2015 CISI Workshop Resource Supplement

California Institute for School Improvement

*Working together to Improve schools since 1982.*

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CISI Workshop Notes, Spring 2015

Following are notes taken at the CISI Workshop on May 26, 2015. Copies of the presentations can be accessed at this link: CISI Workshop Resource Library [Access Online]

**CISI Workshop Presentation 1: Looking Back, Looking Forward: Implementation of the Assessment System**

Deb Sigman, National Chair, *Smarter Balanced Executive Committee*

*Smarter Balance Implementation Update*

Implementation of the Smarter Balanced assessments started in March 2015.

Some challenges of note:
- Problems logging in
- Pausing issues during testing
- High school level opt outs
- Testing frustration among special education students
- High school students only writing enough to fill up the visible small box rather than recognizing that the answer could exceed the visible space

**History of Curriculum Standards Implementation**

[SBAC Digital Library](#). Already, around 200,000 people have accessed the digital library. Interim test results came out late this year. Testing for testing sake, comprehensive interim 5 weeks (interim test) before the summative. Planning to provide an online form for feedback to SBAC consortium.

Assessment can be a catalyst for improvement and creating an environment for success. What does it mean to be an effective school? The current focus is on measures of growth in addition to measures of performance.

The 95% completion rate required for AYP (for high school districts) under No Child Left Behind legislation was 95%. Originally, this was for the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE); this was an incentive for test completion. Currently, in some schools, only 5 students opting out impacts being able to meet the 95% requirement. In contrast, SBAC is not an exit measure and was not designed for that.

Consider the effect of making high schools Title One. If you have a Unified School District, you can shift. ESEA reauthorization is getting some traction.
Taking a look at tentative SBAC scores: tentative scores are coming in much stronger than anticipated. Currently scores range from about 85% to 65%. California tentative results are much stronger than some other states. Although, state level results are not yet available. We are five years in to implementation of CCSS. California has done things the right way; the State Board of Education (SBE), the governor and CDE are on the same page.

Part of this process is focusing teachers on what they need to do differently in classrooms.

There is acknowledgment of the need to disaggregate data in order to address academic progress of student subgroups. The tendency to aggregate data and compare districts makes some nervous.

**CISI Workshop Presentation 2: State Board of Education Update**

Sue Burr, Chief Education Advisor for Governor Brown
Former Executive Director, SBE
Member, Collaborative for Excellence in Education

*Where are we going with California state accountability system?*

In 1998 Governor Wilson introduced academic standards. The idea about the standardized statewide test was that it was like a consumer report. This approach was too extreme and it overtook the rest of our system. It took a full decade to get everything in place with the standards that preceded CCSS.

The state is currently working on Social Studies and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) frameworks. The CCSS process, by comparison, has been at warp speed. This spring, Spring 2015, establishes an SBAC baseline. With AB484 we’re looking at all of our tests. The CELDT (write this out) test is on its way out. We should take a couple of years to develop the new EL test. This process involves developing a new exam for SDC (1%) students.

CAHSEE is not aligned to CCSS; this is part of an active conversation.

Concurrently, LCFF is a major overhaul of the school finance system. The intent is to equitably align funding to students with the greatest needs, aligned to state educational priorities (8 State Priorities). We are currently in the process of developing local and state accountability so that it supports improved outcomes for students.

Parent engagement and community engagement. When we talk about accountability do we mean consequences? What types of consequences?
The first level of accountability is the local community (the local school boards). A performance level descriptor at level 3 is that students are ready to engage at university level coursework. We view state level accountability acting as the “czar of accountability” as a last resort.

The eight state priorities define what the state finds to be important at the local level. It is multidimensional approach. We have to think differently about accountability as we move forward.

What would be helpful at the local level?
Looking at ways to measure the success of the students with multiple measures. This means putting data together to do staff development to move forward; the numbers have been missed in many of these processes.

How do we best measure accountability of instruction that stems from a growth model?
California has 1,200, to 11,300 charter schools and 1,000+ districts. One half of our state’s districts have less than 500 students. Additionally, LA Unified is like another state, it’s so large.

We are exploring the use and effect of a standardized set of measures at state level.

With regard to the status of accountability (NCLB) and a new growth model (SBAC), the state of California is out of the shame and blame business. We have gotten rid of a complicated, inflexible system and moved to one that is transparent and based on performance across multiple metrics. CA districts are now working on LCAP year two, annual update of last year’s 1st LCAP.

Generally, districts are trending toward defining fewer LCAP goals (3-5) in order to have a clear focus each year.

