



EQUITY ALLIANCE for LA's Kids

Investing in our highest needs children is critical to the future of Los Angeles.

When communities throughout California organized to pass LCFF in 2013-14, we anticipated a good amount of money would go to LAUSD and therefore into our high needs schools.

Advancement Project California, Community Coalition and InnerCity Struggle saw an opportunity to codify LCFF at the local level. We knew we needed the data to illuminate the areas of highest need.

Today, we have parents and students continuing their fight to demand a culture of equity.

WHAT IS AT STAKE?

A major problem is the historic disinvestment in schools that has led to under resourced and constrained schools perpetuating inequity for Black and Latino students, often rendering them invisible. This has only solidified the achievement gap.

In addition, issues like gun violence, trauma and asthma substantially produce negative effects on our student's ability to learn. The Department of Public Health (DPH) has submitted a letter with supporting evidence and research which highlight the negative effects these conditions have on student learning and achievement.

Today we see an unconscionable concentration of high and highest-need schools in parts of the district, thus we need a concentration of resources to address those specific needs of high and highest-need school in particular regions of the district.

OUR ASK

- *The kids earned this funding!* Starting from 2013 they have earned over \$1 billion per year through LCFF (local control funding formula).
 - The Governor is proposing to fully fund LCFF this year reinforcing his statement, "equal treatment for children in unequal situations is not justice." We ask LAUSD to adopt the "SENI 2.0" (Students Equity Needs Index) as the primary means for identifying high and highest-needs schools allocating LCFF investments.
- *SENI 2.0 is ready for use!* We must leverage this improved equity funding tool and begin focusing on our concentration of high and highest-need Elementary, Middle and High Schools to improve enrollment and increase funding.
 - We have been negotiating the indicators with LAUSD for over a year. We are open to some adjustment but for the most part it is ready for use.
- *We're offering a two-step approach.*
 - 1) For the 2018/19 LAUSD budget, will demand an equity-based funding formula immediately allocate \$100 million LCFF Funds from Governor Brown's proposed budget and any new dollars from the State May Revise to all high and highest-need schools.
 - 2) Starting in 2019/20 LAUSD budget, begin and moving forward, continue to utilize the equity-based funding formula to increase the allocation to approximately \$300 million.
- *Not just about the dollars.* We're seeking to help high and highest-need schools improve outcomes by offering a "Menu of Options" that are evidence-based and aligned with community needs.
 - We need to ensure that the money allocated for the concentration of highest-need schools goes directly to impact students and gets us closer to closing the achievement gap for black and brown high need students.

DESIRED IMPACT

We believe public education plays a significant role in eliminating poverty and racism for the future of all Angelenos.

There is no reason why every child shouldn't receive the best education possible. We believe LAUSD can be a model for the state and the county by passing the Students Equity Needs Index "SENI 2.0" and investing dollars to build a culture of equity.

A concentrated and focused investment on higher expectations for students will in turn increase the promise and potential for their communities. This will create a new culture of equity and excellence and most importantly raise the achievement bar for all students.

FAQs

What is the SENI (Students Equity Needs Index)? An equity-based student need index to inform the allocation of funds so that LAUSD can efficiently address the achievement gap.

What are the indicators? The alliance wanted to highlight the conditions in communities. We fought to include these persistent conditions to consider the whole child.

Why now? There is money on the table from the Governor's budget which allows us to take the first much needed steps for equitable funding for our high and highest needs kids.

How will the money flow? If funding flows according to the index, then high and highest-needs school get the funding. \$100 million this year 2018/19 and \$300 million the following year 2019/20. The menu of options supports schools in how to spend the funding.

Who are the winners and losers? There have always been winners and losers in LAUSD's budget. Historically it's been low-income students of color getting the short end of the stick. The Equity Alliance for LA's Kids is looking to fix this problem.

Is this inclusive? Yes. For over four years we have engaged a broad group of community-based organizations, parents and students into the SENI. We are looking to broaden and deepen our relationships, and are happy to open talks with additional people and organizations who share our values and goals.

Is there research in support? New research shows that funding targeted to high-need students can narrow achievement gaps^[1] and is an effective poverty reduction strategy, homelessness reduction strategy, and a workforce development strategy.^[2]

- A \$1,000 increase in per student spending in grades 10-12 leads to a 5.3% increase in high school graduation rates, on average, among all students.
- Specifically, a \$1,000 increase in per student spending leads to a 6.1% increase in graduation rates for low-income students, a 5.3% increase for African American students, and a 4.5% increase for Latino students.
- A 20% increase in per-student spending each year for all 12 years of public school for low-income students leads to a 25% increase in earnings and a 52% increase in family income, thereby making targeted investments earlier ever so important.
- Expanding early learning initiatives would provide benefits to society of roughly \$8.60 for every \$1 spent, about half of which comes from increased earnings for children when they grow up.^[3]

[1]Johnson, R., and Tanner. S. "Money and Freedom: The Impact of California's School Finance Reform." Learning Policy Institute (2018).https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Money_Freedom_CA_School_Finance_Reform_BRIEF.pdf

[2]Jackson, C.K., Johnson, R, and Persico, C. "The Effect of School Finance Reforms on the Distribution of Spending, Academic Achievement, and Adult Outcomes." National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 20118 (2014). <http://www.nber.org/papers/w20118.pdf>

[3] Council of Economic Advisors. "The Economics of Early Childhood Investments". Obama White House Archives (2014)https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/docs/the_economics_of_early_childhood_investments.pdf