California’s Local Control Funding Formula and the Local Control and Accountability Plan’s Principally Directed Mandate

A Dissertation by

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ABSTRACT
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Purpose: The purpose of this mixed methods Policy Delphi study was to determine the practices experts identify as effective for utilizing supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of Local Control Funding Formula, to determine how the experts rated the effectiveness of the different practices, and to determine what strategies experts recommend for implementation of the five practices identified as most effective.

Methodology: The Delphi method was utilized in order to gather data from an expert panel of County Office of Education Administrators that have been engaged in reviewing Local Control and Accountability Plans in California. For purposes of this Policy Delphi study, an electronic questionnaire was distributed in three rounds to determine what practices County Office of Education administrators identify has effective for utilizing supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of Local Control Funding Formula. Additionally, the study identified the strategies recommended for implementation of the five practices identified as most effective.

Findings: Analysis of the first round of data resulted in an expert panel identifying 18 practices, which were narrowed down in the second round to the five most effective practices for utilizing supplemental funds and the five most effective practices for utilizing concentration funds. The expert panel then identified strategies in the third round for the implementation of each of the 10 practices identified as most effective.
**Conclusions:** According to the expert panel, districts should establish an interdepartmental Local Control Accountability Plan team in order to develop and implement their Local Control Accountability Plan, ensure their teams are trained in the new California School Dashboard and the Local Control Accountability Plan template, and ensure an effective accountability system is in place within the district to monitor the Local Control Accountability Plan actions and services to ensure an improvement in student outcomes and return on investment.

**Recommendations:** Four areas of further research were recommended to increase the body of knowledge related to Local Control Accountability Plan and the “principally directed” mandate of Local Control Funding Formula.
Eight State Priorities
Meaningful Engagement
Expanded role of COE
Accountability
Evaluation Rubrics
Self-assessment rubric
Support rubric
Intervention rubric
CCEE
Initial LCAP Reviews
Advocates Weigh in on LCAPs
Principally Directed Mandate
Research Gap
Summary

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY
Overview
Purpose Statement
Research Questions
Research Design
Population and Sample
Target Population
Sample
Purposive Selection
Sample Selection Process
Sample Size
Instrumentation
Round 1 Survey Questions
Round 2 Survey Questions
Round 3 Survey Questions
Field Test
Data Collection
Round 1 Data Collection
Round 2 Data Collection
Round 3 Data Collection
Data Analysis
Round 1 Data Analysis
Round 2 Data Analysis
Round 3 Data Analysis
Limitations
Summary

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS
Overview
Purpose
Research Questions
Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures ........................................... 64
Population and Sample .................................................................................. 66
Presentation of the Data ................................................................................. 66
  Research Question 1 .................................................................................. 66
    Round 1 ................................................................................................. 67
      Analysis of round 1 ............................................................................. 70
    Round 2 ................................................................................................. 72
      Analysis of round 2 ............................................................................. 73
    Round 3 ................................................................................................. 75
      Analysis of round 3 ............................................................................. 77
  Additional Comments ................................................................................ 79
Summary ........................................................................................................ 80

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS .......... 82
Purpose Statement ....................................................................................... 82
Research Questions ..................................................................................... 82
Research Methods ....................................................................................... 83
Major Findings ............................................................................................ 84
  Research Questions .................................................................................. 84
    Research question 1 .............................................................................. 84
      Round 1 ............................................................................................... 84
    Round 2 ................................................................................................. 84
    Research question 2 .............................................................................. 85
      Round 3 ............................................................................................... 85
  Unexpected Findings ................................................................................. 87
Conclusions .................................................................................................. 88
  Conclusion 1 ............................................................................................. 88
  Conclusion 2 ............................................................................................. 89
  Conclusion 3 ............................................................................................. 89
Implications for Action ................................................................................ 90
  Implication for Action 1 ......................................................................... 91
  Implication for Action 2 ......................................................................... 91
  Implication for Action 3 ......................................................................... 92
  Implication for Action 4 ......................................................................... 93
Recommendations for Further Research ..................................................... 93
Concluding Remarks and Reflections ......................................................... 95

