. But so trained and so committed to the core values that, they would not be influenced by any particular interest group or small group of people that only want to see their participation in the LCAP process. (I9)

The method of facilitation is key, because “you may achieve all things like having people from all groups attending the meeting, the meeting process being bilingual, but if you don't engage the crowd then the meeting will have no meaningful impact” (I6). A trained facilitator ensures that when a stakeholder “shows up to a meeting they aren't lectured at instead they are engaged in a way that engages and makes parents feel like they're actually there and their opinions are valued” (I4). The participation process should be an engaged one.

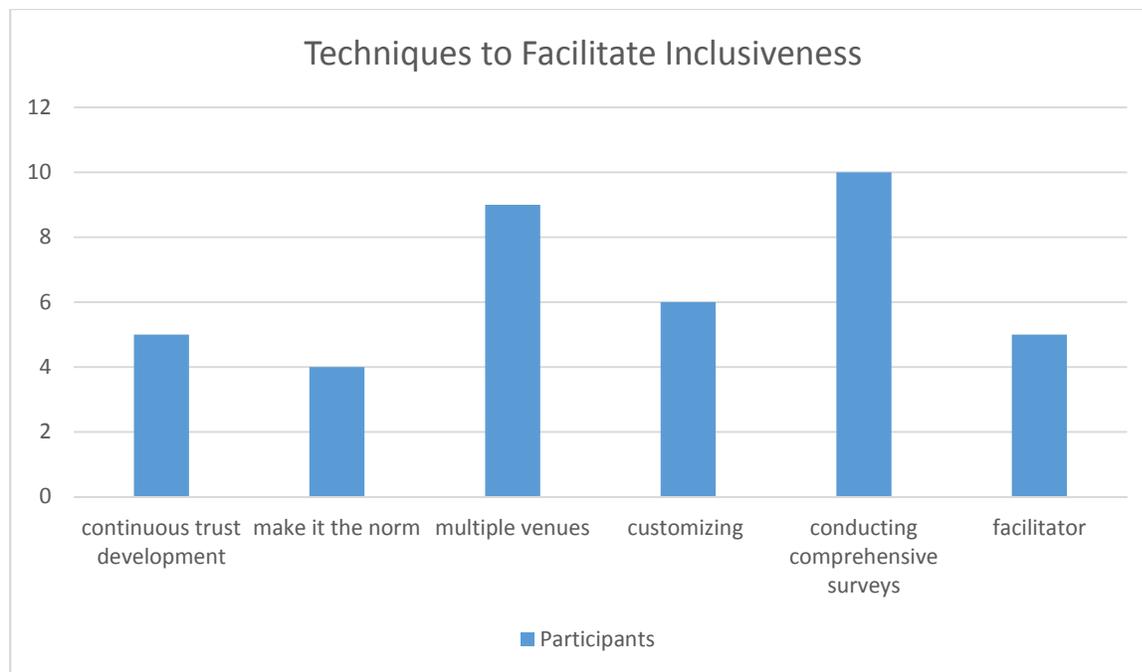


Figure 5. Number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques fostering maximum inclusiveness.

**Fairness.** Over the course of the 10 interviews, 15 subthemes were identified from the interviewees' responses, of which five themes emerged pertaining to the measures, guidelines, and techniques LEA leaders believe can contribute to the fairness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process. These themes include: facilitation, communication, authentic participation, equity, and local control. A summary of the five themes will be addressed at the conclusion of Chapter 4; this section will discuss the 15 identified subthemes.

***What measures do you think could be effective for ensuring fairness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?*** The analysis of the data is organized into four subthemes: (a) facilitator, (b) continual assessment, (c) ensuring stakeholders' diversity, and (d) individual needs. Figure 6 demonstrates the number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to measures to determine fairness.

*Facilitator.* "We have all of our facilitators professionally trained so they can have the tools they need to make the meetings as fair as possible" (I9). The facilitator is the agent who provides clarity and purpose to the stakeholder; this person should begin each meeting by reviewing the meeting norms, the purpose, and the goals. The facilitator is there to create an environment where all stakeholders have an opportunity to contribute to the conversation, even when the information is hard to receive. "If the LCAP meetings are going to be fair we have to allow all people to have a voice no matter what we think of their message" (I4). Stakeholder engagement needs to be exactly that; "A competent facilitator engages participation instead of just lectur[ing]" (I9).

*Continual assessment.* LCAP stakeholder meetings and surveys alike should continually be assessed for success or lack thereof; modifications should be made based on the results of the assessment, and new plans implemented. As one participant shared,

The best way to find out if the stakeholders felt the meeting was fair is to ask them...even ask the ones who weren't there so you know if they thought you communicated the opportunity to participate in a fair manner. (I3)

The continuous quality improvement cycle ensures accountability in the process itself, thus fostering fairness in the LCAP process.

*Ensuring stakeholders' diversity.* In an effort to ensure fairness in the stakeholder engagement component of the LCAP, the district has a responsibility to seek out the involvement of all stakeholder groups who are affected by the potential decisions that are being made. "We have to stop and ask ourselves who is not at the table, why are they not at the table, and what can we do to get them here" (I2). Districts can use LCFF Dashboard data to identify what student subgroups and sites are struggling and what area are they struggling with. This data can "serve as a guide as to who is not at the table and who needs to be at the table" (I2). Sign in sheets can serve as tool to identify who has participated and what groups were and were not represented.

*Individual needs.* Equal is not always fair; as one interviewee stated, "You can hold a meeting in the middle of the day and make it open to all stakeholders, but that's not fair to parents who work, or staff members on duty" (I6). The stakeholder engagement process is not about giving equal access as much as it is about meeting the stakeholders where they are and addressing their individual needs. Providing variety and choice as to how and when stakeholders participate creates a more equitable and therefore fair environment and LCAP process. The stakeholder engagement data collected should be reviewed to identify who is participating and who is not. One participant noted, "You could also do an additional crosswalk based on your data and your demographics to ensure that one voice isn't coming across stronger than another based on your population" (I3).

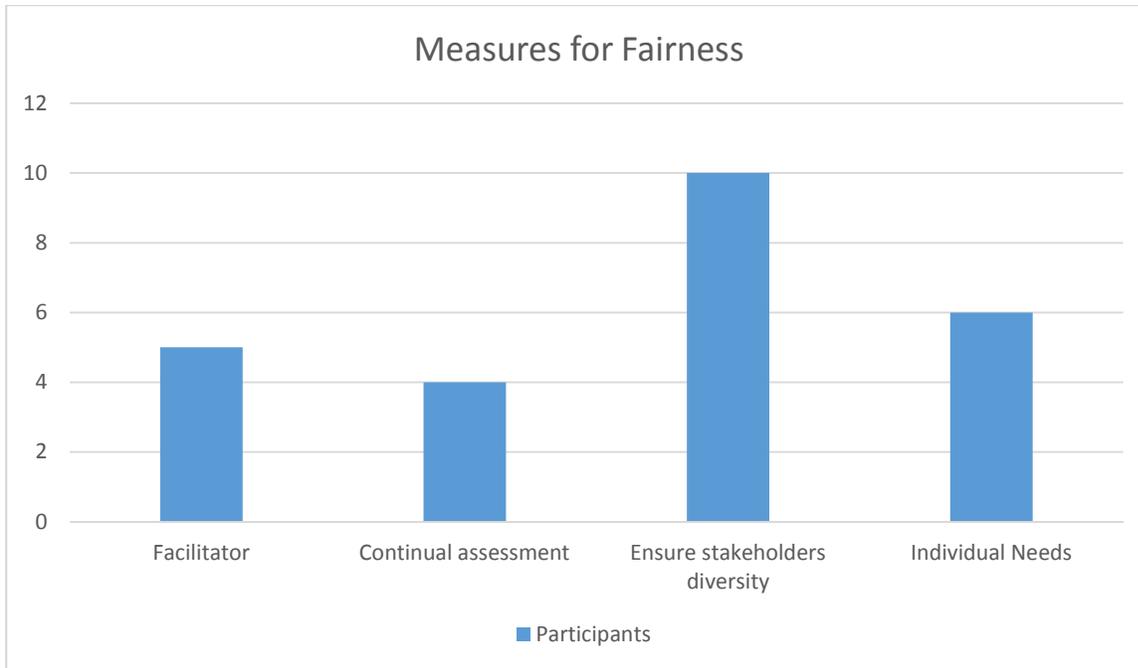


Figure 6. Number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to measures to determine fairness.

***What guidelines do you think could be effective for ensuring that the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process is designed with fairness in mind?*** The analysis of the data is organized into four subthemes: (a) customizing, (b) standardizing, (c) continual assessment, and (d) capture each stakeholder’s voice. Figure 7 demonstrates the number of interviewees who commented about the various subthemes related to guidelines to determine fairness.

*Customizing.* The guidelines to ensure fairness will vary district to district, as what is fair for one demographic or stakeholder group is not fair to another. As one participant put it, “Fairness is leveling the playing field” (I6). “I think you have to go back to your demographics and your data as a baseline as far as guidelines; it has to be local again if you’re going to truly do a local process” (I1).

*Standardizing.* All stakeholders should receive the same information and have the same opportunity to provide feedback. “If you stick to a similar presentation with a similar opportunity for feedback, I believe that that would help to ensure fairness.... You have to make

sure the information that is given out is the same” (I2). Another way to ensure the process is designed with fairness is to standardize the norms and ensure all participants understand the engagement process purpose and norms established by the district and the stakeholders. “Having something like a flow chart that spells out every step of the process that needs to be adhered to” (I9) can help ensure fairness during the engagement process.

*Continual assessment.* To determine fairness, established guidelines should be assessed continually as well as the practices and techniques used in the engagement process. As one participant asserted, “I think the guidelines can just be that lines that say; we are about fairness, in everything we do, let’s ask ourselves that, is this going to be fair for the stakeholder groups” (I4). The assessment process can include a self-assessment as well as an analysis of best practices and successes of other districts. In other words, “We should be learning and growing from each other not acting in a silo” (I5). As another interviewee offered,

So the way I’d answer this one is, to look at a districts successful characteristics of their process, and then see if they are similar to other successful districts and then if they are, then those rise to the top as the effective and if they’re not, then they go to the bottom.  
(I8)

*Capture each stakeholder’s voice.* “Stakeholders need to know the process is authentic and their participation matters” (I9). A guideline to ensure fairness is to ensure each stakeholder’s voice is captured.

You know again this is something we took to heart through our own process and so what we made sure we did is we captured every piece of input from every person exactly as it was written, wasn’t paraphrased, it wasn’t, we captured exactly what was given and allowed the input of every single participant and then we categorized that input by group

and by topic. So when we said that our parents overwhelmingly wanted a certain outcome, we were able to display the data about what that looked like and so we were able to list that oh I could see a picture of this large document in my mind, that listed everything verbatim so we had everything captured concretely of what people's input was so because one person might have been louder in the room, their thing was only said once and lots of multiple people said different things at the same time that was captured so we had an accurate use of that ideas. So I think fairness means giving equal value to every voice and we captured that voice and then presented that back at the following meeting saying did we capture your voice correctly here's the things we heard. (I9)

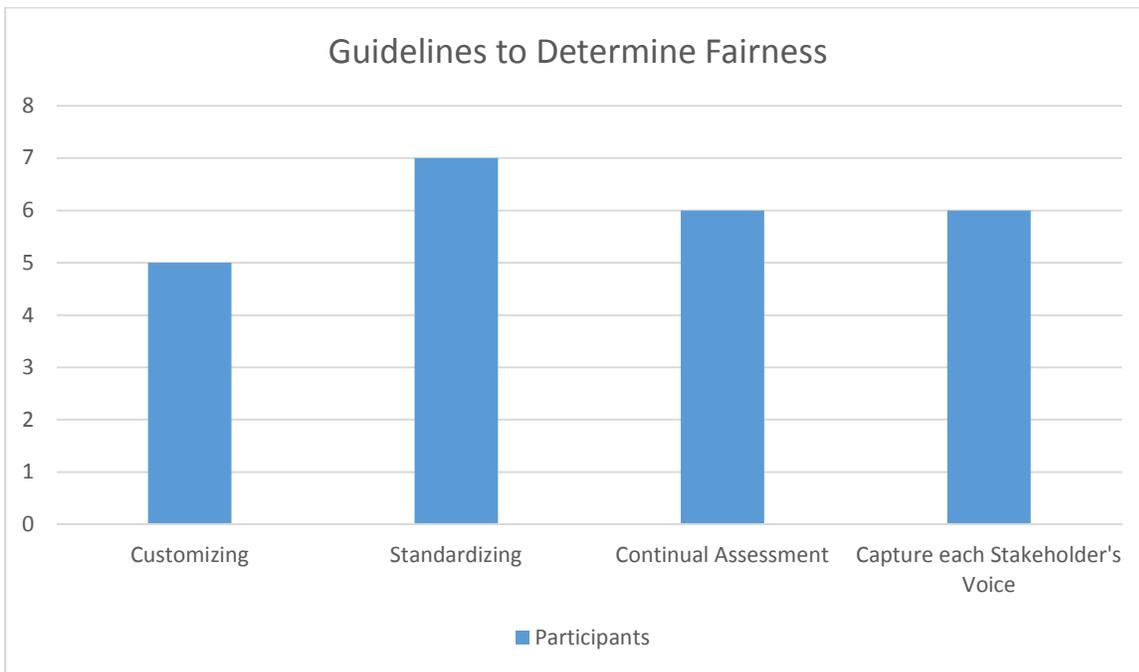


Figure 7. Number of interviewees who commented about the various subthemes related to guidelines to determine fairness.

***Can you think of specific techniques that could hinder fairness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?*** The analysis of the data is organized into four subthemes: (a) lack of equity, (b) restricting participation, (c) poor communication, and (d) poor facilitation.

Figure 8 demonstrates the number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques hindering fairness.

*Lack of equity.* Fairness in the LCAP stakeholder engagement process can be hindered when stakeholders do not have level playing fields.

I think hindering fairness, again, would be if you were meeting with a group of parents who did not speak English as a first language and you didn't provide a translator for them or didn't provide material in their language, you would not provide a fair opportunity for them to be a participant. (I1)

*Restricting participation.* Fairness in the stakeholder engagement process is hindered when participation in the process is restricted. A variety of poor techniques can lead to restricting participation of stakeholders these include, but are not limited to: time, location, facility, facilitator, communication, and lack of norms, goals, and purpose.

If you're limited in your platforms that you push out information that invites participation stakeholders, then that would hinder the engagement process, lack of skills for those facilitators facilitating the process. Lack of facilities, maybe you get a facility but it's not big enough or you keep changing facilities or the facility you get is right next to a band room and, you know, you can barely hear people talk, it's things like that [that hinder fairness in the engagement process]. (I9)

Providing information to stakeholders using limited means can also act as a barrier to fairness. When information is only relayed in terms of meetings or online surveys then some people may be left out and may not have access to participate. As one participant put it. "So to be only having one meeting at a set time hinders the fairness and the participation of folks" (I6).

*Poor communication.* Fairness in the stakeholder engagement process could be hindered if stakeholders do not receive the information they need to participate and or make an informed decision. The use of limited platforms limits one's audience. For example, one participant stated, "If you're limited in your platforms that you push out information that invites participation from stakeholders, then that would hinder the engagement process" (I9). Intentionally or unintentionally limiting the data stakeholders need to make informed decisions hinders the fairness of the engagement process,

I think that...that excluding information or data would certainly hinder fairness because you wouldn't allow people to give input about information that is real and valid because you've just chosen to exclude it so that it doesn't become part of the conversation. (I3)

*Poor facilitation.* Fairness may be hindered in the LCAP engagement processes if the facilitator has no formal training to present information and engage the attendees in an authentic interactive process where all feel safe to participate. As one interviewee shared, "The lack of skills for those facilitators facilitating the process can hinder the fairness" (I4). Fairness can also be hindered by lack of efficient facilities to hold meetings. For example, the meeting room could be too small to accommodate everyone in attendance or maybe the room is not located in a quiet location, or "the facility you get [could be] right next to a band room" (I7), rendering it impossible to hear some people's input. Seating arrangement can also hinder fairness during LCAP meetings. This may be due to "placing of certain groups that speak one language on one side and another group alone on the other side" (I7), which results in each group failing to hear diverse perspectives.

