



SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Agenda Item 9.1

Meeting Date: January 16, 2020

Subject: Special Education Update

- Information Item Only
- Approval on Consent Agenda
- Conference (for discussion only)
- Conference/First Reading (Action Anticipated: _____)
- Conference/Action
- Action
- Public Hearing

Division: Academic Office/Special Education Department

Recommendation: To provide an update on progress towards implementing recommendations of multiple reviews to improve special education programs and services as well as improved practices in evaluating and monitoring budget allocations and expenditures.

Background/Rationale: The District has entered into a formal partnership with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE). The purpose of this partnership is to provide assistance to the District to make substantial improvements to its system of support for all students. The presentation will update the Board on the partnership, the current realities of special education services and work currently underway to address these recommendations. Specifically, we will address issues around the need to build a culture of data literacy and a coherent and aligned data system to monitor multiple data sources that are crucial to student growth in academics and behavior, report on the work that has begun to align central office to build the capacity and support structures for the implementation of Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and an immediate effort to address the use of formal and informal suspension to address behavior.

Financial Considerations: None

LCAP Goal(s): College and Career Ready; Family and Community Engagement

Documents Attached:

1. Executive Summary

Submitted by: Christine Baeta, Chief Academic Officer
Becky Bryant, Director, Special Education
Department/SELPA

Approved by: Jorge A. Aguilar, Superintendent

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I. Overview/History of Department or Program

In recent years, the District has had multiple reviews of its special education programs and services. Specifically, in fall 2016 the District engaged with the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) to conduct a comprehensive review of its special education services with an external team of urban educators; in Spring of 2018 a Comprehensive Review was conducted by CDE evaluating the special education services provided to eligible students and compliance with federal and state law; in Fall of 2018 a FCMAT audit evaluated the District's financial health and business practices, and; most recently, a comprehensive financial and business practice audit by the State Auditor's Office as ordered by the State Legislature and completed in December, 2019. Each of these comprehensive studies provided recommendations for the District to improve its' special education programs and services as well as improved practices in evaluating and monitoring budget allocations and expenditures.

Given all the information provided by each of the aforementioned reviews/audits and the lack of progress, the District entered into a formal partnership with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE).¹ The purpose of this partnership is to provide assistance to the District to make substantial improvements to its system of support for all students. In addition, the District continues its partnership with UC Merced to implement a data aligned system which gives school sites and the District a real time snapshot of identified achievement, attendance and other important improvement targets the District wishes to monitor on a regular basis. The District's continued partnership with CORE provides leadership strategic thought partners in the continuous improvement work.

II. Driving Governance:

Students eligible for special education services are protected by a comprehensive set of federal and state laws. 34 CFR§300.101 states, "A free and appropriate public education must be available to all children residing in the State between the ages of 3 and 21, inclusive, including children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school." SCUSD must actively and systematically seek out all students with disabilities, from birth to 21 years of age (EC 56300 and EC 556301).

¹ The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) is a new and different kind of statewide agency designed to help deliver on California's promise of a quality, equitable education for every student. Designed to "advise and assist," CCEE does not carry out compliance or accountability functions. Rather, it serves as strategic thought partners working alongside educators to listen, identify goals and needs, promote innovative thinking, and jointly solve problems. CCEE serves a critical role in strengthening and growing [California's innovative System of Support](#), a component of the state's new school accountability system whose guiding principles include local control and continuous improvement.

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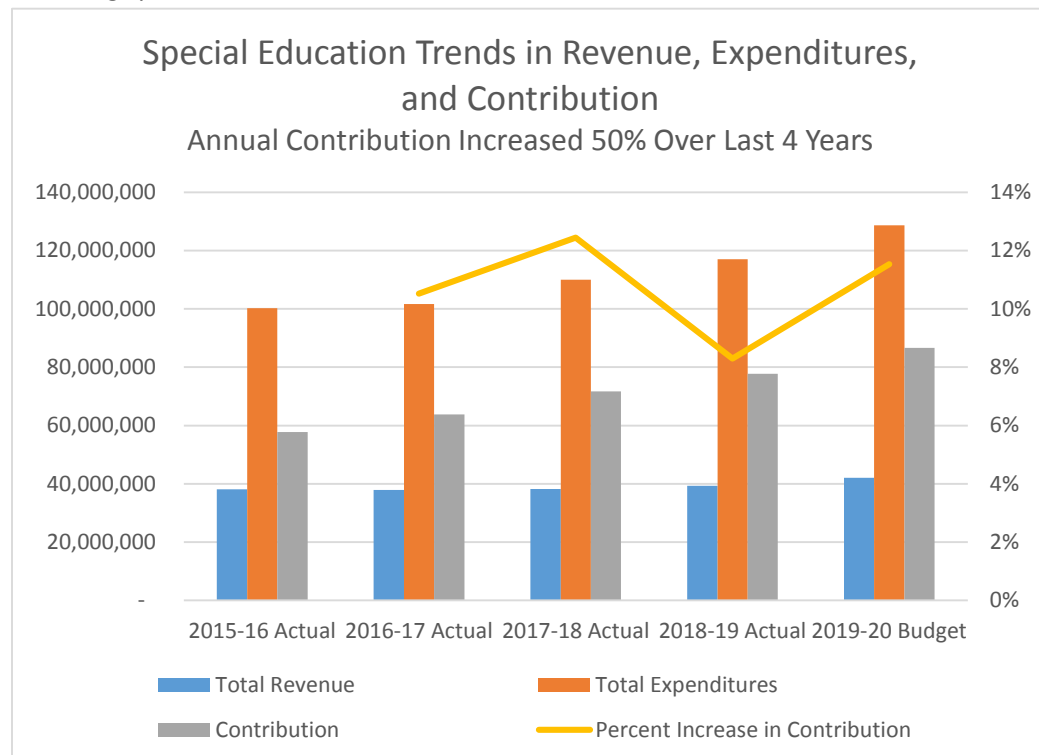