The state has high hopes for the annual LCAP updates as a local method for assessing the efficacy of district and site level student outcomes. In order to give the process to work, the state has held off stakeholder groups on changing the LCAP before districts have had a chance to produce results through the LCAP process.

The state is working on creating a new system of technical assistance to support district goals. This exists at the county level. The idea is to fold BASC and LCAP assistance together.

WestEd is doing most of the support for the state board for implementation of LCFF.

Three broad areas of the state priorities:
1. Student performance
2. Conditions for learning
3. Community Engagement

Status metrics fall in the basic services category. Some other considerations include: instructional materials, certified teachers, facilities in good repair (Williams criteria). a-g requirements are different than statutory requirements. CCSS requires a-g to be graduation requirement. There is a focus on supporting a broad-based curriculum that is holistic and multi-dimensional.

It would be easy to snap back to a categorical system. The question needs to be about how did the student do? Not here’s $100 to spend on this student.

The template was adopted through regulation. However, now it does not have to change through regulation, just through a state board process. Some districts have innovative ways of reaching out to their communities. Some students wanted a really active role in the LCAP. East Side Union set aside money for the students to use. Taco truck? Homework Center? These are student-driven initiatives: creative ways to communicate, including data snapshots.

The front line of district support will be given by the counties.

Goals of the LCAP Evaluation rubric:
- equity
- transparency
- student performance

Differentiated level of information: Many districts are asking sites to align SIPSA goals with LCAP goals. What is required by the SPSA is tied to prop 98 and the SARC is not going away.

Another aspect of LCFF legislation is formation of the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) is a newly formed state entity meant to support districts with a continuous improvement focus. The state is looking at other models such as the Inspectorate in England or school quality review teams like WASC as ways to share in the work with districts.

Q: What’s the consequence if you don’t make the goals stated in the LCAP?
A: Local conversation; inquiry into disaggregated data and programmatic/instructional shifts.

Comment from the audience:
Volumes of information are being rolled out to stakeholders. It is too much. That
needs to slow down.
100 flashes from testing. There is a challenge to manage the communications.

### CISI Workshop Presentation 3: County Office of Education LCAP Update

Peter Birdsall, Executive Director, *California County Educational Superintendents Services Association (CCESSA)*

The CDE, the education community and the governor are in alignment. Implementation of LCFF and LCAP went really fast from 2013 until now. Districts had 6 months to complete the first LCAP in 2014. The SBE revised spending regulations and revised the LCAP template. Adoption of the evaluation rubrics will take place in Fall 2015; there’s is a lot resting on that.

According to program educational services folks, this process is generally viewed as working really well. Remember, the fiscal accountability system took 20 years to evolve to where we are. There are very few district budgets that get disapproved.

Generally, stakeholders don’t trust the system. They are looking for answers now. But the system doesn’t move that fast. It’s complicated. We are in the very beginning stages of learning what works and how it should evolve over time. County superintendents are required to review and approve each LCAP. The COEs also have to complete LCAPs. This gives us the perspective of what the state is looking for: a balanced process.

The link to LCAPs statewide is available on CDE’s Website—County Office of Education and School District LCAPs. [2014-15 County Office of Education and School District LCAPs] (XLS; Posted 07-Nov-2014)

From CDE: California *Education Code* Section 52065 requires that the Superintendent post links to all local control and accountability plans approved by the governing boards of school districts and county boards of education on the Internet Web site of the Department. CDE is working with county offices of education and school districts to obtain links to their 2014-15 LCAPs. CDE will continue to update this list as information is received.

[Review of School Districts’ 2014-15 Local Control and Accountability Plans (January 20, 2015)]
We work toward approval of the district’s LCAP just as we work toward approval of the district’s budget. Counties are working with districts to improve the LCAP. This is a model of working collaboratively to meeting the standards that are set by the state developed in the LCAP.

The intent is to foster a local definition of priorities and how priorities are measured for improvement. The idea is to get consensus for approval of the LCAP. In 2-3 years advocacy groups might question why all the LCAPs are approved. The idea is not that 10% of the LCAPs should fail. This approach represents a shift in accountability in the state. The point is to raise the right issues and have the right conversations. We are moving towards a system where most LCAPs are approved.

Three criteria for approval for county superintendents:

1. LCAP or update adheres to the template
2. Parent engagement — advisory committee

3. Budget for fiscal year is sufficient to implement the strategies

We are resisting the compliance mindset because once you go back to that we have categorical programs again. This gets back to the part about transparency and public accountability.