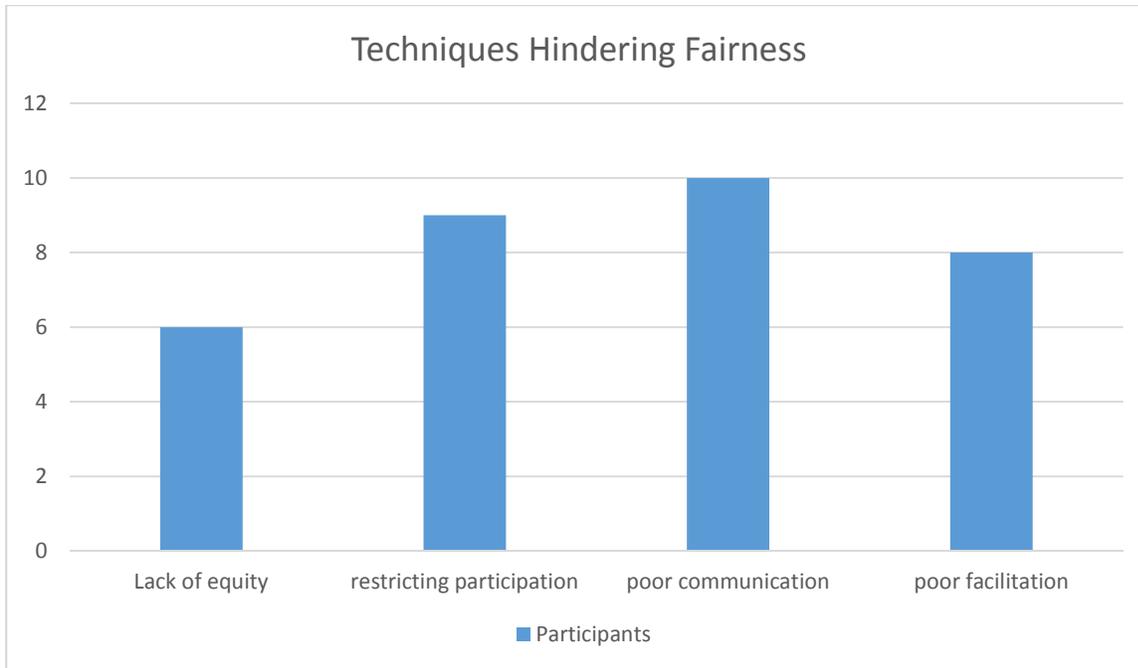


Figure 8. Number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques hindering fairness.

***Can you think of specific techniques that could facilitate fairness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?*** The analysis of the data is organized into four subthemes: (a) customizing, (b) collecting feedback, (c) equal access, and (d) facilitation. Figure 9 demonstrates the number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques to facilitate fairness.

*Customizing.* “Fairness looks different at every district” (I1), and as a result it is important that each district and its stakeholders identify what is and is not fair as it pertains to that district. For example,

At my district parents care about military leave schedules, but that’s because we live by a base, and many parents are military and their family is impacted when a loved one leaves or comes home from a tour, I’m sure someone on the other side of the county may not care as much about military leave schedules. (I3)

*Collecting feedback.* One interviewee stated the following:

I think another technique is to listen to stakeholders for what they need to have an effective meeting, so when we listen to our parents for example, they said boy you know we'd really like to have this meeting the same meeting in Spanish, we really would like to have childcare provided, we would really like to have translation services or yeah, interpretation services, we really like to have the meetings at this time a day and in the morning or maybe in the in the evening. So we were able to offer meetings based on you know what was given to us as input and so that was our attempt to be fair. (I9)

When the facilitator or the district collects feedback from stakeholders, it allows for an analysis of the process through the lens of not only the district but also the stakeholder, thus engaging in a continuous quality improvement cycle. As one interviewee noted,

So the technique and specifically to me is informing them about the outcome we're trying to achieve with fairness getting them to understand that and then if they understand that, then asking them, do you feel that we are accomplishing that? (I4)

*Equal access.* Ensuring all stakeholders have equal access to participate through equity of resources and opportunities will facilitate greater fairness in the LCAP process. Stakeholders must have equitable resources and opportunities in order for the stakeholder engagement process to be fair. This could be achieved through providing translation services for those who don't understand English. As one interviewee asserted,

I think the traditional translator is passé and does not facilitate engagement, I think having the courtesy of headsets so that you're having simultaneous and real-time translation rather than 30-minute message going an hour because it's being translated both directions. (I7)

Translation services provide stakeholders the opportunity to engage actively in the process. In order for participants to understand the information, it needs to be provided in various stakeholder languages, academic language needs to be explained in layman’s terms, and acronyms need to be defined. Meetings need to be held at different locations at varying times with the same agenda, making sure the materials presented are consistent throughout the gatherings. In the words of another participant, “Ways to ensure fairness, again, in my mind, would be using standardized material that you’re presenting to the different groups so that they’re all seeing the same thing” (I3).

*Facilitation.* Fairness is achieved through an environment where participants feel safe to participate; this environment is created by a skilled facilitator. As one interviewee shared, “Having staff that are trained with professional facilitation skills to authentically engage a group of stakeholders is a skill set and facilitation is that skill set that allows the authentic engagement of stakeholders in a decision-making process” (I9).

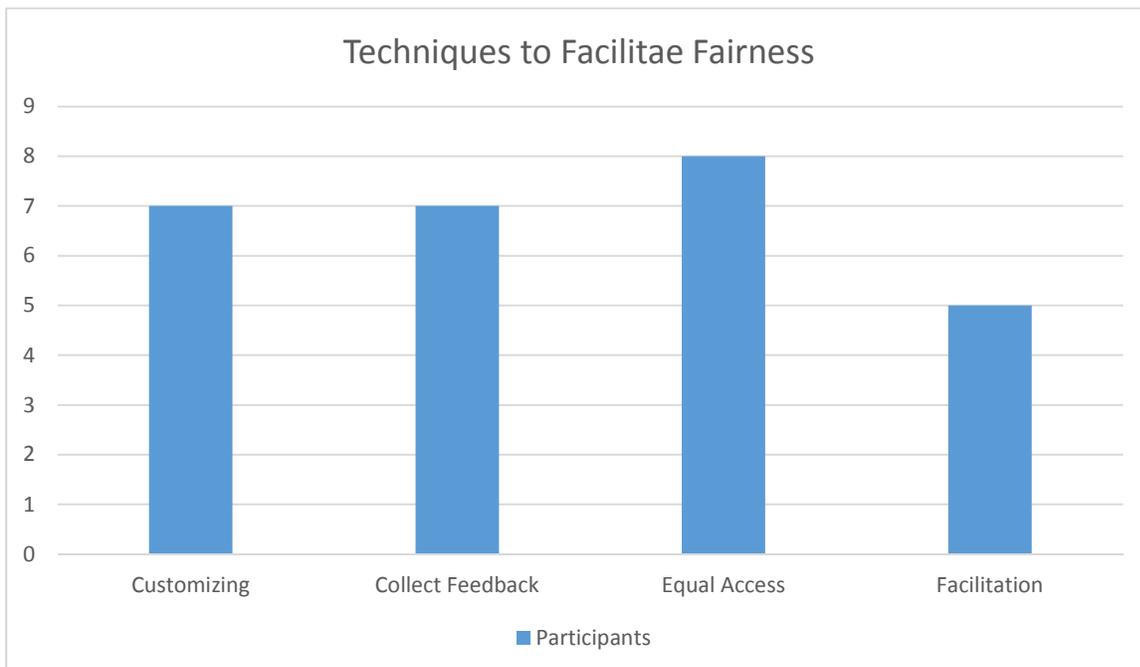


Figure 9. Number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques to facilitate fairness.

**Openness.** Over the course of the 10 interviews, 15 subthemes were identified from the interviewees' responses, of which three themes emerged pertaining to the measures, guidelines, and techniques LEA leaders believe can contribute to the openness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process. These themes include: communication, trust, and facilitation. A summary of the three themes will be addressed at the conclusion of Chapter 4; this section will discuss the 15 identified subthemes.

*What measures do you think could be effective for ensuring openness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?* The analysis of the data is organized into four subthemes: (a) clarity in communication, (b) transparency in data, (c) collecting feedback, and (d) informing stakeholders of progress. Figure 10 demonstrates the number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to measures ensuring openness.

*Clarity in communication.* Districts must communicate to the stakeholders in a manner they will understand, "because people can't be open and communicate if they don't understand what's going on" (I7). To safeguard openness in the LCAP stakeholder engagements process clarity must be ensured, for instance use of abbreviations should be eliminated, "stop the acronyms" (I1). This is not a time for "staff to show off their fancy vocabulary and education jargon," (I7) but to speak in a respectful manner using terms and analogies all stakeholders can understand while taking time to explain education jargon and acronyms, as well as education code and regulations that may create parameters for the decision making. Stakeholders cannot be open about their thoughts if they do not understand what is being discussed.

*Transparency in data.* In order for stakeholders to engage in the LCAP PPP in a meaningful way and make informed decisions, stakeholders must be given current and accurate data. As one interviewee noted,

I think the measures that we employed and that I felt were effective for ensuring openness in the process were anticipating information that would be helpful during our first meeting together and brought that data, so we brought for example our existing strategic plan, we brought student achievement data, we brought current strategic objectives that were underway and gave an overview of all that information so that people had as much information as we had at the time to make a clear decision. (I9)

Even though the data a district produces may seem endless, the district should “anticipate information that would be helpful to the decision making process” (I3) and bring those data to the stakeholders. The data will likely include that which the district desires to share as well as that which the district rather not. As one participant put it, “Get comfortable because sometimes the data is going to show a pictures you don’t want to see” (I6). However, transparency in data and open conversations will help develop trust between the district and the stakeholders.

*Collecting feedback.* Use of feedback can also help ensure openness. Feedback can take the simple form of asking the stakeholders if they felt that openness was achieved during the LCAP process. In other words, “Tell them what we are going to do, do it, and ask do you think we did it” (I7). Through the collection of participant feedback, the value of stakeholder voices is reaffirmed and districts can move to adjust and improve the process, thus creating a more open process.

*Informing stakeholders of progress.* The stakeholder engagement PPP must be an ongoing cycle of communication and engagement, not a meeting with a beginning and end. As one interviewee stated,

So throughout the LCAP process the stakeholders should be informed of what the progress is in terms of what the input was and what has been achieved so far. This brings them into the process and they become aware of everything that's taking place. (I2)

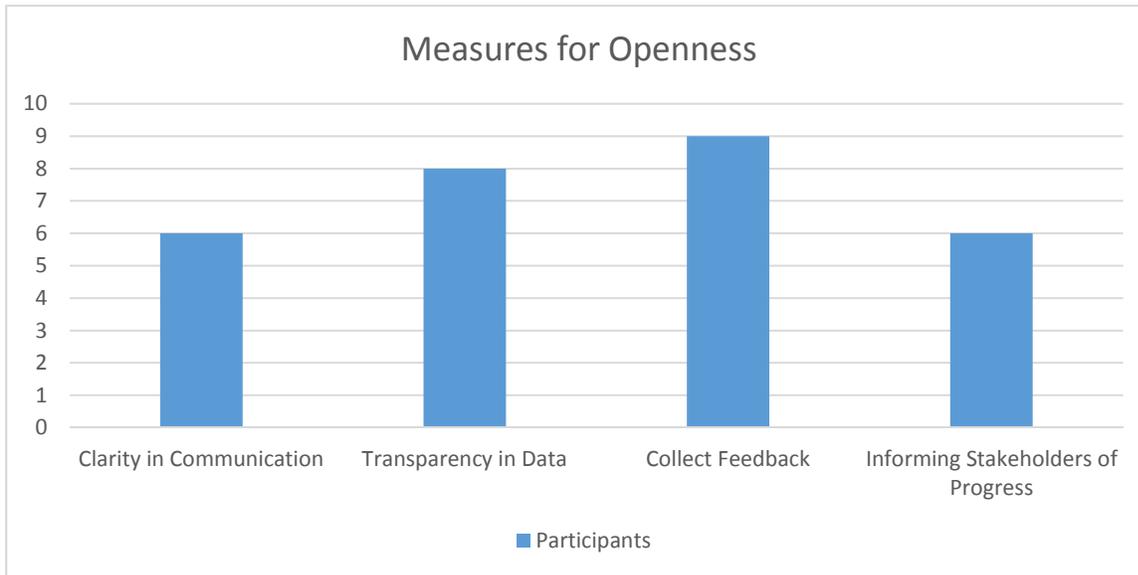


Figure 10. Number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to measures ensuring openness.

***What guidelines do you think could be effective for ensuring that the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process is designed with openness in mind?*** The analysis of the data is organized into three subthemes: (a) receive data, (b) lay a foundation, and (c) continuous and clear communication. Figure 11 demonstrates the number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to guidelines to determine openness.

*Receive data.* The conversation in the stakeholder engagement process generally begins with a quantitative data finding, taken specifically from the LCFF Dashboard. However, districts must pay attention to the qualitative data captured by the stakeholders and brought to the process as this data “is real to the parents; this is what they care about, this is what they have strong feelings about” (I1) and this too must be addressed and validated by the district in order to foster an environment of trust, transparency, and honesty.

*Lay a foundation.* During the course of the stakeholder engagement activities, time should be set aside to revisit the district’s core values and mission statement. As discussions ensue in the stakeholder engagement process, the facilitator should continue to ask the question, “Is this consistent with our core values as a district” (I5)? “It makes it so much easier for us to say, ‘Yes,’ ‘No,’ or ‘Let’s revisit this particular idea or proposal that’s presented, if it does or doesn’t align with our set of core values as a district’” (I8).

*Continuous and clear communication.* The LCAP cycle and each step within the cycle should be presented to stakeholders, and leaders should “tell the stakeholders what it looks like and what part they are participating in, and what will happen next in the process” (I7). The first time a district engages a stakeholder should not be the last even if they stop attending or actively participating, “Stakeholders should be made aware of how their contributions helped the process and how ultimate decisions are made” (I4). Stakeholders should be given all the information they may need to assist them in the decision making process. When the decisions have been made, they should be told how their contributions were incorporated into the final decisions. As one participant stated, “Yes, I do believe that stakeholders should be provided information to participate in a meaningful way and that local leaders should be able to communicate to those stakeholders who have participated how their input affected the decision” (I3).

***Can you think of specific techniques that could hinder openness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?*** The analysis of the data is organized into three subthemes: (a) ignoring stakeholder input, (b) not sharing all data, and (c) use of unclear data. Figure 12 demonstrates the number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques to hinder openness.

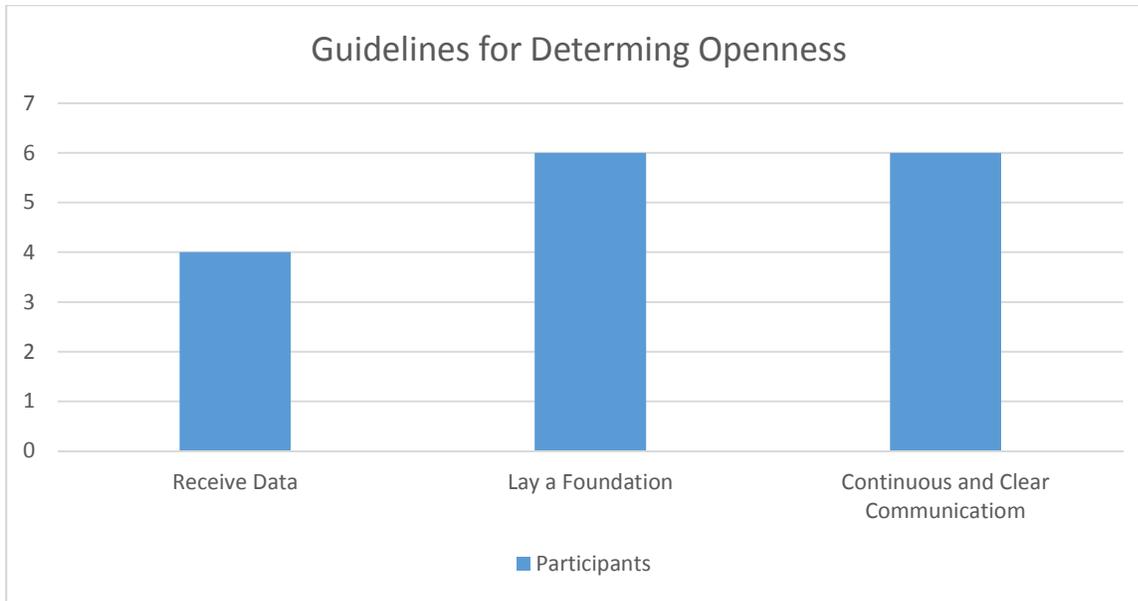


Figure 11. Number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to guidelines to determine openness.