III. Budget:

The following table illustrates the trend of rising costs for providing special education services:

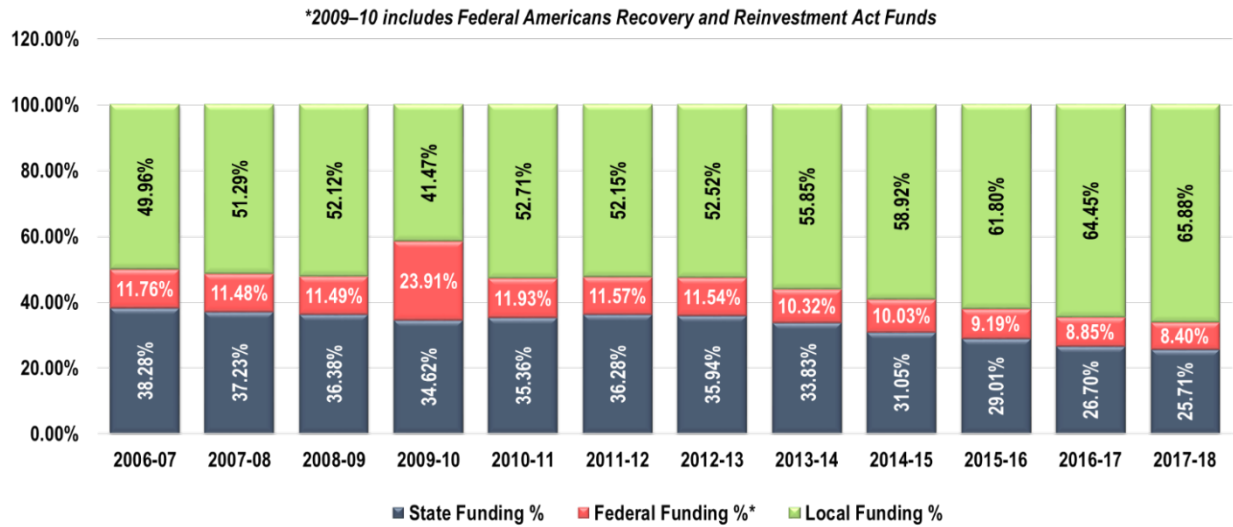
	2015-16 Actual	2016-17 Actual	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Actual	2019-2020 Budgeted
Total Revenue	\$ 38,112,832	\$ 37,892,020	\$ 38,265,797	\$ 39,309,030	\$ 42,047,545
Total Expenditures	\$100,238,485	\$101,714,014	\$110,028,201	\$117,023,240	\$128,727,336
District Contribution	\$ 57,743,413	\$ 63,821,994	\$ 71,762,404	\$ 77,714,210	\$ 86,679,788
Percent Increase of Contribution		11%	12%	8%	12%

- State Revenue has increased 1.25% over the past 4 years, except for this year which reflects a 8% increase due to one-time dollars
- Federal Revenue has increased .89% over the past 4 years, except for this year which reflects a 7% increase due to one-time dollars
- AB 602 (State funding) is based on the Districts ADA, not the number of students receiving special education services