Q: What happens in the middle of the year if districts decide to change their approach?
A: The update will provide an opportunity to address issues that came up during the year.

Q: How do we share LCAPs among the counties?
A: We want to have an aligned response across the state.

With over 1,000 districts, the LCAPs represent many variations on a theme.

**LCFF expenditure requirements**

To increase or improve services for supplemental and concentration grant funding in support of the pupils generating the funding (FRMP eligible, EL and foster youth). We have agreed to this new approach and we are holding our breath in hopes that it will result in improved pupil outcomes.

We trust districts, and we trust the counties and CDE in this process. While everyone’s doing their calculations, the May revision changes all of the numbers.

Q: Does this require a new LCAP and new public hearing?
A: We have to recognize that this is a flow rather than a single point in time.

Some districts are under pressure to raise salaries because qualified staff may go to other districts. Regarding salary increases, what does the data look like 2-3 years later? If the student outcome data hasn’t changed much, maybe we need to rethink the way we’re using that money.

That funding was invested to improve and increase services, principally. This does not mean exclusively. The county superintendent is required by law to approve the LCAP if the three criteria are met. Public transparency and the intent behind it with community engagement, is what’s important.

Timing is difficult because the money just comes through in June and the LCAP must be approved by July. Many districts must take LCAPs to the board in June.

There are four rounds of fiscal accountability guidance that might provide a guide for how to approach the LCAP review process and supports. They identify how to
respond to different contingencies. The evaluation rubrics are critically important. There is a fundamental tension related to which measures we will look at.

ACSA groups are talking about an aspirational model that is setting standards above where most of the districts are performing and everyone is moving toward that model. Some are concerned that this approach is like NCLD in that it potentially identifies ways to fail and slipping back into an overly simplistic accountability model not built of growth and system support.

Local metrics lead to what in terms of local accountability? We are having conversations about what ought to happen, locally, if goals are not met. What needs to happen? There is agreement that it is not sanctions.

The fiscal accountability system has taken 20 years to work through these issues. The evaluation rubrics are where the balance between local control and state control will manifest. Technical assistance will spark conversations about district priorities and how to align the district to meet those.

What is promising about the LCAP model is that it encourages the fiscal people and the program people to talk to each other. Interventions, regarding rubrics, are not only years away, if we follow the model of the fiscal accountability system they are unlikely; the state has only intervened in about 5 districts over the last 15 years. LCAP rubrics are meant to foster the local conversation. The CCEE should build a resource bank to support improvement.

If the district requests technical assistance, the district pays for it.

This process will evolve. This is a growth model. District must improve over multiple years. Technical assistance is the focus.

The point of all this is coming to terms with what is the standard, i.e., the state is saying: “prove to us that you are doing the right thing” with local school boards saying, “leave us alone to do our work.”

Fiscal accountability has been a collaborative holistic approach. Not like it was with NCLB.

ESEA might be reauthorized. This will give much greater authority to states to develop state-determined accountability system.

People are trying to figure out what is the CCEE? People are looking at what FCMAT has been doing because it has a track record of success. FCMAT has a fiscal health risk analysis. This might give a sense for how counties could approach it. Yet, the
fiscal side is not the same as the program side--dollars add up. The program side is different. See FCMAT slide.

The county superintendents have a very different experience set; NCLB and compliance. The two sides need to talk because there needs to be ongoing conversations. There needs to be a conversation with the program side about how it links to the assessment data.

**How to use data to improve instruction?**
Integration of fiscal and program is fundamental to the success of LCFF. This is a model; it’s not that the CBOs are in charge. FCMAT provides a broad review of the district. Districts that are in financial trouble tend to be in programmatic trouble, too.

The evaluation rubrics are critical. How they are applied needs to be toward the approval of the LCAP.

**Comment:** Many districts are having the educational services positions open. There is not a place for us to go for educational services resources. I suggest that you beef up the educational services resources to support districts. That is a great job description for CISI.

**RESOURCES**
Links From “State Board of Education Update”:
- State Board of Education Agendas
- LCFF—WestEd Channel
  [http://lcff.wested.org/](http://lcff.wested.org/)
- CDE LCFF
  [http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/)
- CDE Common Core
  [http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/)

Links from “County Office of Education LCAP Update”:
- Link to 2015-16 CCSESA LCAP Approval Manual:
  [http://ccsesa.org/?wpfb_dl=4072](http://ccsesa.org/?wpfb_dl=4072)
- Link to FCMAT Website:
- Fiscal Health Risk Analysis, Link to Indicators of Risk:
Facilities Update

**California Still Needs More School Buildings**

Educators and political leaders from both parties agree that California must have a steady supply of new school buildings to meet the current and projected need. That need arises from growth in the student population, aging facilities, and changes in educational programs.