*Ignoring stakeholders' input.* One technique that could hinder openness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process is collecting, yet ignoring, stakeholder input. As one participant shared,

That would be one potential hindrance that I would see happening where, you had just hold a couple meetings, collect surveys, but they aren't reviewed, they aren't looked at, there's no commentary made on it within your LCAP anywhere. (13)

*Not sharing all data.* Withholding or providing inaccurate data will hinder the openness of the process as well. For example, as one interviewee observed,

Not sharing all or accurate data...but acting in the interest of making yourself look good and not making yourself want to improve or grow, would be probably a... a hindrance that would prevent the process from being open. (18)

*Use of unclear language.* Use of education jargon or acronyms that may not be understood by everyone in attendance can act as a barrier to openness. For example, one interviewee stated, "I've seen educators use million dollar words and acronyms as a technique in

meetings to shut down the stakeholders and belittle them” (I10). Sometimes, educators unintentionally overuse education jargon and acronyms and lose their crowd, sometimes for good.

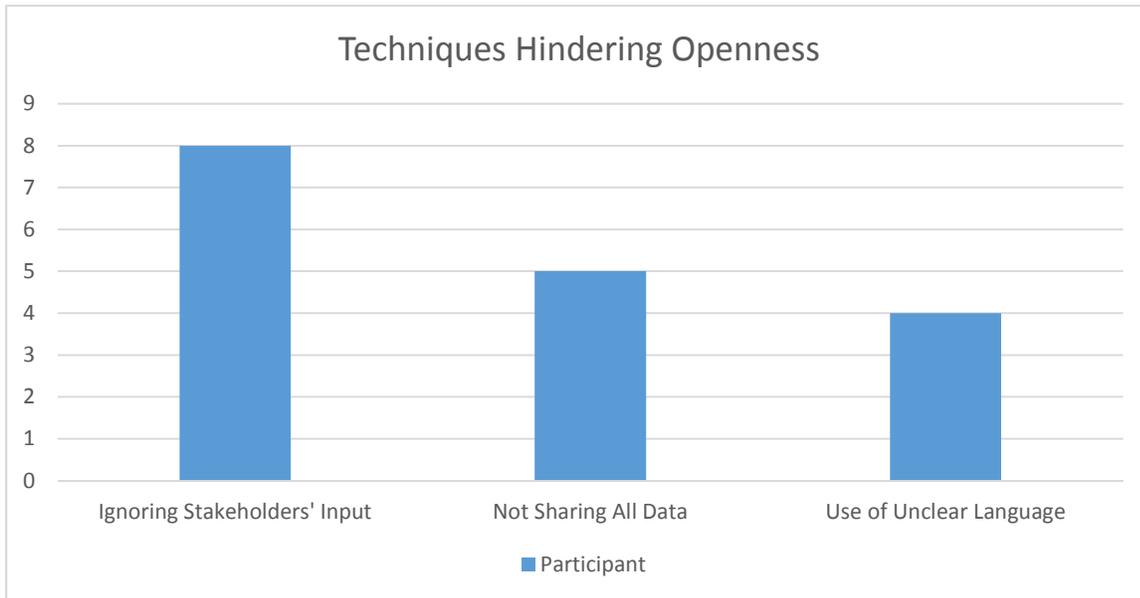


Figure 12. Number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques to hinder openness.

***Can you think of specific techniques that could facilitate openness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.*** The analysis of the data is organized into four subthemes: (a) open-ended communication, (b) sharing outcomes with stakeholders, (c) fostering trust with stakeholders, and (d) more than one avenue for engagement and feedback. Figure 13 demonstrates the number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques to facilitate openness.

***Open-ended communication.*** Developing and presenting open-ended questions allows stakeholders to feel they can express themselves in their own terms. Doing so often generates deep and rich discussion that generates innovative ideas. In open-ended questions, “There’s opportunity to be able to say, ‘Hey, I’ve got a better idea’” (I2). Stakeholders should have an ongoing outlet where they can provide feedback after the meeting. For example, one participant

has “a drop box in our office, and a page on our website where people can leave their suggestions or input, if we get it before a meeting we share it out at the meeting” (I2).

*Sharing outcome with stakeholders.* Sharing the outcome of the process is a key element of openness. Sharing the outcome enables people to see what they recommended and how their recommendations were used to come up with the final decision. One participant emphasized the importance of “sharing out information from those surveys from the LCAP, what people had suggested, recommended...based upon that information, providing what was taken into account” (I1). Doing so will ensure an open process.

*Fostering trust with stakeholders.* A relationship of trust needs to be fostered between the stakeholders and the LCAP committee. This in turn will ensure all participants feel free to contribute in agreement or disagreement without fear. In such circumstances, authentic conversations are had and real change can begin. In other words,

Where the real change happens is when people feel comfortable enough to say, “That’s a good idea but, have we thought about this?” and then for the other person to say, “You know what? I haven’t thought about this, but let’s talk more about this and see if it fits for what we’re trying to do,” instead of giving me 500 reasons why that won’t work. (I8)

*More than one avenue for engagement and feedback.* It is important to ensure that information is distributed through different means—including social media, newsletters, electronic communication, websites, all calls, radio advertisement, billboards, flyers, text messages, and word of mouth—to give updates on the LCAP process and the feedback that has been received. One participant emphasized the need to make sure “the LCAP process is consistent...consistently communicated regularly, again, whether it’s through links, whether it’s through apps, Facebook or web page displays, galleries events, district events” (I7). Having

meetings scheduled at different times and days provides opportunities for all stakeholder to participate and access to the information. As one interviewee stated, “Go to where the people already are, provide and collect LCAP information at football games, awards nights, and choir performances” (I5). One participant recommended recording and live streaming the in person meetings, noting that at their school, the meetings:

were also recorded or live streamed so that parents could engage no matter what. If they’re stuck at home because of some disability or some limitation, they could watch it later and provide input. We had an input mechanisms for after the meeting as well. (I9)

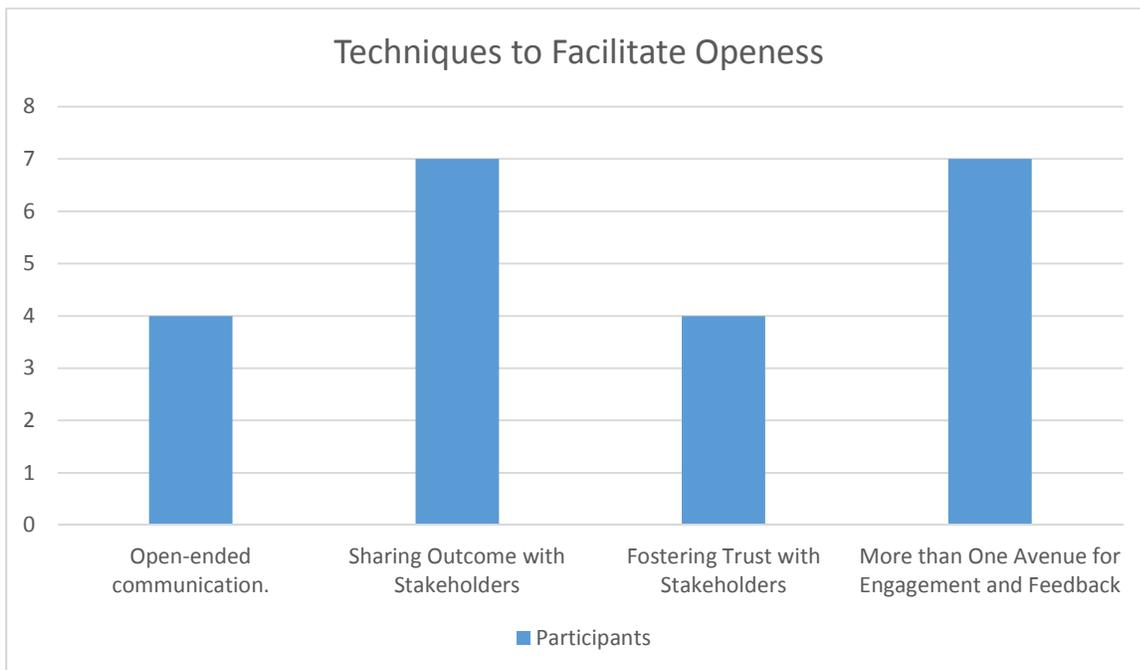


Figure 13. Number of interviewees who contributed to the various subthemes related to techniques to facilitate openness.

**IAP2 core values.**

*How do local education agency leaders conceive the use of the IAP2’s core values to define successful public stakeholder engagement for the LCAP in terms of inclusivity, fairness, and openness?* The responses for this question were reviewed and analyzed for general agreement or disagreement. Seven of the 10 interviewees explicitly stated their agreement with

the use of IAP2’s core values (as displayed in Table 8) to define successful public stakeholder engagement for the LCAP in terms of inclusivity, fairness, and openness.

Table 8

*IAP2’s Seven Core Values*

Number	Core Value
1	Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
2	Public participation includes the promise that the public’s contribution will influence the decision.
3	Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
4	Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5	Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6	Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7	Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

The remaining three participants used lived examples of how they currently incorporate IAP2’s core values into their stakeholder engagement process. Here are some of the comments they offered:

*Explicit.*

- “The core values are definitely woven into the underpinnings of the intent behind the Local Control Funding Formula.... These types of values are inherent in the LCAP” (19).
- “These core values do seem to provide at least some guidance, some guidelines, on how to kind of structure and...maybe measure the type of engagement with the stakeholder groups” (18).
- “So for the 7 core values I would say they’re right on. They reflect the values not only for the purpose of parent participation or public participation but also the values of

our Board of Education.... Actually the implementation of LCAP kind of redirected everybody to these core values” (I7).

- “If you follow these core values, you’re truly living up to the spirit of what LCAP is asking you to do as far as stakeholder engagement” (I2).
- “I thought those core values hit it right on the head in regards to what and how stakeholders should be involved in the process.” (I4).
- “I do believe the IAP2’s core values makes sense on all fronts they seem to articulate exactly what we need to be doing specific to engaging stakeholders” (I3).
- “As you read them,...they’re logical; they make sense. I think without even having these, that was a lot of what we tried to do” (I6).

*Lived examples.*

- “As a district we make it a priority to ensure everyone who is affected by a decision has a voice in the decision making process” (I1).
- “Our LCAP process includes all stakeholders and everyone has an opportunity to participate” (I5).
- “We make sure and communicate back how their participation impacted the outcome of the LCAP goals” (I10).

## **Summary**

In summary, six themes and 40 subthemes emerged as a result of the coding and thematic analysis of the interview responses to the 12 questions pertaining to the measures, guidelines, and techniques LEA leaders believe can contribute to the inclusiveness, fairness, and openness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process. Chapter 4 provided an in-depth overview of the 40 subthemes as they emerged from the respective 12 questions. Chapter 5 will discuss the

six main themes that emerged from the data: authentic participation, communication, equity, facilitation, local control, and trust.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

Chapter 5 includes a restatement of the importance of the study, the purpose of the study, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, the research questions, and the research design used in this phenomenographic study. In addition, this chapter presents the key findings and conclusions, including a discussion of recommendations for practice and recommendations for further research. The limitations of the study are presented along with an explanation of how study validity was ensured. Finally, the study concludes with closing remarks.

### **Problem Statement**

Executing the PPP in an inclusive and transparent manner as mandated by the new LCFF Act and the LCAP is a challenging task (Affeldt, 2015; Fuller & Tobben, 2014; Knudson, 2014). According to the requirements of the new funding system, districts should host an “inclusive and transparent public planning process” (Menefee-Libey & Kerchner, 2015, p. 4) during which budgetary district administrators and the public should collaboratively formulate priorities and targets. However the legislation does not explain what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open PPP (Affeldt, 2015). Taylor (2013) provided a detailed account of the LCFF and discussed the requirement for districts to consult with the schools, parents, and bargaining units. Although Taylor’s account of the LCFF provided an overview of stakeholder groups that should be consulted (i.e., school personnel, parents, and bargaining units), specificity is lacking regarding the new legislation’s reference to the inclusion of numerous individuals and groups with diverse points of view and interests who are affected by funding allocation.

Although the LCAP guidelines stipulate that the PPP for the allocation of funding should be undertaken every 3 years, the guidelines do not describe how public participation should be measured. Arguing that the 3-year planning process is problematic, Warren (2014) called for an

annual planning and revision process. The LCFF addresses the necessity for school districts to facilitative inclusive processes but does not provide an explanation of how this is to be achieved and, likewise, does not propose criteria for measuring success or failure in terms of *inclusivity* and *transparency* (Affeldt, 2015; Humphrey & Koppich, 2014). The problem this study addressed is how the LCAP's omission of a definition for the inclusive and transparent PPP may unintentionally lead to disproportionate inclusion of individual participants or stakeholder groups. This imbalance could result in dominating individual voices overpowering those vulnerable groups whom this legislation intended to protect (Koppich et al., 2015). Therefore, both an opportunity and a need existed to examine California school district superintendents' or their designees' conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open PPP as mandated by the LCAP.

### **Purpose**

California Education Code 35035 designates school district superintendents as responsible for the preparation, submission, and implementation of the LCAP. The superintendent is ultimately responsible for the LCAP planning process and is charged with ensuring that it is conducted in an inclusive, fair, open manner. Upon the recommendation of the superintendent, each school district board can designate a superintendent designee. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenographic study was to examine conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open LCAP PPP among superintendents in San Bernardino County, a high poverty county in Southern California. For the purposes of this study, the IAP2's Quality Assurance Standards, specifically the seven core values, served as the conceptual framework that defines the public engagement/participation planning process.

## Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

There is a growing body of evidence supporting the link between stakeholder engagement and positive community change. In *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, R. Edward Freeman (1984) introduced stakeholder theory, which was used as a theoretical framework in this study in determining what constitutes an inclusive planning process. Stakeholder theory was originally formulated to study the “principle of who or what really counts” (p. 412) in corporations and was validated through research conducted by Donaldson and Preston (1995). Donaldson and Preston offered evidence supporting stakeholder theory as it pertains to descriptive, instrumental, normative, and managerial issues. Jones and Wicks (1999), who introduced convergent stakeholder theory (a combination of the normative and instrumental aspects of stakeholder theory), later expanded upon stakeholder theory. The normative and instrumental aspects of convergent stakeholder theory are centered on the management of stakeholders; *normative* refers to how businesses should operate in relation to moral principles, and *instrumental* refers to how to obtain organizational goals through stakeholder management. The normative and instrumental aspects of convergent stakeholder theory as presented by Jones and Wicks served as the focus of this study, as they provide a lens through which to view the management of stakeholders to achieve the goals of the district and the eight state priorities.