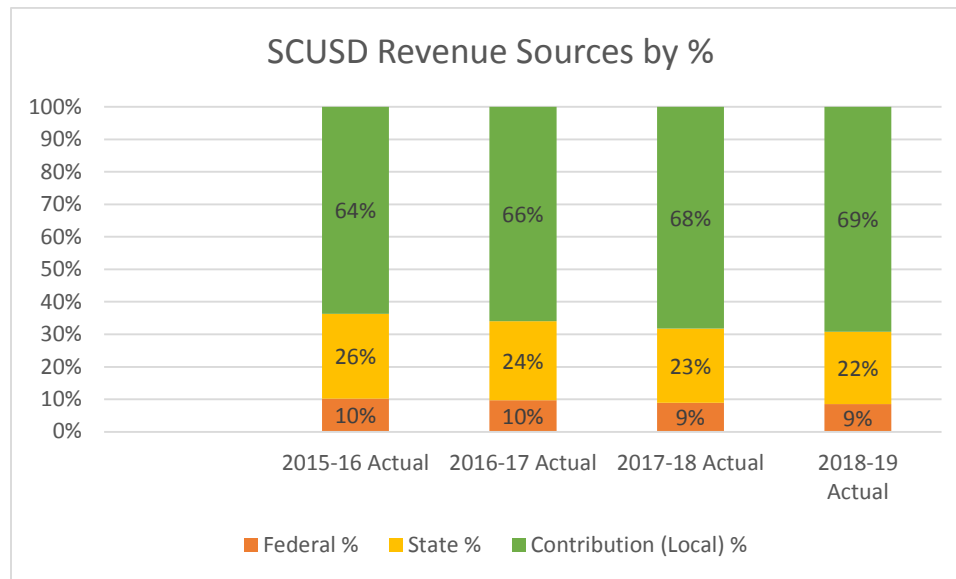


Special Education Costs: Local Contributions Comprise 65% of Total Funding in 2017-18
 State Wide Data



Source: SELPA Special Education MOE Reports

Table Source: School Services of California Fiscal Report 10/3/2019



IV. Goals, Objectives and Measures:

This presentation will focus on the District’s current realities of its special education programs and services and work currently underway and planned to address these concerns. Specifically, we will address issues around the need to build a culture of data literacy and coherent and aligned data system that is user friendly and designed to support and monitor multiple data sources that are crucial to student growth in academic and behavior.

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We will share the work that has begun to align central office efforts around developing a common language, common understanding around data driven decision making and support. Within this central office work we will explore the six critical components of the multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) and build the capacity and structures needed to support schools in the implementation of MTSS.

Underway is an immediate effort to address the current practice of sending students home as an informal suspension or informal intervention to address behavior. Efforts are underway to formally and explicitly articulate the required actions for any student with a disability that is suspended. In addition, the district is about the reduction of suspensions for all students, including African American students and students with disabilities.

A consistent concern across reports and recommendations is the lack of a shared responsibility for all students, especially students with disabilities. Courageous and data driven conversations are beginning that address the mindsets, beliefs and implicit bias that is pervasive across the District.

Finally, the presentation will address the current budget and expenditure practices specific to special education services. Understanding that special education services are driven by the requirements of the IDEA and the specific recommendations in each student's IEP, the practice of transparent budgeting, monitoring expenses throughout the year, and adjusting budgets as student needs change, is critical. The District is a single district Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) which is funded at the bottom tier of the state special education funding system. Long term state advocacy will be needed to improve our position in the funding tier in order to adequately meet our students' unique learning needs.

V. Major Initiatives:

- MTSS
 - Building central office capacity to support sites through planning and implementation - blending previously identified workgroups into one entity to support the implementation of MTSS
 - Establish a common language, common understanding of an integrated approach for delivering academic and behavioral supports and shared responsibility within the organization to support implementation with fidelity
 - Common assessments in ELA and Mathematics have been reinstated; continue to refine the use of the data collected and the analysis of the data to drive instruction and adjustments to instruction in response to the findings of the data
 - Creating systems within the central office and at each site to regularly analyze the data necessary to improve instruction and positive behavior supports and strategies to address interventions when Tier One instruction has not proven to be effective for the student
 - Ensuring that every site administrator has a clear understanding going forward about positive behavioral supports, documentation of those supports and documentation of

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interventions, including the recent interim agreement regarding the current class action suit and its intermediate steps;

- Ensure the recording of all suspensions into the student information system; for students with IEPs and 504 plans
- Ensure that each Instructional Area Superintendent and Principal have a clear understanding of the requirement for Functional Assessment of Behavior for social/emotional/behavior concerns for students with IEPs and the development and implementation of Behavior Intervention Plans, including monitoring, data collection and adjustment if needed over time before making recommendations for student movement to a more restrictive setting

VI. Results:

N/A

VII. Next Steps:

- Develop the selection criteria for the first cohort of 25 schools for summer and Fall 2020 MTSS professional learning
- Continue to build communication, capacity, knowledge and understanding around MTSS within the central office
- Build Principal leadership capacity and accountability for the explicitly articulated suspension requirements and restrictions and the required documentation into the student information system for regular monitoring with Instruction Area Superintendent
- Build site capacity of Principals and case managers to clearly understand the policy of addressing the behavioral needs of students with IEPs and 504 Plans and the requirement to assess in the area of social/emotional/behavior if there are concerns and requirement to develop and implement and monitor Behavior Intervention Plans
- Continue to participate in the County-wide SELPAs' collaboration for setting rates with Nonpublic Schools and granting requested rate increases
- Continue to monitor budget and expenditures throughout the year and adjust expenditure items as needed
- Continue to build the Special Education budget based on the needs of the students to fully implement their IEPs
- Continue to advocate at the State and Federal level for improved funding for students receiving special education services