REFERENCES ............................................................................................... 97

APPENDIX ................................................................................................. 110
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Examples of Local Control Funding Formula for Different Types of District................................................................. 25
Table 2. Common Services Targeting Subgroups .......................................................... 39
Table 3. County Office of Education Administrators Meeting the Target Population Criteria .......................................................... 52
Table 4. List of 10 Perceived Effective Practices for Local Control Funding Formula Supplemental Funds .................................................. 68
Table 5. List of 10 Perceived Effective Practices for Local Control Funding Formula Concentration Funds .................................................. 69
Table 6. Ranking based on Effectiveness of Supplemental LCAP Practices from Research Question 1 .......................................................... 72
Table 7. Ranking based on Effectiveness of Concentration LCAP Practices Research Question 2 .......................................................... 73
Table 8. Strategies Districts can utilize to Implement Effective Supplemental Practices (Research Question 1) ............................................ 75
Table 9. Strategies Districts can utilize to Implement Effective Concentration Practices (Research Question 2) ............................................ 76
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Eight State Priorities and Required Data .................................................. 4
Figure 2. The Eight State Priority Areas and Associated Metrics for LCAP ............... 28
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

“Today I am signing a bill that is truly revolutionary. We are bringing government closer to the people, to the classroom where real decisions are made, and directing the money where the need and challenge is greatest. This is a good day for California, it’s a good day for school kids, and it’s a good day for our future.” – Governor Jerry Brown

At a ceremony on July 1, 2013, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law a historic school-funding bill, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) aimed at overhauling how education funds are allocated and spent on the neediest of students (CA.Gov, 2013). This new legislation transferred decision making from Sacramento to local school boards and districts, and brought to closure 40 years of categorical funded programs from the state that dictated how the money was to be spent (Miles & Feinberg, 2014).

The LCFF is a groundbreaking shift in how school districts have been funded for the past three decades. The last major shift in funding was due to changes created after the 1976 and 1978 Serrano vs. Priest (California School Boards Association [CBSA], 2012) case, which established how student’s rights were violated due to the unequal funding of school districts. Prior to this case, schools budgets were funded by local property taxes, resulting school districts in wealthier areas receiving greater funds than those districts in lower income areas with lower property values. Since this case, politicians in Sacramento have introduced a myriad of funding proposals (categoricals) resulting in a “hodge-podge of programs (that) has no rationale about which students need particular services” (Kirst, 2006, p. 14).

In 2007, a report titled Getting Down to Facts, was commissioned by a bipartisan group of California leaders, including the Superintendent of Public Education and the State Secretary of Education (Loeb, Bryk, & Hanushek, 2008). This report summed up education in California
by stating, “while good things are happening in many districts, schools, and classrooms, California’s school finance and governance systems are fundamentally flawed and failing to help students meet state performance goals, especially students from low-income families” (Loeb et al., 2008, p. 2). This report stated that directing greater funds to the current system in place would not change anything, stating only “meaningful reform” would work (Loeb et al., 2008).

In light of the recommendation in Getting Down to Facts, a perfect opportunity to make a radical change to the school finance and accountability system was presented in 2013 under the leadership of Governor Jerry Brown. With the support of the state legislature, Brown was able to propose and implement LCFF, funneling more money, over time, to a new system, radically different, with the potential to address the glaring inequities in existence.

**Background**

One of the major objectives of the LCFF bill was to distribute resources targeting those students with the most needs: low income (LI), English learners (EL), and foster youth (FY) (Miles & Feinberg, 2014). School districts would no longer be subject to politicians in Sacramento mandating how state provided funds were to be spent via the categorical funding system. Instead, LCFF would allow districts to write a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) that communicates their goals in alignment with the eight state priorities. These eight state priorities are: (a) Student Achievement, (b) Student Engagement, (c) Other Student Outcomes, (d) Parental Involvement, (e) Course Access, (f) Implementation of Common Core State Standards, (g) Basic Services, and (h) School Climate. This allows for what many refer to as leadership from the middle (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012; M. Fullan, 2014; Miles & Feinberg, 2014), where districts will be directly driving the change, rather than being mandated from those at the top, or at the state and federal level.
Components of the LCAP