IAP2’s (2004) framework of professional standards was used as a conceptual framework in determining fairness and openness in conducting the PPP. This framework was an appropriate lens through which to view the problem because it explores the discourse process of groups in terms of the fairness and openness in deeper engagement of stakeholders throughout the educational decision-making process, including planning and evaluation of impact. The core values of IAP2, designed in 2004, include the following factors: (a) everyone who is influenced

by a resolution is entitled to be involved in the decision-making process, (b) the stakeholders' opinions will be used in the final decision, (c) the needs and interests of the participants and decision-makers are recognized, (d) the decision-makers actively seeks for and involved everyone who is affected by the decision, (e) the design of the process focuses on enabling participation of all participants, (f) the stakeholders will receive all needed information, and (g) feedback to stakeholders will include the effect of their input in the final decision. Kania and Kramer's (2011) theory of collective impact, which outlines the conditions for effective collaborations for positive community change, further informed these stakeholder theories in combination with IAP2's values.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions provided guidance for this study:

- RQ1. How do local education agency leaders conceive the use of the IAP2's core values to define successful public stakeholder engagement for the LCAP in terms of inclusivity, fairness, and openness?
- RQ2. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local education agency leaders conceive can contribute to the inclusiveness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?
- RQ3. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local education agency leaders conceive can contribute to the fairness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?
- RQ4. What measures, guidelines, and techniques do local educational agency leaders conceive can contribute to the openness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?

## Research Design Overview

This qualitative study utilized the research design of phenomenography, which is a subset of phenomenology (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016). According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research involves the “collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study” (p. 44). Creswell further explained that both inductive and deductive data analysis methods are used in qualitative research for the purpose of identifying “patterns and themes” (p. 44) in the data.

The use of qualitative research in social sciences increased in the latter half of the 20th century, allowing researchers to seek a more in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). However, critics of qualitative research argue that the data are not statistically representative and generalizable to a population. A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate for this study as it focused on gaining an understanding of California school district superintendents’ or their designees’ conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open PPP for the LCAP.

Phenomenology is an approach focused on revealing a particular phenomenon through descriptions of people’s lived experiences of the phenomenon. However, the focus in phenomenography is on describing people’s varying conceptions of a particular phenomenon. An important distinction is that a phenomenographical approach does not focus on the phenomenon itself; rather, the focus is on people’s conceptions of the phenomenon (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016). In other words, a researcher uses a phenomenographic approach in order to describe the different ways people understand a particular phenomenon (Marton, 1981).

In the case of this study, there was no need to reveal the phenomenon of inquiry through descriptions of people’s lived experience; the phenomenon was already known—an inclusive,

fair, and open PPP per the LCAP guidelines. However, this phenomenon was not well defined. Therefore, this study aimed to determine if the IAP2 core values for public engagement/participation can provide the lacking definition and examine superintendents' or their designees' conceptions about the measures, guidelines, and techniques that can contribute to an inclusive, fair, and open PPP.

### **Key Findings (Themes)**

Six themes emerged from analyzing the data for similarities and differences using coding and thematic categorizing techniques (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). These themes included (a) authentic participation, (b) communication, (c) equity, (d) facilitation, (e) local control, and (f) trust. Table 9 provides a list of the six themes, 20 categories, and 40 subthemes identified as pertaining to the measures, guidelines, and techniques LEA leaders believe can contribute to the inclusiveness, fairness, and openness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process. The key finding (themes) will be identified and discussed. Sections pertaining to conclusions and recommendations will follow wherein the key findings will be related to the literature.

**Theme 1: Authentic participation.** Six subthemes drove the emergence of this theme. These six subthemes include: (a) checking attendance diversity, (b) diversity in attendance, (c) engaging the same people every time, (d) ensuring stakeholders' diversity, (e) ensuring attendees contribute, and (f) restricting participation.

Table 9

*Themes, Categories, and Subthemes*

Themes	Categories	Subthemes
Authentic Participation	Diversity Attendees Participation	Checking attendance diversity, Diversity in attendance, Engaging the same people every time, Ensuring stakeholders’ diversity, Ensuring attendees contribute, Restricting participation
Communication	Instructions Clarity Assess Questions	Capture each stakeholder’s voice, Clarity in communication, Collecting feedback, Conducting comprehensive surveys, Continual assessment, Continuous and clear communication, Ignoring stakeholders’ input, Informing stakeholders of progress, Open-ended communication, Poor communication, Sharing outcome with stakeholders, Standardizing, Use of unclear language
Equity	Integrity Equal Fair Access	Equal access, Lack of equity, Individual needs
Facilitation	Environment Comfort Tone Norms Organizing	More than One Avenue for Engagement and Feedback, Setting expectations, Not going to the stakeholders, Inconvenient meeting times and locations, Climate, Multiple venues, Facilitator, Poor facilitation
Local Control	Customization	Customizing
Trust	Honesty Transparency Expectations	Fostering trust with stakeholders Student Achievement, Independent oversight, Compliance document, Continuous trust development, Make it the norm, Transparency in data, Receive data, Lay a foundation, Not sharing all data

According to various interviewees, the LEA should be checking attendance diversity “while asking, ‘Who else should be here’” (I1)? Assessing who is participating and who is not helps determine actions to be taken to improve inclusive engagement among stakeholders, as suggested by multiple interviewees. In an effort to ensure fairness in the stakeholder engagement component of the LCAP, the district has a responsibility to seek out the involvement of all stakeholder groups who are affected by the potential decisions that are being made. One

interviewee supported this idea by stating, “We have to stop and ask ourselves who is not at the table, why are they not at the table, and what can we do to get them here” (I2). Multiple interviewees suggested that districts can use LCFF Dashboard data to identify what student subgroups and sites are struggling and the areas in which they are struggling. This data can “serve as a guide as to who is not at the table and who needs to be at the table” (I2), according to one interviewee. Because the stakeholder groups have diverse needs, wants, and levels of comfort, it is essential to provide “multiple ways to engage the community with multiple avenues for stakeholders to contribute” (I7). Responses from multiple interviewee suggested these avenues need to be assessed to determine relevance and success. In other words, “Stakeholders need to be asked, ‘How do you want to participate’” (I10)? Authentic participation is core to the heart of the LCAP process.

**Theme 2: Communication.** Thirteen subthemes drove the emergence of this theme: (a) capture each stakeholder’s voice, (b) clarity in communication, (c) collecting feedback, (d) conducting comprehensive surveys, (e) continual assessment, (f) continuous and clear communication, (g) ignoring stakeholders’ input, (h) informing stakeholders of progress, (i) open-ended communication, (j) poor communication, (k) sharing outcome with stakeholders, (l) standardizing, and (m) use of unclear language. According to interviewees, the stakeholder engagement PPP must be an ongoing cycle of communication and engagement, not a meeting with a beginning and end. As one interviewee emphasized,

So throughout the LCAP process the stakeholders should be informed of what the progress is in terms of what the input was and what has been achieved so far. This brings them into the process and they become aware of everything that’s taking place. (I2)

To ensure fairness, it is critical to ensure each stakeholder's voice is captured. In the words of one interviewee,

You know again this is something we took to heart through our own process and so what we made sure we did is we captured every piece of input from every person exactly as it was written, wasn't paraphrased, it wasn't, we captured exactly what was given and allowed the input of every single participant and then we categorized that input by group and by topic. (I9)

According to multiple interviewees, districts must communicate to the stakeholders in a manner they will understand, "because people can't be open and communicate if they don't understand what's going on" (I7). To safeguard openness in the LCAP stakeholder engagements process, clarity must be ensured. For instance use of abbreviations should be eliminated or, as one interviewee emphasized, "stop the acronyms" (I1). This is not a time for "staff to show off their fancy vocabulary and education jargon" (I7), but to speak in a respectful manner using terms and analogies all stakeholders can understand while taking time to explain education jargon and acronyms, as well as education code and regulations that may create parameters for the decision making. Stakeholders cannot be open about their thoughts if they don't understand what is being discussed. An ongoing cycle of mutual and purposeful communication is key to openness in the LCAP process.

**Theme 3: Equity.** Three subthemes drove the emergence of this theme: (a) equal access, (b) lack of equity, and (c) individual needs. Interviewees spoke to the idea equal is not always fair, stating, "You can hold a meeting in the middle of the day and make it open to all stakeholders, but that's not fair to parents who work, or staff members on duty" (I6). Interviewees suggested it is not about giving equal access as much as it is about meeting the

stakeholders where they are and addressing their individual needs. Providing variety and choice as to how and when stakeholders participate creates a more equitable and fair environment and LCAP process.

Stakeholders must also have equitable resources and opportunities in order for fairness to be achieved in the process. This could be achieved through providing translation services for those who don't understand English. One interviewee stated,

I think the traditional translator is passé and does not facilitate engagement, I think having the courtesy of headsets so that you're having simultaneous and real-time translation rather than 30-minute message going an hour because it's being translated both directions. (I7)

Translation services provide stakeholders the opportunity to engage actively in the process. In order for participants to understand the information, it needs to be provided in various stakeholder languages, academic language needs to be explained in layman's terms, and acronyms need to be defined. Meetings need to be held at different locations at varying times with the same agenda, making sure the materials presented are consistent throughout the gatherings. One participant offered, "Ways to ensure fairness, again, in my mind, would be using standardized material that you're presenting to the different groups so that they're all seeing the same thing" (I3). Equity in resource, time, and access is essential to the fairness of the LCAP process.

**Theme 4: Facilitation.** Eight subthemes drove the emergence of this theme: (a) more than one avenue for engagement and feedback, (b) setting expectations, (c) not going to the stakeholders, (d) inconvenient meeting times and locations, (e) multiple venues, (f) facilitator, (g) poor facilitation, and (h) climate. Interviewees advised that the individual(s) facilitating the

LCAP engagement processes should be trained and not be affected directly by the outcome. This means the facilitator should have “no horse in the race, only the goal of creating a safe environment where all voices can be heard” (I7). The facilitator should have an objective mind and not favor any side or group over another. The facilitator should have knowledge of the district, community, and LCAP process. The method of facilitation is key, because “you may achieve all things like having people from all groups attending the meeting, the meeting process being bilingual, but if you don’t engage the crowd then the meeting will have no meaningful impact” (I6). A trained facilitator ensures that when a stakeholder “shows up to a meeting they aren’t lectured at. Instead they are engaged in a way that engages and makes parents feel like they’re actually there and their opinions are valued” (I4). The participation process should be an engaged one.

In addition, interviewees recommended making sure the information is distributed through different means—including social media, newsletters, electronic communication, websites, all calls, radio advertisement, billboards, flyers, text messages, and word of mouth—to give updates on the LCAP process and the feedback that has been received. One participant emphasized the importance of “making sure that the LCAP process is...consistently communicated regularly, again, whether it’s through links, whether it’s through apps, Facebook or web page displays, galleries events, district events” (I7). Interviewees asserted that having meetings scheduled at different times and days provides opportunities for all stakeholders to participate and access to the information. As one interviewee stated, “Go to where the people already are, provide and collect LCAP information at football games, awards nights, and choir performances” (I5). One participant recommended recording and live streaming the in person meetings, noting that at their school, the meetings:

were also recorded or live streamed so that parents could engage no matter what if they're stuck at home because of some disability or some limitation they could watch it later and provide input we had an input mechanisms for after the meeting as well. (I9)

Facilitation supports a LCAP process that is inclusive, fair, and open.

**Theme 5: Local control.** One subtheme that drove the emergence of this theme: customizing. Interviewees indicated that in order for the process to be effective, everything has to be customized to fit the relevant district since each district is different; “the same guideline that would work for a large district or a small district would look very different as well as rural to urban” (I1). Developing guidelines at a local level for inclusiveness is critical. As one participant noted, “for me here making sure that meetings and documents are bilingual would be a key component of inclusiveness but that may not be true 10 miles down the road” (I6). “Fairness looks different at every district” (I1), and because of this it is important that each district and its stakeholders identify what is and is not fair as it pertains to that district. For example,

At my district parents care about military leave schedules, but that's because we live by a base, and many parents are military and their family is impacted when a loved one leaves or comes home from a tour, I'm sure someone on the other side of the county may not care as much about military leave schedules. (I3)

The decision to label this theme *local control* versus *customizing* derived from the literature, specifically that of the LCFE.

**Theme 6: Trust.** Nine subthemes drove the emergence of this theme: (a) fostering trust with stakeholders, (b) student achievement, (c) independent oversight, (d) compliance document, (e) continuous trust development, (f) make it the norm, (g) transparency in data, (h) receive data,

(i) lay a foundation, and (j) not sharing all data. Interviewees emphasized the importance of fostering a relationship of trust between the stakeholders and the LCAP committee. This in turn will ensure all participants feel free to contribute in agreement or disagreement without fear. In such circumstances, authentic conversations can be had and real change begins. In other words,

Where the real change happens is when people feel comfortable enough to say, “That’s a good idea but, have we thought about this?” and then for the other person to say, “You know what? I haven’t thought about this, but let’s talk more about this and see if it fits for what we’re trying to do,” instead of giving me 500 reasons why that won’t work. (I8)

In order for stakeholders to engage in the LCAP PPP in a meaningful way and make informed decisions, stakeholders must be given current and accurate data. As one participant shared,

I think the measures that we employed and that I felt were effective for ensuring openness in the process were anticipating information that would be helpful during our first meeting together and brought that data, so we brought for example our existing strategic plan, we brought student achievement data, we brought current strategic objectives that were underway and gave an overview of all that information so that people had as much information as we had at the time to make a clear decision. (I9)

Even though the data a district produces may seem endless, the district should “anticipate information that would be helpful to the decision making process” (I3) and bring that data to the stakeholders. The data will likely include that which the district desires to share as well as that which the district rather not. As one participant put it, “Get comfortable because sometimes the data is going to show a picture you don’t want to see” (I6). However, transparency in data and open conversations will help develop trust between the district and the stakeholders.

Interviewees also suggested that the conversation in the stakeholder engagement process generally begins from a quantitative data finding, specifically from the LCFF dashboard. However, districts must pay attention to the qualitative data captured by the stakeholders and brought to the process as this data “is real to the parents; this is what they care about, this is what they have strong feelings about” (I1). This too must be addressed and validated by the district in order to foster an environment of trust, transparency, and honesty.

## **Conclusions**

The findings of this study led to three conclusions that are aligned with the literature review and the participant interviews.

**Conclusion one.** Thematic analysis of the interview response data clearly aligns with the extensive research conducted by the IAP2 (2004) as presented in their Quality Assurance Standards, specifically the seven core values. The core values for public participation include the following factors: (a) everyone who is influenced by a resolution is entitled to be involved in the decision-making process, (b) the stakeholders’ opinions will be used in the final decision, (c) the needs and interests of the participants and decision-makers are recognized, (d) the decision-makers actively seeks for and involved everyone who is affected by the decision, (e) the design of the process focuses on enabling participation of all participants, (f) the stakeholders will receive all needed information, and (g) feedback to stakeholders will include the effect of their input in the final decision.

The interviewees accepted the core values as a foundation for best practices in the LCAP’s stakeholder engagement process. In addition, the six themes that emerged as a result of the thematic analysis of the interviewee responses directly correlate with the core values,

providing further validation for using the IAP2's core values as a foundation for best practices in the stakeholder engagement component of the LCAP (see Table 10).

Table 10

*Themes Organized by IAP2's Core Values*

Themes	IAP2's Core Values
Authentic Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone who is influenced by a resolution is entitled to be involved in the decision-making process</li> <li>• The decision-makers actively seeks for and involved everyone who is affected by the decision</li> </ul>
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The stakeholders' opinions will be used in the final decision</li> <li>• Feedback to stakeholders will include the effect of their input in the final decision.</li> </ul>
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The needs and interests of the participants and decision-makers are recognized</li> <li>• The design of the process focuses on enabling participation of all participants</li> </ul>
Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The design of the process focuses on enabling participation of all participants</li> </ul>
Local Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The design of the process focuses on enabling participation of all participants</li> </ul>
Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The stakeholders will receive all needed information</li> </ul>

**Conclusion two.** Data from the study clearly suggest that each interviewee has his/her own conception of which measures, guidelines, and techniques contribute to the inclusiveness, fairness, and openness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process. Although multiple interviewees identified many of the same measures, guidelines, and techniques, it remained clear their conceptions were a result of various life and scholarship experiences in contrast to a guiding set of core values or principles for stakeholder engagement. Multiple participants asked if there was a rubric for the LCAP stakeholder engagement PPP and expressed their desire to have one, or even a list of best practices. Due to the varying characteristics and components of each district, what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open LCAP PPP will differ; however, the

core values of the stakeholder engagement PPP may be applied across varying demographics and district characteristics.