California will need an infusion of $117 billion during the next decade, with close to half of the funding needed to replace or repair existing buildings, according to a 2012 report by the UC-Berkeley Center for Cities and Schools. The report, which was commissioned by the California Department of Education, calls for:

- $53 billion for replacing and restoring schools that have exceeded their service life, including eliminating the 75,000 portables still being used throughout the state;
- $36 billion for new construction, including $12 billion to address enrollment growth and/or crowding
- $28 billion for modernization of existing facilities, which includes upgrades for modern technology use, and equipment for science classes and career and technical education programs.

The California Department of Finance estimates that enrollments, which declined during the recession, will grow by 1.4% to reach nearly 6.3 million students in 2021-22.

The impact of changes in enrollment varies by district. Although school districts such as Los Angeles Unified, Mt. Diablo Unified, and Saddleback Valley Unified are declining, others such as Clovis Unified, San Jose Unified, and Fremont Unified are growing and may need bigger facilities.

The new push for smaller classes may also strain school facilities. Under the new Local Control Funding Formula school finance system, the state is offering a financial incentive to California’s districts to reduce (over eight years) their kindergarten through third grade class sizes to 24 students. This could have a profound impact on facilities in many districts that had abandoned the earlier class size reduction program (20 students to 1 teacher) during the recession.

**Schools Require Maintenance and Modernization**

More than two-thirds of California’s public school buildings are more than 25 years old. Due to the age of the buildings and, in some cases, poor maintenance, many schools need repair. In addition, a major investment is essential to enable schools to use computers and other technology as part of their instructional program.
School districts are also required to comply with a variety of federal mandates. These include removing safety hazards, such as asbestos and radon, and making schools accessible to disabled people, as required by the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Facilities Play a Part in Educational Quality**
In what ways does a school facility either enhance or inhibit student performance? And what implications do new education reform strategies have on how schools should be designed? As communities continue to design and build new facilities—in California and nationally—researchers, policymakers, and school planners are addressing these two important questions.
LAO/LCAP Update

Report Reviews First Year of LCAP Development, Assesses Usefulness of New Plans

This report examines 50 LCAPs to evaluate their compliance with statutory requirements and determine whether LCAPs overall reflected thoughtful strategic planning by districts.

Figure 5
DistRICTS INCluded In Our Sample

Sample

- 50 districts. Districts comprise 26 percent of statewide enrollment located in 24 counties.
  - 19 High EL/LI districts.
  - 16 Average EL/LI districts.
  - 15 Low EL/LI districts.

Note: “High” districts are defined as those with more than 75 percent EL/LI enrollment, “average” districts between 50 percent and 75 percent EL/LI enrollment, and “low” districts less than 50 percent EL/LI enrollment.

EL/LI = English learner, low-income and foster youth students.
Access full report and Executive Summary [HERE](#)  

Summary of Recommendations

- Emphasize clear, strategic plan over detailed, comprehensive plan.
- Allow districts to focus on key metrics.
- Clarify metrics in some areas to help monitor performance.
- Require districts to indicate whether actions are new or ongoing.
- Monitor quality of information regarding EL/LI students, make minor statutory changes.
- Disseminate information on key ingredients of effective strategic plans.

Research evidence and common sense indicate that there is a minimum level of quality for a school facility below which student and teacher effectiveness can be seriously compromised. Various studies show that students achieve less in school buildings that are situated on noisy streets, have too many students for their capacity, or cannot be adequately and safely maintained. A lawsuit brought by a consortium of plaintiffs (Williams v. State of California) charged, successfully, that the state has not fulfilled its constitutional role of providing an appropriate educational environment. Subsequent legislation provided $800 million for repairs to school buildings and imposed accountability measures for low-performing schools.  

CCEE Website

Quality School Framework (QSF)

The QSF videos are designed to provide process recommendations for organizational leaders and educational partners who wish to enact critical change--this is the 'how' of implementing positive organizational change.

The website provides links to resources such as videos, planning guides and external links. One link connects to the Colorado Department of Education resource for Unified Improvement Planning that identifies ways to approach continuous improvement as an ongoing process. ([http://www.cde.state.co.us/uipl](http://www.cde.state.co.us/uipl))