The LCAP addresses the supplemental and concentration funds that a district receives, above and beyond the base LCFF funds (Legislative Analyst’s Office [LAO], 2013). Base grants are utilized to run day-to-day operations of a district and are calculated using the district’s daily attendance (ADA). The LCAP is written to address how a district utilizes “supplemental funding”, the additional funds received for particular student groups, which includes LI, EL students and FY students. Additionally, if a district has a higher population of LI and EL which exceeds 55% of their enrollment (LAO, 2013) they will also receive “concentration funding” (California Department of Education [CDE], 2016a.; Miles & Feinberg, 2014).

A district’s LCAP plan must include both district-wide goals and goals for each numerically significant student subgroup in the district (a numerically significant subgroup is a group of at least 30 students in the subgroup, or 15 if FY). The student subgroups to be included in the LCAP are Black (African American), American Indian, Asian, Filipino, Hispanic (or Latino), Native Hawaiian (or Pacific Islander), White (Caucasian not of Hispanic descent), two or more races, as well as LI students, EL, Students with Disabilities, and FY (Miles & Feinberg, 2014; Menefee-Libey & Kerchner, 2015).

Districts create their LCAP, following a state created template, which must detail the actions a district will take to reach their goals. These goals require actions aligned with their budget and need to specify what actions will be taken and how success will be measured. The LCAP must also address each of the eight state priorities. Within each of the eight state Priorities there are required data that must be reviewed (see Figure 1).
The LCF Formula is a groundbreaking shift for how school districts have been funded since changes made after the 1976 and 1978 Serrano vs. Priest (Humphrey & Koppich, 2014; Timar, 2006) case that found student’s rights were violated due to the unequal funding of school districts. Up until 1976, school districts relied on local property taxes to fund their schools. However, with funding being dependent on local taxes, this resulted in unequal levels of funding. The ruling found that students were denied an equal educational opportunity in violation of the “Equal Protection” clause of California’s constitution. In Serrano I, the school finance system was found to be unconstitutional and in Serrano II, the state was subsequently required to reduce the disparities among the districts (Timar, 2006).
**Proposition 13**

Another shift in school funding took place in 1978 around the same time as Serrano v. Priest occurred, when Proposition 13, was placed on the ballot. This proposition capped increasing property taxes, the base of funding for schools at the time. The intent of the legislation was to lower freeze property taxes, however it created a greater reliance on state taxes for school funding given property taxes were now frozen and would only increase modestly over time. California was forced to decrease their per-pupil spending as the major revenue stream was reduced (Fuller & Tobben, 2014; Timar, 2006).

**Proposition 98**

As a result of Proposition 13, another proposition was voted into law in 1988, Proposition 98. In response to the decrease in K-12 education funding in California, Proposition 98 created a minimum floor for K-12 school finances (Timar, 2006) and was considered to be vital to the foundation of school finance (Kirst, 2006, p. 12). Proposition 98 ensured a funding source that would grow each year depending on the economy and number of students (LAO, 2014a; Timar, 2006). Funding, considered guaranteed funding, was given through a combination of general funds and local property taxes. While these propositions determined how much funding the state provides to districts, they did not regulate how the funds were allocated to school districts.

**AB 1200**

Another piece of legislation, AB1200 signed into law California in 1991, ensured districts were sufficiently prepared to meet their financial obligations. It was approved in reaction to several school districts that found themselves embroiled in financial crises due to improper financial management. This bill in effect created a plan, whereby county offices’ of education began playing a bigger role in monitoring school districts and requiring a level of
financial accountability. AB 1200 also created a Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) be established to assist school districts and county offices of education (Frazier, 1994).

**Categorical Funding**

With school districts being dependent on state monies to function, politicians designed categorical funding, a method by which the state and federal government distributed resources to school districts to target certain students or programs. School district’s revenue sources come in three different methods: general purpose (or base), categorical funding, and local funding.