**Conclusion three.** As evidenced by the interview data, authentic participation, communication, equity, facilitation, local control, and trust are suggested as imperative to an inclusive, fair, and open stakeholder engagement PPP. As illustrated in Table 11, this claim is supported by the works of Kania and Kramer’s (2011) collective impact theory, Comer’s (2005) whole child approach, and Epstein’s (2011) theory of overlapping spheres, all of which encompass one or more of the themes that emerged from this study.

Table 11

*Themes Aligned with the Literature*

Themes	Literature
Authentic Participation	Collective Impact Theory (Kania & Kramer, 2011) Whole Child Approach (Comer, 2005) Theory of Overlapping Spheres (Epstein, 2011)
Communication	Collective Impact Theory (Kania & Kramer, 2011) Whole Child Approach (Comer, 2005) Theory of Overlapping Spheres (Epstein, 2011)
Equity	Whole Child Approach (Comer, 2005)
Facilitation	Collective Impact Theory (Kania & Kramer, 2011) Theory of Overlapping Spheres (Epstein, 2011)
Local Control	Collective Impact Theory (Kania & Kramer, 2011) Whole Child Approach (Comer, 2005) Theory of Overlapping Spheres (Epstein, 2011)
Trust	Collective Impact Theory (Kania & Kramer, 2011) Whole Child Approach (Comer, 2005) Theory of Overlapping Spheres (Epstein, 2011)

## **Implications for Policy and Practice**

As a result of this study, the researcher offers three recommendations for policy and practice.

**Recommendation one.** As it pertains to the LCAP's stakeholder engagement component, the CDE would serve its stakeholders well by aligning its practices with Kania and Kramer's (2011) collective impact theory, specifically the 5 key elements: common agenda, common progress measures, mutually reinforcing activities, communication, and backbone organization. Through centralized infrastructure where the CDE is the backbone organization it can assist LEAs across the state by identifying a common agenda such as adopting a set of research based stakeholder engagement PPP core values. Collecting data and researching districts across the state to identify best stakeholder engagement practices will assist the CDE in identifying mutually reinforcing activities and develop a rubric or list of best practices for LEAs from the findings. In addition, the CDE could categorize the findings by district characteristics (such as: rural, urban, suburban, large, small, unified, elementary, high school, socioeconomic status, demographics, language barriers, etc.) to help districts identify best practices for their specific make up. All while engaging in open, ongoing, two way communication with LEAs about the stakeholder engagement component of the LCAP.

**Recommendation two.** Upon the adoption of a common agenda or set of core values to guide the stakeholder engagement component of the LCAP, the CDE should first deploy the initiative through a pilot as recommended by Kania and Kramer (2011) in their collective impact theory. A pilot would allow the CDE to guide the stakeholder engagement component of the LCAP. The pilot should include district training for the purpose of understanding the components and importance of the core values as well as training on the best practices that bring

the core values to fruition. The pilot should include a CDE or other organizational oversight for the purpose of both support of implementation and observation of outcomes. The piloting of a set of core values will assist the CDE in fine-tuning the development of a set of core values to guide stakeholder engagement as it pertains to the LCAP.

**Recommendation three.** Until the CDE is able to establish what Kania and Kramer (2011) refer to as a shared measurement or a rubric or set of core values to guide the stakeholder engagement PPP, districts should identify their own set of core values based on current research such as IAP2 and this study. The identification process should begin with a district committee made up of representatives from different stakeholder groups, whose purpose is to identify mutually reinforcing activities as outlined in the collective impact theory. Districts should both provide and receive training regarding the meaning and spirit of the adopted core values as well as what they look like enacted: in other words, what best practices accompany the core values.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

**Study stakeholders' perceptions of the current stakeholder engagement PPP process.** The researcher recommends conducting a similar study with stakeholders instead of the superintendents. This change in interviewees will allow for the comparison of superintendents' conceptions versus stakeholders' perceptions of current LCAP processes. The identification of gaps between the two could assist LEAs in reassessing and redeveloping current PPP practices in an effort to further engage stakeholders. Likewise, if gaps are not identified it would provide validation to current practices and conceptions.

**Study superintendents across California.** The researcher recommends studying superintendents across California, instead of being limited to one county. The geographical expansion would allow for statewide assessment of superintendents' conceptions, thus further

identifying both best practices and possible gaps in understanding and practice. Furthermore, it would be interesting to compare data results across counties, as well as identify county PPP trainings and recommendations for implementation.

**Adjust the interview instrument.** Since fatigue and time were not an issue in the study, the researcher recommends adding an additional question to the interview guide. This study could be improved upon if the interviewer established a better understanding of the difference between the interviewees' lived experience and perceived best practices. This understanding could be established by asking the interviewees, "What technique, measure, or guideline do you think would enhance your PPP, that you currently do not use?"

### **Closing Remarks**

The LCFF's LCAP's stakeholder engagement component appears to be designed to ensure districts partner with the communities they serve thus creating a means to bridge the gap between the community and the district for the purpose of improving student achievement. However, it appears from the lack of training and resources provided to the districts or county office of education by the CDE at the roll out of the LCAP, there may have been an assumption by the CDE that stakeholder engagement strategies are inherent to district leadership. The findings of this study support the idea that assumption is incorrect. After speaking with the interviewees and reading the literature it was clear stakeholder engagement strategies are not inherent to district leadership, in fact multiple interviewees stated they would like to have a rubric or set of core values to guide the LCAP stakeholder engagement process. As a result, the researcher is even more convinced of the need to provide LEAs with guidance and best practices for the stakeholder engagement process. Training and professional development on the stakeholder engagement component of the LCAP would go far in ensuring the LCAP does not

become a compliance document, instead would allow the LCFE intent of “deeply engaging families and communities” (Humphrey & Koppich, 2014, p. 7) to come to fruition. The importance of and need for stakeholder engagement go far beyond that of the LCFE and LCAP and can be seen across nations and communities.

We must move past the assumption that stakeholder engagement practices are inherent and common knowledge. Instead, we must recognize the need to teach and train those who are entrusted with implementing and fostering the stakeholder engagement process in an effort to ensure the techniques, guidelines, and measures foster a PPP that is inclusive, fair and open.

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## APPENDIX A

### Job Description: Superintendent

#### **State of California EDUCATION CODE Section 35035 35035.**

The superintendent of each school district shall, in addition to other powers and duties granted to or imposed upon him or her: (a) Be the chief executive officer of the governing board of the school district (b) Except in a school district where the governing board has appointed or designated an employee other than the superintendent, or a deputy, or assistant superintendent, to prepare and submit a budget, prepare and submit to the governing board of the school district, at the time it may direct, the budget of the school district for the next ensuing school year, and revise and take other action in connection with the budget as the governing board of the school district may desire. (c) Be responsible for the preparation and submission to the governing board of the school district, at the time the governing board may direct, the local control and accountability plan of the school district for the subsequent school year, and revise and take other action in connection with the local control and accountability plan as the governing board of the school district may desire. (d) Except in a school district where the governing board has appointed or designated an employee other than the superintendent, or a deputy, or assistant superintendent, ensure that the local control and accountability plan is implemented. (e) Subject to the approval of the governing board of the school district, assign all employees of the school district employed in positions requiring certification qualifications to the positions in which they are to serve. This power to assign includes the power to transfer a teacher from one school to another school at which the teacher is certificated to serve within the school district when the superintendent concludes that the transfer is in the best interest of the school district. (f) Upon adoption by the school district board of a school district policy concerning transfers of teachers from one school to another school within the school district, have authority to transfer teachers consistent with that policy. (g) Determine that each employee of the school district in a position requiring certification qualifications has a valid certificated document registered as required by law authorizing him or her to serve in the position to which he or she is assigned. (h) Enter into contracts for and on behalf of the school district pursuant to Section 17604. (i) Submit financial and budgetary reports to the governing board of the school district as required by Section 42130. (Amended by Stats. 2015, Ch. 303, Sec. 72. (AB 731) Effective January 1, 2016; CDE, 2015)

# APPENDIX B

## LCAP Cycle

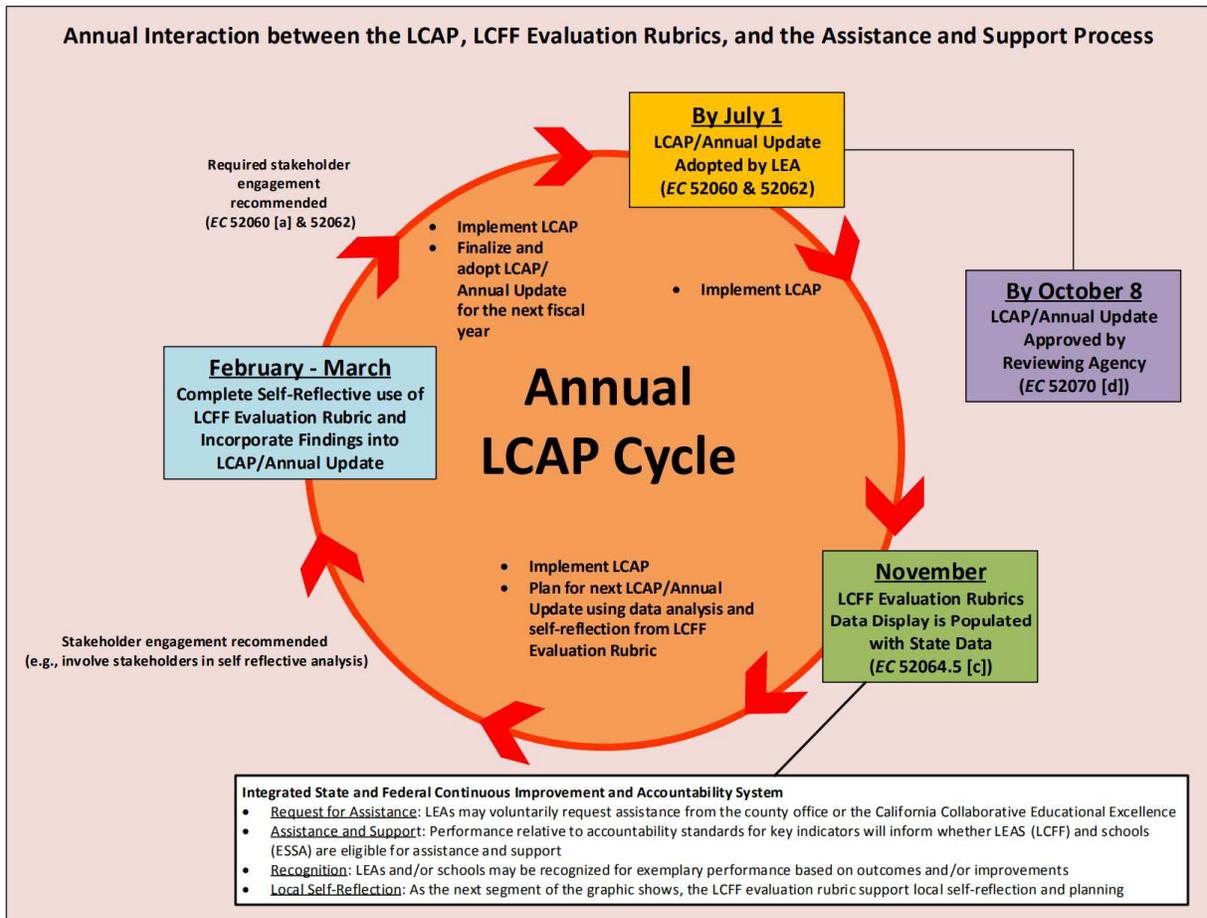


Figure B1. Annual LCAP cycle.

APPENDIX C

LCAP Approval Timeline

**County Superintendent Process and Timeline to Review and Approve District Budgets and LCAPs**

<i>(no later than)</i>	<b>Budget Action</b>	<b>LCAP Action</b>
<b>July 1</b>	Transmit adopted budget to county superintendent	Adopt LCAP
<b>July 6</b>		Transmit adopted LCAP to county superintendent
<b>August 15</b>	County superintendent approves, conditionally approves or disapproves budget (conditional approval or disapproval must be accompanied by written recommendations to revise budget)	County superintendent may seek written clarification on LCAP from LEA
<b>August 30</b> <i>(or within 15 days of receiving written response)</i>		LEA shall provide written response to county superintendent
<b>September 8</b>	LEA must revise budget and file it with county superintendent	
<b>September 15</b> <i>(or within 15 days of receiving LEA response)</i>		County superintendent may submit written recommendations to amend the LCAP
<b>September 30</b> <i>(or within 15 days of receiving written recommendations)</i>		LEA must consider county superintendents recommendations at a public hearing
<b>October 8</b>	County superintendent shall approve or disapprove revised budget	County superintendent shall approve LCAP if conditions for approval are met

*Figure C1.* County superintendent process and timeline to review and approve district budgets and LCAPs.

APPENDIX D

Approved Revised LCAP Template

LCAP Year  2017–18  2018–19  2019–20

**Local Control**

Addendum: General instructions & regulatory requirements.

**Accountability Plan and**

Appendix A: Priorities 5 and 6 Rate Calculations

**Annual Update (LCAP)**

Appendix B: Guiding Questions: Use as prompts (not limits)

**Template**

LCFF Evaluation Rubrics [Note: this text will be hyperlinked to the

LCFF Evaluation Rubric web page when it becomes available.]:

Essential data to support completion of this LCAP. Please analyze

the LEA’s full data set; specific links to the rubrics are also

provided within the template.

LEA Name

Contact Name and Title

Email and Phone

**2017-20 Plan Summary**

**THE STORY**

Briefly describe the students and community and how the LEA serves them.

[Empty text box for 'THE STORY' section]

**LCAP HIGHLIGHTS**

Identify and briefly summarize the key features of this year’s LCAP.

[Empty text box for 'LCAP HIGHLIGHTS' section]



## **REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE**

Based on a review of performance on the state indicators and local performance indicators included in the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics, progress toward LCAP goals, local self-assessment tools, stakeholder input, or other information, what progress is the LEA most proud of and how does the LEA plan to maintain or build upon that success? This may include identifying any specific examples of how past increases or improvements in services for low-income students, English learners, and foster youth have led to improved performance for these students.

## **GREATEST PROGRESS**



Referring to the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics, identify any state indicator or local performance indicator for which overall performance was in the “Red” or “Orange” performance category or where the LEA received a “Not Met” or “Not Met for Two or More Years” rating. Additionally, identify any areas that the LEA has determined need significant improvement based on review of local performance indicators or other local indicators. What steps is the LEA planning to take to address these areas with the greatest need for improvement?

**GREATEST NEEDS**



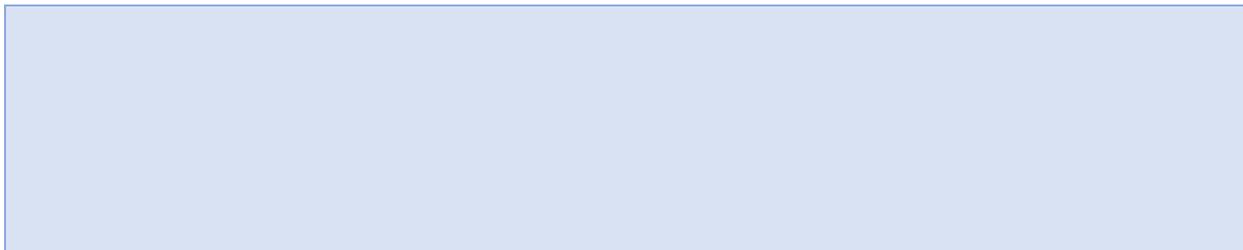
Referring to the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics, identify any state indicator for which performance for any student group was two or more performance levels below the “all student” performance. What steps is the LEA planning to take to address these performance gaps?

