

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 2774 (Akilah Weber)
As Introduced February 18, 2022
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Augments the definition of "unduplicated pupil" for Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) purposes by adding a pupil who is classified as a member of the lowest performing subgroup or subgroups, as defined, commencing with the 2023-24 fiscal year.

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires, for school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education (COEs), the LCFF definition of "unduplicated pupil" to include a pupil who is classified as a member of the lowest performing subgroup or subgroups.
- 2) Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to annually identify the lowest performing subgroup or subgroups based on the most recently available mathematics or English language arts results on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP).
- 3) Excludes the following subgroups from being identified pursuant to this calculation:
 - a) A subgroup already identified for LCFF supplemental funding (English learners, low-income pupils, and foster youth); and
 - b) Any subgroup specifically receiving supplemental funding on a per-pupil basis through state or federal resources received from a source other than LCFF (pupils with disabilities).
- 4) Provides that a subgroup identified in the 2023–24 fiscal year as a lowest performing subgroup shall continue to receive supplemental funding until its performance meets or exceeds the highest performing subgroup of pupils in the state.

COMMENTS

The LCFF was established in the 2013-14 fiscal year to address the achievement gap by providing more equitable funding among local education agencies (LEAs), and to provide a higher level of funding to LEAs that enroll larger numbers of unduplicated pupils so they could provide those pupils with additional services and support. The LCFF consists of three primary components:

- 1) A base grant of the following amounts in 2021-22:
 - a) \$8,935 for grades K-3, which includes a 10.4% grade span adjustment for class size reduction;
 - b) \$8,215 for grades 4-6;
 - c) \$8,458 for grades 7-8; and

- d) \$10,057 for grades 9-12, which includes a 2.6% grade span adjustment for college and career readiness.
- 2) A supplemental grant equal to 20% of the base grant for each unduplicated pupil.
- 3) A concentration grant, equal to 65% of the base grant, based on the number of unduplicated pupils in excess of 55% of the district or charter school total enrollment.

This bill adds a pupil who is classified as a member of the lowest performing subgroup or subgroups as defined by EC 52052 to the definition of unduplicated pupil. That section defines subgroups to include the following:

- 1) Ethnic subgroups;
- 2) Socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils;
- 3) English learners;
- 4) Pupils with disabilities;
- 5) Foster youth; and
- 6) Homeless youth.

However, the bill also exempts the following subgroups from its expanded definition of unduplicated pupil:

- 1) A subgroup already identified for supplemental funding under LCFF (this includes socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils, English learners, Foster youth, and homeless youth); and
- 2) Any subgroup specifically receiving supplemental funding on a per-pupil basis through state or federal resources received from a source other than the LCFF (this includes pupils with disabilities).

In effect, then, an ethnic subgroup is the only subgroup that would be added to the LCFF definition of unduplicated pupil.

According to data provided by the California Department of Education (CDE) and the author's office, the lowest-performing ethnic group is Black/African American. Therefore, this bill would add Black/African American pupils to the unduplicated pupil count for LCFF purposes. About 298,000 pupils in K-12 schools identify as Black/African American, comprising about 5.1% of the total K-12 population in the 2021-22 school year. According to the CDE's DataQuest, about 82,000 pupils identified as Black/African American are not low income. Accordingly, this bill would add about 82,000 pupils to the total number of unduplicated pupils for purposes of the LCFF.

The subgroup identified in year one is treated differently than other subgroups that may be identified in future years. This bill provides that the subgroup identified for the 2023-24 fiscal year based on 2018-19 CAASPP scores (which is the Black/African American subgroup) shall be included within the unduplicated pupil count until its scores equals or exceeds the highest

performing subgroup (Asian, in 2018-19). Other subgroups that may be identified in future years would generate additional funding only if they remain the lowest scoring group. This means that Black/African American pupils could be the second-highest performing subgroup and still receive additional funding on the basis of their prior status as the lowest performing subgroup.

Low-Performing Students Block Grant. The Budget Act of 2018 established the Low-Performing Students Block Grant (LPSBG) as a state education funding initiative with the goal of providing grant funds to LEAs serving pupils identified as low-performing on state English-language arts or mathematics assessments who are not otherwise identified for supplemental grant funding under the LCFF or eligible for special education services as defined in Education Code section 41570(d). For the 2018-19 school year, \$300 million in one-time funds was appropriated to establish the block grant, available for expenditure or encumbrance during fiscal years 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21. The final per pupil allocation was \$1,998.02. LEAs were required to use LPSBG funds for evidence-based services that directly supported pupil academic achievement, including professional development activities for certificated staff; instructional materials; and additional supports for pupils.

According to the Author

"2019 statewide testing data shows that African American students are the lowest performing subgroup with 67% not meeting English Language Arts Standards and 79% not meeting math standards. The achievement gap for African American students is pervasive whether they are low-income or not. Low-income White students outperform non-low income Black students in math and science.

A recent UC Berkeley study found that "schools in districts receiving concentration grants during the initial two years of LCFF did engage in organizational change that parallels gains in pupil achievement, compared with schools in almost identical districts not receiving concentration grants. These benefits were largely experienced by Latino students and not by other groups at significant levels." (Lee & Fuller 2017) The authors also note that their "inability to detect gains for Black students is worrisome." (Lee & Fuller 2017) These early findings suggest that while LCFF supplements may be improving outcomes for Latino students, as intended, a notable gap remains for African American students."

Arguments in Support

The California State Parent Teachers Association (CAPTA) writes, "The California State PTA has a long history of supporting legislation and public policies that improve academic achievement for all students and eliminate the achievement gap. We believe this bill will move us closer to adequate funding for every student."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

Ongoing annual Proposition 98 (GF) costs of about \$662 million to provide additional LCFF funding for the lowest performing subgroup or groups. (Costs would be higher if this bill and AB 1948 [Ting], which is pending in this committee, are both enacted. AB 1948 increases the LCFF

base by 15%, which would add to the cost of this bill.) Additional ongoing funding in the hundreds of millions of dollars if multiple subgroups qualify for funding in future years.

VOTES**ASM EDUCATION: 7-0-0**

YES: O'Donnell, Megan Dahle, Bennett, Chen, Lee, McCarty, Quirk-Silva

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 16-0-0

YES: Holden, Bigelow, Bryan, Calderon, Carrillo, Megan Dahle, Davies, Mike Fong, Fong, Gabriel, Eduardo Garcia, Levine, Quirk, Robert Rivas, Akilah Weber, Wilson

UPDATED

VERSION: February 18, 2022

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FN: 0002778