

March 18, 2014

An Overview of LCFF and Agricultural Education Grants

LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

Presented to:
Senate Committee on Agriculture
Hon. Cathleen Galgiani, Chair





Background: K-12 Funding System

- ☑ **Historically Schools Have Been Funded Through General Purpose Monies and Dozens of Categorical Programs**
 - General purpose funds are unrestricted and can be used for any educational purpose.
 - Categorical funds are restricted for specific activities.

- ☑ **Broad Consensus That Categorical System Had Major Problems**
 - Myriad of formulas and requirements.
 - Compliance-oriented rather than outcomes-oriented.
 - Limited ability by districts to design education programs based on local needs and priorities.

- ☑ **The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Replaced Dozens of Categorical Programs and Formulas With One Simplified Funding Formula**
 - Spending restrictions and reporting requirements were eliminated for most categorical programs in 2013-14 and the associated funding became part of the LCFF.
 - The new funding formula provides higher rates for higher grade levels and additional amounts for English-learner (EL) and low-income (LI) students.
 - The intent of LCFF is to provide a simpler, more rational funding system that allows districts to more easily target funds toward local priorities.



Background: K-12 Accountability

- ☑ **State Holds Schools Accountable Based on the Academic Performance Index (API)**
 - The API measures and ranks the academic performance of schools based primarily on student assessments.

- ☑ **State in Process of Refining API to Include Career Technical Education (CTE) Performance Indicators**
 - The State Superintendent of Public Instruction must develop by 2015-16 a revised API for high schools that includes college and career readiness indicators.

- ☑ **Districts Are in the Process of Developing Local Control and Accountability Plans**
 - In conjunction with LCFF, the Legislature adopted a new accountability system centered on eight state priority areas, including student achievement, engagement, and other student outcomes.
 - As part of the student achievement priority area, districts must set goals and track progress on the API.



Overview of Agricultural Education Grants

Agricultural Education Grants Totaling \$4.1 Million Awarded in 2013-14

- The California Department of Education awarded 303 grants to 222 districts.
- Funds typically are used to purchase agricultural equipment and supplies.
- Funds may not be used for instructional costs.

Grant Funds Are Awarded to All Qualified Applicants

- Grantees must operate state-approved agricultural programs and provide matching funds.
- Six regional supervisors conduct on-site reviews and provide ongoing technical assistance to grantees.
- Grantees are evaluated annually on several program quality indicators, including curriculum and instruction requirements, leadership development, industry involvement, career guidance, and accountability.



Governor's Proposal



Adds Agricultural Education Grants (and One Other CTE Categorical Program) to LCFF

- Districts receiving the categorical program funds in 2013-14 would continue to receive the funds in 2014-15 and subsequent years.
- Districts could choose to use funds exactly as they do now or in other ways to meet students' needs.



Increases Funding for LCFF

- The average high school base funding rate would increase from \$6,306 in 2013-14 to \$6,987 in 2014-15, an increase of \$681 or 11 percent. (When accounting for the additional funding provided for EL/LI students, the high school rate is higher—\$8,384 in 2014-15.)



LAO Assessment and Recommendations

- Proposal to Add Agricultural Education Grants to LCFF Is Consistent With the State's Decision to Provide More Local Flexibility**
 - Districts widely use LCFF for equipment and related operational costs in other high school academic and technical programs.
 - Rationale is unclear for continuing to provide a small, separate appropriation to cover similar costs for one specific discipline.
 - The state is providing significantly more money for high schools in 2014-15, which districts also can use for CTE.

- Recommend Holding High Schools More Accountable for CTE Student Outcomes**