**PERFORMANCE GAPS**



**INCREASED OR IMPROVED SERVICES**

If not previously addressed, identify the two to three most significant ways that the LEA will increase or improve services for low-income students, English learners, and foster youth.



**BUDGET SUMMARY**

Complete the table below. LEAs may include additional information or more detail, including graphics.

**DESCRIPTION**

**AMOUNT**

Total General Fund Budget Expenditures for LCAP Year

\$

Total Funds Budgeted for Planned Actions/Services to Meet the Goals in the LCAP for LCAP Year

\$

The LCAP is intended to be a comprehensive planning tool but may not describe all General Fund Budget Expenditures. Briefly describe any of the General Fund Budget Expenditures specified above for the LCAP year not included in the LCAP.

**\$** Total Projected LCFF Revenues for LCAP Year

**Annual Update** LCAP Year Reviewed: **XXXX-XX**

Complete a copy of the following table for each of the LEA’s goals from the prior year LCAP. Duplicate the table as needed.

<b>Goal 1</b>	
State and/or Local Priorities Addressed by this goal:	STATE <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8  COE <input type="checkbox"/> 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10  LOCAL _____

ANNUAL MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

**EXPECTED**

**ACTUAL**

--	--

ACTIONS/SERVICES

Duplicate the Actions/Services from the prior year LCAP and complete a copy of the following table for each.

Duplicate the table as needed.

# 1

Action

Actions/Services	PLANNED	ACTUAL
Expenditures	BUDGETED	ESTIMATED ACTUAL

## ANALYSIS

Complete a copy of the following table for each of the LEA's goals from the prior year LCAP. Duplicate the table as needed.

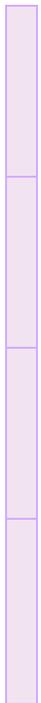
Use actual annual measurable outcome data, including performance data from the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics, as applicable.

Describe the overall implementation of the actions/services to achieve the articulated goal.

Describe the overall effectiveness of the actions/services to achieve the articulated goal as measured by the LEA.

Explain material differences between Budgeted Expenditures and Estimated Actual Expenditures.

Describe any changes made to this goal, expected outcomes, metrics, or actions and services to achieve this goal as a result of this analysis and analysis of the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics, as applicable. Identify where those changes can be found in the LCAP.



# Stakeholder Engagement

LCAP Year

2017–18    2018–19    2019–20

## INVOLVEMENT PROCESS FOR LCAP AND ANNUAL UPDATE

How, when, and with whom did the LEA consult as part of the planning process for this LCAP/Annual Review and Analysis?

## IMPACT ON LCAP AND ANNUAL UPDATE

How did these consultations impact the LCAP for the upcoming year?

# Goals, Actions, & Services

## Strategic Planning Details and Accountability

Complete a copy of the following table for each of the LEA’s goals. Duplicate the table as needed.

	<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Modified	<input type="checkbox"/> Unchanged
<b>Goal 1</b>			
State and/or Local Priorities	STATE <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8		
Addressed by this goal:			

COE  9  10

LOCAL \_\_\_\_\_

Identified Need

EXPECTED ANNUAL MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Metrics/Indicators	Baseline	2017-18	2018-19	2019
				-20


PLANNED ACTIONS/SERVICES

Complete a copy of the following table for each of the LEA's Actions/Services. Duplicate the table, including Budgeted Expenditures, as needed.

Action **1**

For Actions/Services not included as contributing to meeting the Increased or Improved Services Requirement:

Students to be Served	<input type="checkbox"/> All <input type="checkbox"/> Students with Disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> [Specific Student Group(s)] _____
Location(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> All schools <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Schools: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Grade spans: _____

**OR**

For Actions/Services included as contributing to meeting the Increased or Improved Services Requirement:

Students to be Served	<input type="checkbox"/> English Learners <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Youth <input type="checkbox"/> Low Income
-----------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Scope of Services	<input type="checkbox"/> LEA-wide <input type="checkbox"/> Schoolwide <b>OR</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Limited to Unduplicated Student Group(s)
Location(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> All schools <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Schools: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Grade spans: _____

**ACTIONS/SERVICES**

<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Modified <input type="checkbox"/> Unchanged	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Modified <input type="checkbox"/> Unchanged	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Modified <input type="checkbox"/> Unchanged

**BUDGETED**

**EXPENDITURES**

<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>
Amount	Amount	Amount
Source	Source	Source
Budget Reference	Budget Reference	Budget Reference

**Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Pupils**

LCAP Year	<input type="checkbox"/> 2017-18 <input type="checkbox"/> 2018-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 2019-20	
Estimated Supplemental and Concentration Grant Funds:	\$	Percentage to Increase or Improve Services: %

Describe how services provided for unduplicated pupils are increased or improved by at least the percentage identified above, either qualitatively or quantitatively, as compared to services provided for all students in the LCAP year.

Identify each action/service being funded and provided on a schoolwide or LEA-wide basis. Include the required descriptions supporting each schoolwide or LEA-wide use of funds (see instructions).

The End

## **Local Control and Accountability Plan and Annual Update Template**

### **Instructions**

### **Addendum**

*The Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and Annual Update Template documents and communicates local educational agencies' (LEAs) actions and expenditures to support student outcomes and overall performance.*

*The LCAP is a three-year plan, which is reviewed and updated annually, as required. Charter schools may complete the LCAP to align with the term of the charter school's budget, typically one year, which is submitted to the school's authorizer. The LCAP and Annual Update Template must be completed by all LEAs each year.*

*For school districts, the LCAP must describe, for the school district and each school within the district, goals and specific actions to achieve those goals for all students and each student group identified by the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF; ethnic, socioeconomically disadvantaged, English learners, foster youth, pupils with disabilities, and homeless youth), for each of the state priorities and any locally identified priorities.*

*For county offices of education, the LCAP must describe, for each county office of education-operated school and program, goals and specific actions to achieve those goals for all students and each LCFF student group funded through the county office of education (students attending juvenile court schools, on probation or parole, or expelled under certain conditions) for each of the state priorities and any locally identified priorities. School districts and county offices of education may additionally coordinate and describe in their LCAPs services funded by a school district that are provided to students attending county-operated schools and programs, including special education programs.*

*If a county superintendent of schools has jurisdiction over a single school district, the county board of education and the governing board of the school district may adopt and file for review and approval a single LCAP consistent with the requirements in Education Code (EC) sections 52060, 52062, 52066, 52068, and 52070. The LCAP must clearly articulate to which entity's budget (school district or county superintendent of schools) all budgeted and actual expenditures are aligned.*

*Charter schools must describe goals and specific actions to achieve those goals for all students and each LCFF subgroup of students including students with disabilities and homeless youth, for each of the state priorities that apply for the grade levels served or the nature of the program operated by the charter school, and any locally identified priorities. For charter schools, the inclusion and description of goals for state priorities in the LCAP may be modified to meet the grade levels served and the nature of the programs provided, including modifications to reflect only the statutory requirements explicitly applicable to charter schools in the EC. Changes in LCAP goals and actions/services for charter schools that result from the annual update process do not necessarily constitute a material revision to the school's charter petition.*

*For questions related to specific sections of the template, please see instructions below:*

### **Instructions: Linked Table of Contents**

Plan Summary  
Annual Update  
Stakeholder Engagement  
Goals, Actions, and Services  
Planned Actions/Services  
Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Students

*For additional questions or technical assistance related to completion of the LCAP template, please contact the local county office of education, or the CDE's Local Agency Systems Support Office at: [REDACTED] or by email at: [REDACTED]*

### **Plan Summary**

The LCAP is intended to reflect an LEA's annual goals, actions, services and expenditures within a fixed three-year planning cycle. LEAs must include a plan summary for the LCAP each year.

When developing the LCAP, mark the appropriate LCAP year, and address the prompts provided in these sections. When developing the LCAP in year 2 or year 3, mark the appropriate LCAP year and replace the previous summary information with information relevant to the current year LCAP.

In this section, briefly address the prompts provided. These prompts are not limits. LEAs may include information regarding local program(s), community demographics, and the overall vision of the LEA. LEAs may also attach documents (e.g., the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics data reports) if desired and/or include charts illustrating goals, planned outcomes, actual outcomes, or related planned and actual expenditures.

An LEA may use an alternative format for the plan summary as long as it includes the information specified in each prompt and the budget summary table.

The reference to LCFF Evaluation Rubrics means the evaluation rubrics adopted by the State Board of Education under *EC* Section 52064.5.

## **Budget Summary**

The LEA must complete the LCAP Budget Summary table as follows:

- **Total LEA General Fund Budget Expenditures for the LCAP Year:** This amount is the LEA's total budgeted General Fund expenditures for the LCAP year. The LCAP year means the fiscal year for which an LCAP is adopted or updated by July 1. The General Fund is the main operating fund of the LEA and accounts for all activities not accounted for in another fund. All activities are reported in the General Fund unless there is a compelling reason to account for an activity in another fund. For further information please refer to the *California School Accounting Manual* (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/ac/sa/>). (Note: For some charter schools that follow governmental fund accounting, this amount is the total budgeted expenditures in the Charter Schools Special Revenue Fund. For charter schools that follow the not-for-profit accounting model, this amount is total budgeted expenses, such as those budgeted in the Charter Schools Enterprise Fund.)
- **Total Funds Budgeted for Planned Actions/Services to Meet the Goals in the LCAP for the LCAP Year:** This amount is the total of the budgeted expenditures associated with the actions/services included for the LCAP year from all sources of funds, as reflected in the LCAP. To the extent actions/services and/or expenditures are listed in the LCAP under more than one goal, the expenditures should be counted only once.
- **Description of any use(s) of the General Fund Budget Expenditures specified above for the LCAP year not included in the LCAP:** Briefly describe expenditures included in total General Fund Expenditures that are not included in the total funds budgeted for planned actions/services for the LCAP year. (Note: The total funds budgeted for planned actions/services may include funds other than general fund expenditures.)
- **Total Projected LCFF Revenues for LCAP Year:** This amount is the total amount of LCFF funding the LEA estimates it will receive pursuant to *EC* sections 42238.02 (for school districts and charter schools) and 2574 (for county offices of education), as implemented by *EC* sections 42238.03 and 2575 for the LCAP year respectively.

## **Annual Update**

The planned goals, expected outcomes, actions/services, and budgeted expenditures must be copied verbatim from the previous year's\* approved LCAP. Minor typographical errors may be corrected.

\* For example, for LCAP year 2017/18 of the 2017/18 – 2019/20 LCAP, review the goals in the 2016/17 LCAP. Moving forward, review the goals from the most recent LCAP year. For example, LCAP year 2020/21 will review goals from the 2019/20 LCAP year, which is the last year of the 2017/18 – 2019/20 LCAP.

### **Annual Measurable Outcomes**

For each goal in the prior year, identify and review the actual measurable outcomes as compared to the expected annual measurable outcomes identified in the prior year for the goal.

### **Actions/Services**

Identify the planned Actions/Services and the budgeted expenditures to implement these actions toward achieving the described goal. Identify the **actual** actions/services implemented to meet the described goal and the estimated actual annual expenditures to implement the actions/services. As applicable, identify any changes to the students or student groups served, or to the planned location of the actions/services provided.

### **Analysis**

Using actual annual measurable outcome data, including data from the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics, analyze whether the planned actions/services were effective in achieving the goal. Respond to the prompts as instructed.

- Describe the overall implementation of the actions/services to achieve the articulated goal. Include a discussion of relevant challenges and successes experienced with the implementation process.
- Describe the overall effectiveness of the actions/services to achieve the articulated goal as measured by the LEA.
- Explain material differences between Budgeted Expenditures and Estimated Actual Expenditures. Minor variances in expenditures or a dollar-for-dollar accounting is not required.
- Describe any changes made to this goal, expected outcomes, metrics, or actions and services to achieve this goal as a result of this analysis and analysis of the data provided in the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics, as applicable. Identify where those changes can be found in the LCAP.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

Meaningful engagement of parents, students, and other stakeholders, including those representing the student groups identified by LCFF, is critical to the development of the LCAP and the budget process. *EC* identifies the minimum consultation requirements for school districts and county offices of education as consulting with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, local bargaining units of the school district, parents, and pupils in developing the LCAP. *EC* requires charter schools to consult with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel,

parents, and pupils in developing the LCAP. In addition, *EC* Section 48985 specifies the requirements for the translation of notices, reports, statements, or records sent to a parent or guardian.

The LCAP should be shared with, and LEAs should request input from, school site-level advisory groups, as applicable (e.g., school site councils, English Learner Advisory Councils, student advisory groups, etc.), to facilitate alignment between school-site and district-level goals and actions. An LEA may incorporate or reference actions described in other plans that are being undertaken to meet specific goals.

**Instructions:** The stakeholder engagement process is an ongoing, annual process. The requirements for this section are the same for each year of a three-year LCAP. When developing the LCAP, mark the appropriate LCAP year, and describe the stakeholder engagement process used to develop the LCAP and Annual Update. When developing the LCAP in year 2 or year 3, mark the appropriate LCAP year and replace the previous stakeholder narrative(s) and describe the stakeholder engagement process used to develop the current year LCAP and Annual Update.

**School districts and county offices of education:** Describe the process used to consult with the Parent Advisory Committee, the English Learner Parent Advisory Committee, parents, students, school personnel, the LEA's local bargaining units, and the community to inform the development of the LCAP and the annual review and analysis for the indicated LCAP year.

**Charter schools:** Describe the process used to consult with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, parents, and students to inform the development of the LCAP and the annual review and analysis for the indicated LCAP year.

Describe how the consultation process impacted the development of the LCAP and annual update for the indicated LCAP year, including the goals, actions, services, and expenditures.

## **Goals, Actions, and Services**

LEAs must include a description of the annual goals, for all students and each LCFF identified group of students, to be achieved for each state priority as applicable to type of LEA. An LEA may also include additional local priorities. This section shall also include a description of the specific planned actions an LEA will take to meet the identified goals, and a description of the expenditures required to implement the specific actions.

**School districts and county offices of education:** The LCAP is a three-year plan, which is reviewed and updated annually, as required.

**Charter schools:** The number of years addressed in the LCAP may align with the term of the charter schools budget, typically one year, which is submitted to the school’s authorizer. If year 2 and/or year 3 is not applicable, charter schools must specify as such.

### **New, Modified, Unchanged**

As part of the LCAP development process, which includes the annual update and stakeholder engagement, indicate if the goal, identified need, related state and/or local priorities, and/or expected annual measurable outcomes for the current LCAP year or future LCAP years are modified or unchanged from the previous year’s LCAP; or, specify if the goal is new.

### **Goal**

State the goal. LEAs may number the goals using the “Goal #” box for ease of reference. A goal is a broad statement that describes the desired result to which all actions/services are directed. A goal answers the question: What is the LEA seeking to achieve?

### **Related State and/or Local Priorities**

Identify the state and/or local priorities addressed by the goal by placing a check mark next to the applicable priority or priorities. The LCAP must include goals that address each of the state priorities, as applicable to the type of LEA, and any additional local priorities; however, one goal may address multiple priorities. ([Link to State Priorities](#))

### **Identified Need**

Describe the needs that led to establishing the goal. The identified needs may be based on quantitative or qualitative information, including, but not limited to, results of the annual update process or performance data from the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics, as applicable.

### **Expected Annual Measurable Outcomes**

For each LCAP year, identify the metric(s) or indicator(s) that the LEA will use to track progress toward the expected outcomes. LEAs may identify metrics for specific student groups. Include in the baseline column the most recent data associated with this metric or indicator available at the time of adoption of the

LCAP for the first year of the three-year plan. The most recent data associated with a metric or indicator includes data as reported in the annual update of the LCAP year immediately preceding the three-year plan, as applicable. The baseline data shall remain unchanged throughout the three-year LCAP. In the subsequent year columns, identify the progress to be made in each year of the three-year cycle of the LCAP. Consider how expected outcomes in any given year are related to the expected outcomes for subsequent years. The metrics may be quantitative or qualitative, but at minimum an LEA must use the applicable required metrics for the related state priorities, in each LCAP year as applicable to the type of LEA. For the student engagement priority metrics, as applicable, LEAs must calculate the rates as described in the LCAP Template Appendix, sections (a) through (d).