Base funding, the principal component of school funding in California, was based on the ADA of a school district (Timar, 2006). Another substantial portion of a districts’ revenues were derived from categorical funding, comprised of the four groups: (a) entitlement, (b) incentive, (c) discretionary, and (d) mandated cost reimbursements (Timar, 2006). Each of these categorical funds were targeted to reach certain groups of students, such as students with disabilities, LI, ELs, etc. Beginning in the 1980s, the state legislature rapidly increased the number of categorical funds. Between 1980 and 2000, average per pupil funding increased by 15% in constant dollars, yet during this same time period the funding for categorical programs increased by 165% (Timar, 2006, p. 21). By 2005, there were 233 state and federal categorical programs. This increased number of programs resulted in multiple funding streams and program requirements rarely reviewed or evaluated once they were implemented.

One of the first attempts to consolidate and eliminate the numerous categorical funds, Assembly Bill (AB) 825 in 2004, created new block grants. These six block grants consolidated 25 categorical programs and did help, but that only accounted for approximately 20% of categorical funding (Timar, 2006). Until the LCFF was enacted in 2013, California’s
“system of school finance was one that had been cobbled together in response to various pressures over the past thirty-some years” (Timar, 2006, p. 31).

**Compliance Oriented Legislation**

In 1999, California implemented what came to be referred to as compliance oriented legislation, with the Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA). The PSAA created the Academic Performance Index (API) as a measurement for accountability (Polikoff & McEachin, 2013). The API was a single number on a scale of 200 through 1,000 and was intended to communicate how well individual schools or entire districts performed on state testing. The PSAA also included the student testing system, Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program, and the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), the high school exit exam.

In 2001, the federal government reauthorized the Title I legislation, now referred to as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). NCLB emerged from concerns at the national level that the United States was no longer competitive internationally. It resulted in escalating the role the federal government played in accountability for student outcomes (Klein, 2015). The goal of NCLB was to close the achievement gap between the poor, minority students and their peers. This act required states to ensure all students be tested on a standardized exam, and score proficient or higher on the state assessments by the year 2014. This was achieved through measuring “adequate yearly progress” (AYP). Those schools unable to achieve AYP for two years or more were subject to a number of sanctions, including the loss of their Title I funding.

The NCLB act ushered in a plethora of requirements in the areas of assessments, personnel, curriculum and school choice. School districts were now required to assess students in grades two through eight and one grade level in high school. They also needed to assess
their entire student population and could no longer exclude students in their special education or EL subgroups (Klein, 2015). NCLB also included a number of requirements for teachers and instructional aides and if a teacher did not meet the requirements of NCLB they would not be considered “highly qualified” and districts were required to work with them to ensure they became highly qualified (Klein, 2015).

The NCLB act also required school districts to provide tutoring, from outside vendors, to students at schools in “Program Improvement” status. NCLB also allowed families in to request for their child be transferred to another school, within the district, not in program improvement (Klein, 2015).

In 2011, the U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, predicted 82% of U.S. schools would be labeled “failing” if the NCLB act was not revised. In response, President Obama’s administration implemented waivers school districts could use to avoid being labeled as “failing” (Klein, 2015). Alas, the federal education policy was focused on “requiring schools with concentrated poverty to meet academic standards but has ignored the need to provide their students the resources necessary to enable them to reach the standards” (Sciarra & Hunter, 2015, p. 29).

**LCFF**

In 2013, California implemented the LCFF, which overhauled the entire system of school finance and accountability. This new legislation takes into account higher costs of educating students in poverty, ELs, and FY (Knudson, 2014; Sciarra & Hunter, 2015). It also requires each district develop an accountability plan (LCAP) developed with input from the community and set goals and measures progress disaggregated by subgroups.

Decisions on how the LCFF monies should be spent should align with the district’s priorities and goals, which also align with the eight priorities’ set by California. The eight
priorities are: (a) access to core services, (b) implementation of the common core standards, (c) access to a broad course of study, (d) student achievement as measured by state testing, (e) other student outcomes, (f) student engagement, (g) parent involvement, and (h) school climate. Each of these priorities also have state metrics along with local developed metrics for progress evaluation (Knudson, 2014).