### **Planned Actions/Services**

For each action/service, the LEA must complete either the section “For Actions/Services not contributing to meeting Increased or Improved Services Requirement” or the section “For Actions/Services Contributing to Meeting the Increased or Improved Services Requirement.” The LEA shall not complete both sections for a single action.

## **For Actions/Services Not Contributing to Meeting the Increased or Improved Services Requirement**

### **Students to be Served**

The “Students to be Served” box is to be completed for all actions/services except for those which are included by the LEA as contributing to meeting the requirement to increase or improve services for unduplicated students. Indicate in this box which students will benefit from the actions/services by checking “All”, “Students with Disabilities”, or “Specific Student Group(s)”. If “Specific Student Group(s)” is checked, identify the specific student group(s) as appropriate.

### **Location(s)**

Identify the location where the action/services will be provided. If the services are provided to all schools within the LEA, the LEA must indicate “All Schools”. If the services are provided to specific schools within the LEA or specific grade spans only, the LEA must mark “Specific Schools” or “Specific Grade

Spans”. Identify the individual school or a subset of schools or grade spans (e.g., all high schools or grades K-5), as appropriate.

**Charter schools** operating more than one site, authorized within the same charter petition, may choose to distinguish between sites by selecting “Specific Schools” and identify the site(s) where the actions/services will be provided. For charter schools operating only one site, “All Schools” and “Specific Schools” may be synonymous and, therefore, either would be appropriate. Charter schools may use either term provided they are used in a consistent manner through the LCAP.

## **For Actions/Services Contributing to Meeting the Increased or Improved Services**

### **Requirement:**

#### **Students to be Served**

For any action/service contributing to the LEA’s overall demonstration that it has increased or improved services for unduplicated students above what is provided to all students (see Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Students section, below), the LEA must identify the unduplicated student group(s) being served.

#### **Scope of Service**

For each action/service contributing to meeting the increased or improved services requirement, identify scope of service by indicating “LEA-wide”, “Schoolwide”, or “Limited to Unduplicated Student Group(s)”. The LEA must select one of the following three options:

- If the action/service is being funded and provided to upgrade the entire educational program of the LEA, place a check mark next to “LEA-wide.”
- If the action/service is being funded and provided to upgrade the entire educational program of a particular school or schools, place a check mark next to “schoolwide”.
- If the action/service being funded and provided is limited to the unduplicated students identified in “Students to be Served”, place a check mark next to “Limited to Student Groups”.

**For charter schools and single-school school districts**, “LEA-wide” and “Schoolwide” may be synonymous and, therefore, either would be appropriate. For charter schools operating multiple schools (determined by a unique CDS code) under a single charter, use “LEA-wide” to refer to all schools under the charter and use “Schoolwide” to refer to a single school authorized within the same charter petition. Charter schools operating a single school may use “LEA-wide” or “Schoolwide” provided these terms are used in a consistent manner through the LCAP.

## Location(s)

Identify the location where the action/services will be provided. If the services are provided to all schools within the LEA, the LEA must indicate “All Schools”. If the services are provided to specific schools within the LEA or specific grade spans only, the LEA must mark “Specific Schools” or “Specific Grade Spans”. Identify the individual school or a subset of schools or grade spans (e.g., all high schools or grades K-5), as appropriate.

**Charter schools** operating more than one site, authorized within the same charter petition, may choose to distinguish between sites by selecting “Specific Schools” and identify the site(s) where the actions/services will be provided. For charter schools operating only one site, “All Schools” and “Specific Schools” may be synonymous and, therefore, either would be appropriate. Charter schools may use either term provided they are used in a consistent manner through the LCAP.

## Actions/Services

For each LCAP year, identify the actions to be performed and services provided to meet the described goal. Actions and services that are implemented to achieve the identified goal may be grouped together. LEAs may number the action/service using the “Action #” box for ease of reference.

### **New/Modified/Unchanged:**

- Check “New” if the action/service is being added in any of the three years of the LCAP to meet the articulated goal.
- Check “Modified” if the action/service was included to meet an articulated goal and has been changed or modified in any way from the prior year description.
- Check “Unchanged” if the action/service was included to meet an articulated goal and has not been changed or modified in any way from the prior year description.
  - If a planned action/service is anticipated to remain unchanged for the duration of the plan, an LEA may check “Unchanged” and leave the subsequent year columns blank rather than having to copy/paste the action/service into the subsequent year columns. Budgeted expenditures may be treated in the same way as applicable.

**Note:** The goal from the prior year may or may not be included in the current three-year LCAP. For example, when developing year 1 of the LCAP, the goals articulated in year 3 of the preceding three-year LCAP will be from the prior year.

**Charter schools** may complete the LCAP to align with the term of the charter school’s budget that is submitted to the school’s authorizer. Accordingly, a charter school submitting a one-year budget to its authorizer may choose not to complete the year 2 and year 3 portions of the “Goals, Actions, and Services” section of the template. If year 2 and/or year 3 is not applicable, charter schools must specify as such.

## **Budgeted Expenditures**

For each action/service, list and describe budgeted expenditures for each school year to implement these actions, including where those expenditures can be found in the LEA's budget. The LEA must reference all fund sources for each proposed expenditure. Expenditures must be classified using the California School Accounting Manual as required by *EC* sections 52061, 52067, and 47606.5.

Expenditures that are included more than once in an LCAP must be indicated as a duplicated expenditure and include a reference to the goal and action/service where the expenditure first appears in the LCAP.

If a county superintendent of schools has jurisdiction over a single school district, and chooses to complete a single LCAP, the LCAP must clearly articulate to which entity's budget (school district or county superintendent of schools) all budgeted expenditures are aligned.

## **Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Students**

This section must be completed for each LCAP year. When developing the LCAP in year 2 or year 3, copy the "Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Students" table and mark the appropriate LCAP year. Using the copy of the table, complete the table as required for the current year LCAP. Retain all prior year tables for this section for each of the three years within the LCAP.

## **Estimated Supplemental and Concentration Grant Funds**

Identify the amount of funds in the LCAP year calculated on the basis of the number and concentration of low income, foster youth, and English learner students as determined pursuant to *California Code of Regulations*, Title 5 (5 CCR) Section 15496(a)(5).

## **Percentage to Increase or Improve Services**

Identify the percentage by which services for unduplicated pupils must be increased or improved as compared to the services provided to all students in the LCAP year as calculated pursuant to 5 CCR Section 15496(a)(7).

Consistent with the requirements of 5 CCR Section 15496, describe how services provided for unduplicated pupils are increased or improved by at least the percentage calculated as compared to services provided for all students in the LCAP year. To improve services means to grow services in quality and to increase services means to grow services in quantity. This description must address how the action(s)/service(s) limited for one or more unduplicated student group(s), and any schoolwide or districtwide action(s)/service(s) supported by the appropriate description, taken together, result in the required proportional increase or improvement in services for unduplicated pupils. If the overall increased or improved services include any actions/services being funded and provided on a schoolwide or districtwide basis, identify each action/service and include the required descriptions supporting each action/service as follows.

For those services being provided on an LEA-wide basis:

- For school districts with an unduplicated pupil percentage of 55% or more, and for charter schools and county offices of education: Describe how these services are **principally directed to** and **effective in** meeting its goals for unduplicated pupils in the state and any local priorities.
- For school districts with an unduplicated pupil percentage of less than 55%: Describe how these services are **principally directed to** and **effective in** meeting its goals for unduplicated pupils in the state and any local priorities. Also describe how the services are **the most effective use of the funds to** meet these goals for its unduplicated pupils. Provide the basis for this determination, including any alternatives considered, supporting research, experience or educational theory.

For school districts only, identify in the description those services being funded and provided on a schoolwide basis, and include the required description supporting the use of the funds on a schoolwide basis:

- For schools with 40% or more enrollment of unduplicated pupils: Describe how these services are **principally directed to** and **effective in** meeting its goals for its unduplicated pupils in the state and any local priorities.
- For school districts expending funds on a schoolwide basis at a school with less than 40% enrollment of unduplicated pupils: Describe how these services are **principally directed to** and how the services are **the most effective use of the funds to** meet its goals for English learners, low income students and foster youth, in the state and any local priorities.

## State Priorities

**Priority 1: Basic Services** addresses the degree to which:

- Teachers in the LEA are appropriately assigned and fully credentialed in the subject area and for the pupils they are teaching;
- Pupils in the school district have sufficient access to the standards-aligned instructional materials; and
- School facilities are maintained in good repair.

**Priority 2: Implementation of State Standards** addresses:

- The implementation of state board adopted academic content and performance standards for all students, which are:
  - English Language Arts – Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts
  - Mathematics – CCSS for Mathematics
  - English Language Development (ELD)
  - Career Technical Education
  - Health Education Content Standards
  - History-Social Science
  - Model School Library Standards
  - Physical Education Model Content Standards
  - Next Generation Science Standards
  - Visual and Performing Arts
  - World Language; and
- How the programs and services will enable English learners to access the CCSS and the ELD standards for purposes of gaining academic content knowledge and English language proficiency.

**Priority 3: Parental Involvement** addresses:

- The efforts the school district makes to seek parent input in making decisions for the school district and each individual school site;
- How the school district will promote parental participation in programs for unduplicated pupils; and
- How the school district will promote parental participation in programs for individuals with exceptional needs.

**Priority 4: Pupil Achievement** as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

- Statewide assessments;

- B. The Academic Performance Index;
- C. The percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU) entrance requirements, or programs of study that align with state board approved career technical educational standards and framework;
- D. The percentage of English learner pupils who make progress toward English proficiency as measured by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT);
- E. The English learner reclassification rate;
- F. The percentage of pupils who have passed an advanced placement examination with a score of 3 or higher; and
- G. The percentage of pupils who participate in, and demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to, the Early Assessment Program, or any subsequent assessment of college preparedness.

**Priority 5: Pupil Engagement** as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

- A. School attendance rates;
- B. Chronic absenteeism rates;
- C. Middle school dropout rates;
- D. High school dropout rates; and
- E. High school graduation rates;

**Priority 6: School Climate** as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

- A. Pupil suspension rates;
- B. Pupil expulsion rates; and
- C. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness.

**Priority 7: Course Access** addresses the extent to which pupils have access to and are enrolled in:

- A. S broad course of study including courses described under *EC* sections 51210 and 51220(a)-(i), as applicable;
- B. Programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated pupils; and
- C. Programs and services developed and provided to individuals with exceptional needs.

**Priority 8: Pupil Outcomes** addresses pupil outcomes, if available, for courses described under *EC* sections 51210 and 51220(a)-(i), as applicable.

**Priority 9: Coordination of Instruction of Expelled Pupils (COE Only)** addresses how the county superintendent of schools will coordinate instruction of expelled pupils.

**Priority 10. Coordination of Services for Foster Youth (COE Only)** addresses how the county superintendent of schools will coordinate services for foster children, including:

- A. Working with the county child welfare agency to minimize changes in school placement
- B. Providing education-related information to the county child welfare agency to assist in the delivery of services to foster children, including educational status and progress information that is required to be included in court reports;
- C. Responding to requests from the juvenile court for information and working with the juvenile court to ensure the delivery and coordination of necessary educational services; and
- D. Establishing a mechanism for the efficient expeditious transfer of health and education records and the health and education passport.

**Local Priorities** address:

- A. Local priority goals; and
- B. Methods for measuring progress toward local goals.

## **PRIORITIES 5 AND 6 RATE CALCULATION INSTRUCTIONS**

For the purposes of completing the LCAP in reference to the state priorities under *EC* sections 52060 and 52066, as applicable to type of LEA, the following shall apply:

- (a) “Chronic absenteeism rate” shall be calculated as follows:
  - (1) The number of pupils with a primary, secondary, or short-term enrollment during the academic year (July 1 – June 30) who are chronically absent where “chronic absentee” means a pupil who is absent 10 percent or more of the schooldays in the school year when the total number of days a pupil is absent is divided by the total number of days the pupil is enrolled and school was actually taught in the total number of days the pupil is enrolled and school was actually taught in the regular day schools of the district, exclusive of Saturdays and Sundays.
  - (2) The unduplicated count of pupils with a primary, secondary, or short-term enrollment during the academic year (July 1 – June 30).
  - (3) Divide (1) by (2).
- (b) “Middle School dropout rate” shall be calculated as set forth in 5 *CCR* Section 1039.1.
- (c) “High school dropout rate” shall be calculated as follows:
  - (1) The number of cohort members who dropout by the end of year 4 in the cohort where “cohort” is defined as the number of first-time grade 9 pupils in year 1 (starting cohort) plus pupils who transfer in, minus pupils who transfer out, emigrate, or die during school years 1, 2, 3, and 4.
  - (2) The total number of cohort members.
  - (3) Divide (1) by (2).
- (d) “High school graduation rate” shall be calculated as follows:
  - (1) The number of cohort members who earned a regular high school diploma [or earned an adult education high school diploma or passed the California High School Proficiency Exam] by the end of year 4 in the cohort where “cohort” is defined as the number of first-time grade 9 pupils in year 1 (starting cohort) plus pupils who transfer in, minus pupils who transfer out, emigrate, or die during school years 1, 2, 3, and 4.
  - (2) The total number of cohort members.
  - (3) Divide (1) by (2).
- (e) “Suspension rate” shall be calculated as follows:

- (1) The unduplicated count of pupils involved in one or more incidents for which the pupil was suspended during the academic year (July 1 – June 30).
  - (2) The unduplicated count of pupils with a primary, secondary, or short-term enrollment during the academic year (July 1 – June 30).
  - (3) Divide (1) by (2).
- (f) “Expulsion rate” shall be calculated as follows:
- (1) The unduplicated count of pupils involved in one or more incidents for which the pupil was expelled during the academic year (July 1 – June 30).
  - (2) The unduplicated count of pupils with a primary, secondary, or short-term enrollment during the academic year (July 1 – June 30).
  - (3) Divide (1) by (2).

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 42238.07 and 52064, *Education Code*. Reference: Sections 2574, 2575, 42238.01, 42238.02, 42238.03, 42238.07, 47605, 47605.6, 47606.5, 48926, 52052, 52060, 52061, 52062, 52063, 52064, 52066, 52067, 52068, 52069, 52070, 52070.5, and 64001.; 20 U.S.C. Sections 6312 and 6314.

### **GUIDING QUESTIONS**

#### **Guiding Questions: Annual Review and Analysis**

- 1) How have the actions/services addressed the needs of all pupils and did the provisions of those services result in the desired outcomes?
- 2) How have the actions/services addressed the needs of all subgroups of pupils identified pursuant to *EC* Section 52052, including, but not limited to, English learners, low-income pupils, and foster youth; and did the provision of those actions/services result in the desired outcomes?
- 3) How have the actions/services addressed the identified needs and goals of specific school sites and were these actions/services effective in achieving the desired outcomes?
- 4) What information (e.g., quantitative and qualitative data/metrics) was examined to review progress toward goals in the annual update?
- 5) What progress has been achieved toward the goal and expected measurable outcome(s)? How effective were the actions and services in making progress toward the goal? What changes to goals, actions, services, and expenditures are being made in the LCAP as a result of the review of progress and assessment of the effectiveness of the actions and services?
- 6) What differences are there between budgeted expenditures and estimated actual annual expenditures? What were the reasons for any differences?

#### **Guiding Questions: Stakeholder Engagement**

- 1) How have applicable stakeholders (e.g., parents and pupils, including parents of unduplicated pupils and unduplicated pupils identified in *EC* Section 42238.01; community members; local bargaining units; LEA personnel; county child welfare agencies; county office of education foster youth services programs, court-appointed special advocates, and other foster youth stakeholders; community organizations representing English learners; and others as appropriate) been engaged and involved in developing, reviewing, and supporting implementation of the LCAP?
- 2) How have stakeholders been included in the LEA’s process in a timely manner to allow for engagement in the development of the LCAP?

- 3) What information (e.g., quantitative and qualitative data/metrics) was made available to stakeholders related to the state priorities and used by the LEA to inform the LCAP goal setting process? How was the information made available?
- 4) What changes, if any, were made in the LCAP prior to adoption as a result of written comments or other feedback received by the LEA through any of the LEA's engagement processes?
- 5) What specific actions were taken to meet statutory requirements for stakeholder engagement pursuant to *EC* sections 52062, 52068, or 47606.5, as applicable, including engagement with representatives of parents and guardians of pupils identified in *EC* Section 42238.01?
- 6) What specific actions were taken to consult with pupils to meet the requirements 5 *CCR* Section 15495(a)?
- 7) How has stakeholder involvement been continued and supported? How has the involvement of these stakeholders supported improved outcomes for pupils, including unduplicated pupils, related to the state priorities?

**Guiding Questions: Goals, Actions, and Services**

- 1) What are the LEA's goal(s) to address state priorities related to "Conditions of Learning": Basic Services (Priority 1), the Implementation of State Standards (Priority 2), and Course Access (Priority 7)?
- 2) What are the LEA's goal(s) to address state priorities related to "Pupil Outcomes": Pupil Achievement (Priority 4), Pupil Outcomes (Priority 8), Coordination of Instruction of Expelled Pupils (Priority 9 – COE Only), and Coordination of Services for Foster Youth (Priority 10 – COE Only)?
- 3) What are the LEA's goal(s) to address state priorities related to parent and pupil "Engagement": Parental Involvement (Priority 3), Pupil Engagement (Priority 5), and School Climate (Priority 6)?
- 4) What are the LEA's goal(s) to address any locally-identified priorities?
- 5) How have the unique needs of individual school sites been evaluated to inform the development of meaningful district and/or individual school site goals (e.g., input from site level advisory groups, staff, parents, community, pupils; review of school level plans; in-depth school level data analysis, etc.)?
- 6) What are the unique goals for unduplicated pupils as defined in *EC* Section 42238.01 and groups as defined in *EC* Section 52052 that are different from the LEA's goals for all pupils?
- 7) What are the specific expected measurable outcomes associated with each of the goals annually and over the term of the LCAP?
- 8) What information (e.g., quantitative and qualitative data/metrics) was considered/reviewed to develop goals to address each state or local priority?
- 9) What information was considered/reviewed for individual school sites?
- 10) What information was considered/reviewed for subgroups identified in *EC* Section 52052?
- 11) What actions/services will be provided to all pupils, to subgroups of pupils identified pursuant to *EC* Section 52052, to specific school sites, to English learners, to low-income pupils, and/or to foster youth to achieve goals identified in the LCAP?
- 12) How do these actions/services link to identified goals and expected measurable outcomes?
- 13) What expenditures support changes to actions/services as a result of the goal identified? Where can these expenditures be found in the LEA's budget?

*Prepared by the California Department of Education, October 2016*

## APPENDIX E

### IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum

#### IAP2'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM



The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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Figure E1. IAP2's public participation spectrum.

## APPENDIX F

### Introductory Email

Good morning Superintendent,

My name is McKenzie Tarango a doctoral candidate in the Education Leadership Administration and Policy program at Pepperdine University. I am currently conducting research for my dissertation titled: Working Towards an Inclusive and Transparent Public Planning Process In Compliance with California's Local Control Funding Formula. This study seeks to explore the conceptions of K-12 Superintendents in San Bernardino County as it pertains to practices and experiences of what constitutes an open, fair, and inclusive public planning process.

Because you are a K-12 Superintendent in San Bernardino County I am inviting you to participate in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary and would include a 13 question open ended interview lasting an anticipated 45 minutes at a location of your choice. Participants will be provided the questions in advance of the interview. The interview will be recorded for transcription purposes and the recording will be deleted once it has been transcribed. The responses will be kept confidential and I will use pseudonyms to report the findings of the study.

If you are a current K-12 Superintendent in San Bernardino County that has at least 2 consecutive years of experience (as Superintendent or Superintendent designee), having experienced an entire cycle of the LCAP process and agree to be audio recorded in the interview I invite you to click the SignupGenius link below to schedule an interview (If you are unable to sign up electronically you can sign up by calling me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx). Participation is voluntary and subjects may opt out at any time for any reason.

To schedule your interview please click here

I thank you in advance for your consideration to participate in this study for the purpose of research. In an effort to maintain the timeline set for the study I respectfully request you respond to this email within 10 days indicating your acceptance or denial of my invitation.

Attached:

Informed Consent

Background of Study

Participant Eligibility Requirements

Invitation to Participate

Respectfully,

McKenzie Tarango

## APPENDIX G

### Informed Consent

#### **PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY**

#### ***Graduate School Education and Psychology***

#### **INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

#### Working Towards an Inclusive and Transparent Public Planning Process in Compliance with California's Local Control Funding Formula

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by McKenzie Tarango and Stephen Kirnon, Ed.D at Pepperdine University, because you are a K-12 District Superintendent within San Bernardino County. Your participation is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything that you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form.

#### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

California Education Code 35035 designates school district superintendents as responsible for the preparation, submission, and implementation of the LCAP. The superintendent is ultimately responsible for the LCAP planning process and is charged with ensuring that it is conducted in an inclusive, fair, and open manner. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenographic study is to examine conceptions about what constitutes an inclusive, fair, and open LCAP public planning process among superintendents in San Bernardino County, a high poverty county in Southern California. For the purposes of this study, the International Association for Public Participation's Quality Assurance Standards, specifically the seven core values, serve as the conceptual framework that defines the public engagement/participation planning process.

#### **STUDY PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in a 8 question audio recorded open ended interview. The 8 questions were developed to identify Superintendent conceptions of an inclusive, fair, and open LCAP public planning process. For the purpose of this study only participants who consent to be audio recorded will be interviewed. The anticipated length of the interview is 45 minutes.

#### **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

The potential and foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study may include fatigue.

#### **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

While there are no direct benefits to the study participants, there are several anticipated benefits to society which include:

The new LCFF dispensation requires a LCAP in which the public participates in collaboration with the district. However, the dispensation does not provide guidelines on conducting an open, fair, and inclusive planning process or how the process should be evaluated. Since the LCFF and LCAP are only 4 years old, only a few studies exist to determine their implementation success (Humphrey & Koppich, 2015; Knudson, 2014; Menefee-Libey & Kerchner, 2015). Concerns, complaints, and lawsuits have already emerged regarding the PPP; this study will serve to address the gap in the LCFF regulations regarding the inclusion of the public and evaluation of the openness and fairness of the planning process (Koppich et al., 2015). This study will address this identified gap and will contribute to the body of knowledge by providing guidelines via which to perform and evaluate the public planning process to determine its openness and fairness. The findings of this study could be utilized on a district and state level to address the important community aspect of the LCFF and its requirement of an open, fair, and inclusive public planning process. Clarity as to what constitutes an open, fair, and inclusive planning process will assist the state and districts in assessing practices, thus ensuring that the intent of the LCFF and LCAP is being implemented with fidelity. Moreover, the findings of this study could assist in further developing and solidifying the voices of stakeholders, specifically, students, parents, minorities, and vulnerable groups.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

I will keep your records for this study confidential as far as permitted by law. However, if I am required to do so by law, I may be required to disclose information collected about you. Examples of the types of issues that would require me to break confidentiality are if you tell me about instances of child abuse and elder abuse. Pepperdine's University's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) may also access the data collected. The HSPP occasionally reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Your responses will be coded with a pseudonym and transcript data will be maintained separately. The audio-tapes will be destroyed once they have been transcribed. The data will be stored on a password protected computer in the principal investigators place of residence for three years after the study has been completed and then destroyed.

### **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

### **ALTERNATIVES TO FULL PARTICIPATION**

The alternative to participation in the study is not participating or completing only the items which you feel comfortable.

### **EMERGENCY CARE AND COMPENSATION FOR INJURY**

If you are injured as a direct result of research procedures you will receive medical treatment; however, you or your insurance will be responsible for the cost. Pepperdine University does not provide any monetary compensation for injury

**INVESTIGATOR’S CONTACT INFORMATION**

I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact McKenzie Tarango, principal investigator at [redacted] or Stephen Kirnon, Ed.D, Dissertation Chair at [redacted] if I have any other questions or concerns about this research.

**RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Judy Ho, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University 6100 Center Drive Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753 or [gpsirb@pepperdine.edu](mailto:gpsirb@pepperdine.edu).

**SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

I have explained the research to the participants and answered all of his/her questions. In my judgment the participants are knowingly, willingly and intelligently agreeing to participate in this study. They have the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study and all of the various components. They also have been informed participation is voluntarily and that they may discontinue their participation in the study at any time, for any reason.

Name of Person Obtaining Consent: McKenzie Tarango

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date

## APPENDIX H

### LCFF State Priorities and Related Data Elements

#### LCFF State Priorities and Related Data Elements

<b>Pupil Achievement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Performance on statewide standardized tests.</li><li>» Score on Academic Performance Index.</li><li>» Share of pupils that meet the requirements for entrance to the University of California and the California State University or complete career technical education sequences or programs.</li><li>» Share of English learners that become English proficient.</li><li>» English learner reclassification rate.</li><li>» Share of pupils that pass Advanced Placement exams with 3 or higher.</li><li>» Share of pupils determined prepared for college by the Early Assessment Program.</li></ul>	<b>School Climate</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Pupil suspension rates.</li><li>» Pupil expulsion rates.</li><li>» Other local measures.</li></ul>
<b>Pupil Engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» School attendance rates.</li><li>» Chronic absenteeism rates.</li><li>» Middle school dropout rates.</li><li>» High school dropout rates.</li><li>» High school graduation rates.</li></ul>	<b>Parental Involvement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Efforts to seek parent input.</li><li>» Promotion of parental participation.</li></ul>
<b>Other Pupil Outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Other indicators of pupil performance in required areas of study.</li></ul>	<b>Basic Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Rate of teachers appropriately assigned and fully credentialed.</li><li>» Pupil access to standards-aligned instructional materials.</li><li>» Facilities maintained in good repair.</li></ul>
	<b>Implementation of State Standards</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Implementation of State Board of Education-adopted academic content and performance standards for all pupils, including English learners.</li></ul>
	<b>Course Access</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Pupils access and enrollment in all required areas of study.</li></ul>

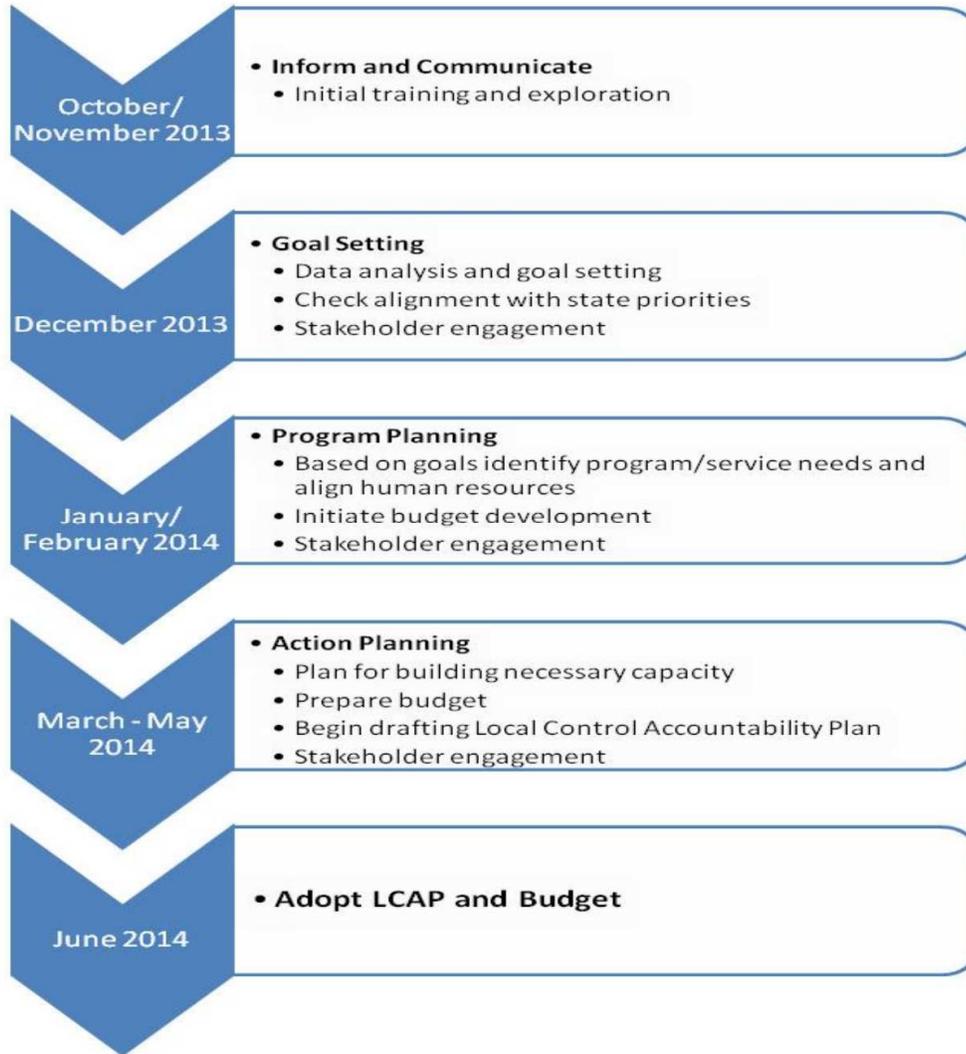


WestEd 

Figure H1. LCFF state priorities and related data elements.

## APPENDIX I

### Local Control Accountability Plan Preparation



*Figure II.* LCAP preparation.

## APPENDIX J

### Interview Questions

Study Title: Working Towards an Inclusive and Transparent Public Planning Process In Compliance with California's Local Control Funding Formula

1. The LCAP requires that school districts engage local stakeholders in facilitating a public planning process that is inclusive, fair, and open. These stakeholders have been generally identified as teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, local bargaining units of the school district, parents, sponsors, voluntary service providers, students, and others who are likely to be affected by decisions. Yet definitions are lacking for what denotes successful stakeholder engagement in terms of inclusiveness, fairness, and openness. Based on the handout I sent you that provides an overview of the IAP2's seven core values, what do you think about the use of these core values for defining successful stakeholder engagement as pertaining to the LCAP?

The IAP2 core values specific to inclusiveness state the following about public engagement/participation: (a) those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process, (b) professional practitioners/leaders should seek out the engagement/participation of those who are potentially affected by or interested in a decision, and (c) the contributions of those who are affected should influence the decisions made. Based on these three core values of inclusiveness:

2. What measures do you think could be effective for determining the inclusiveness of the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?

3. What guidelines do you think could be effective for determining whether the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process is inclusive?

4. Can you think of specific techniques that could hinder inclusiveness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.

5. Can you think of specific techniques that could facilitate greater inclusiveness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.

The IAP2 core values specific to fairness state the following about public engagement/participation: (a) recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all stakeholders promotes sustainable decisions, (b) professional practitioners/leaders should facilitate the engagement/participation of those who are potentially affected by or interested in a decision, and (c) professional practitioners/leaders should seek stakeholders input about how they would like to be engaged/participate.

6. What measures do you think could be effective for ensuring fairness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?

7. What guidelines do you think could be effective for ensuring that the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process is designed with fairness in mind?

8. Can you think of specific techniques that could hinder fairness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.

9. Can you think of specific techniques that could facilitate fairness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.

The IAP2 core values specific to openness state the following about public engagement/participation: (a) stakeholders should be provided the information they need to participate in a meaningful way, and (b) professional practitioners/leaders should communicate to engaged/participating stakeholders how their input affected decisions.

10. What measures do you think could be effective for ensuring openness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process?

11. What guidelines do you think could be effective for ensuring that the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process is designed with openness in mind?

12. Can you think of specific techniques that could hinder openness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.

13. Can you think of specific techniques that could facilitate openness in the LCAP public stakeholder engagement process? Please describe these techniques.