LCFF is a new and different approach to the compliance-oriented world in which California administrators and educators have been functioning. It was designed to facilitate districts work with their local communities to create an accountability plan (LCAP) to better serve their students (Knudson, 2014; PACE, 2014). This is a shift for many, especially at the district level, whose jobs are to ensure compliance with categorical and programmatic requirements. As a recent report from the Policy Analysis for California Education found, “the legacy of categorical funding is deeply imbedded in the DNA of many state, district and county officials” (Koppich, Humphrey, & Marsh, 2015, p. 3). With LCFF, the focus should be on designing programs and strategies aligned with the district goals and based on evidence and effectiveness, not compliance (Knudson, 2014).

A feature of the LCFF legislation recently implemented is the creation of the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE). The CCEE is a new autonomous statewide agency developed to support local school districts implementation of their LCAPs (M. Fullan, 2014). The agency, led by Carl Cohn, former longtime Superintendent of Long Beach Unified, is charged with helping school districts and schools that fail to meet the state’s achievement targets or district’s accountability goals (J. Fensterwald, 2015a). CCEE will intervene in districts failing to make their achievement goals for multiple subgroups over several years. However, since the new rubrics are not yet in place, it is likely to be several years before CCEE will intervene with any district (Koppich et al., 2015).
Statement of the Research Problem

Not since the 1976 and 1978 court rulings of Serrano v. Priest has California undertaken such an all-encompassing change in both the allocation of resources and governance structure for public education (L. Freedberg, 2015; M. Fullan, 2015; Koppich et al., 2015). The LCFF represents a “radical decentralization of power and authority from Sacramento to local schools” (L. Darling Hammond & Plank, 2015, p. 2). With the implementation of LCFF and LCAP, in conjunction with new state standards and a new state assessment system, school districts in California have been given “a unique opportunity to reconfigure themselves as learning organizations” (L. Darling Hammond & Plank, 2015, p. 2).

Although this presents an incredible opportunity, most district administrators have lived under the compliance world of NCLB for the past 16 years, where many schools have failed to meet state and federal growth targets and achievement benchmarks (Embse & Hasson, 2012). District administrators are familiar with the compliance world they have been living under, rather than the new expectations and processes expected in LCAP plans (Knudson, 2014). In a recent report from the California Collaborative on District Reform titled, Implementing LCFF: Building Capacity to Realize the Promises of California’s New Funding System, it suggests numerous district administrators have found their roles have changed under LCFF and in they should now be guided by local “strategies that are based on evidence of effectiveness and alignments with district goals, not with state mandates” (Knudson, 2014, p. 1).

Furthermore, educational researcher M. Fullan (2014), states CAs LCFF and LCAP represents a shift,

From the ‘wrong policy drivers’ (negative accountability, individualism, technology, and fragmented policies) to ‘the right policy drivers’ capacity building (with internal/external accountability), collaborative team work, pedagogy (with digital
innovations as a deepener and accelerator), and systemic policies that stimulate shared coherence. (p. 2)

Yet, it appears that many districts have created plans (LCAP) that are less clear and more confusing, rather than straightforward, understandable, and transparent (J. T. Affeldt, 2015; M. Fullan, 2015). The LCAP, in its second year of implementation, appears to be a “massive distractor eating up resources of time and money in counterproductive activities that seem based on getting the plan done to meet compliance requirements rather than one that serves implementation” (M. Fullan, 2015, p. 4).

Now, in its third year of implementation, is an appropriate time to look at some of the challenges and criticisms of the LCAP process brought forth by a variety of special interests groups and advocates. One of the main errors of concern and focus has been on the use of the supplemental and concentration funds and how they are to be “principally directed” and “effective” in meeting the needs of the students that generate the money (LI, EL, and FY). Recently, the California Department of Education (CDE) acted on an administrative complaint against the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), ruling the supplemental and concentration funds LAUSD allocated in their LCAP must “increase or improve” what the district was already spending on their LI, EL, and FY students (Chorneau, 2016). LAUSD will now need to recalculate its spending, and adjust spending in its 2016-17 LCAP.

The LCAP was implemented without a rubric in place. Various special interest groups, advocates, and educational experts have been providing input and critiques of the LCAP. This study will contribute to the emerging body of research about best practices for districts in developing their LCAPs.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this mixed methods Policy Delphi Study was to determine the practices
experts identify as effective for utilizing supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF, to determine how the experts rated the effectiveness of the different practices, and to determine what strategies experts recommend for the implementation of the five practices identified as most effective.

**Research Questions**

The following questions were used to address the purpose of the study:

**Round 1**

1. What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing supplemental funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?
2. What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

**Round 2**

3. How do experts rate the effectiveness of the practices identified for supplemental funds in Round 1?
4. How do experts rate the effectiveness of the practices identified for concentration funds in Round 1?

**Round 3**

5. What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for supplemental funds from Round 2?
6. What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for concentration funds from Round 2?

**Significance of the Problem**

The Superintendent’s Advisory Task Force on Accountability and Continuous Improvement’s recent report states California’s public education system is at a critical point,
where it “more equitably distributes resources (through the LCFF), and trusts local educators and communities to design the educational structures and supports students need to reach their full potential (through the Local Control and Accountability Plans)” (Superintendent’s Advisory Task Force on Accountability and Continuous Improvement, 2016. p. 3).

The LCFF has the potential to transform how school districts and district administrators address the achievement gap, now that they have been freed from the compliance-oriented world of NCLB. This study will add to the literature that is emerging on implementation of the LFCC and LCAP in California. The LCFF and LCAP process is new and district administrators are interested in learning how other districts are implementing their LCAPs. This study sought to explore how districts in southern California have used the flexibility of LCFF to design, community-involved LCAPs aligned to district-wide goals, while at the same time following the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF in targeting high need students.

Additionally, this study will provide district superintendents, cabinet and other district level administrators with best practices other districts have implemented to ensure both supplemental and concentration funds are “principally directed” to the students generating the additional funds to increase or improve services for LI and EL pupils (EdSource, 2016; Taylor, 2013). It will also identify actions school districts can take to ensure they are using highly rated practices.

**Definitions**

The following terms were used for the purpose of this study:

*Drivers.* In this study, it refers to a policy force. M. Fullan (2015) discusses the wrong drivers, which is a policy force that has little chance of achieving the desired result, as compared to the right driver, which is a policy force that does achieve the desired result.
Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). Legislation enacted in 2013 (AB 97) that created a weighted funding system in California, that is based on the idea that students with greater need (LI, EL, FY, and homeless youth) require more resources to have the same opportunities (J. T. Affeldt, 2015; Carbal & Chu, 2013).

Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). Under the LCFF, all LEAs are required to prepare a LCAP, which is a plan that describes how LEAs intend to meet annual goals for all pupils, with specific activities to address state and local priorities identified pursuant to EC Section 52060(d) (CA Legislative Information, 2014a).

Unduplicated pupils. Unduplicated pupils, for the purpose of LCAP counts, are (1) EL, (2) meet income or categorical eligibility requirements for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program, or (3) are FY (EC sections 2574(b)(2) and 42238.02(b)(1)).

Principally Directed. School districts are required to justify the LCFF supplemental and concentration expenditure of funds as being “principally directed” towards serving their high needs pupils and over time that this expenditure was “effective”. School districts need to demonstrate their supplemental and concentration expenditures are focused on initiatives for their high needs pupils (EL, LI, and/or FY), rather than on initiatives for all pupils (A. K. Jongco, 2016; LAO, 2015).

Supplemental Funds. In the LCFF legislation, districts will receive a per-pupil base grant and a supplemental grant, which is based on the number of students that students from LI families, EL, and FY pupils (Carbal & Chu, 2013).

Concentration Funds. In the LCFF legislation, districts will receive a per-pupil base grant and a supplemental grant, which is based on the number of students that are from LI
families, EL students, and FY pupils, and a concentration grant for districts with over 55% of one of these targeted populations (Carbal & Chu, 2013).

LI. In the LCFF legislation, one of the targeted subgroups are students from LI; which are students whose family qualify for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (Carbal & Chu, 2013).

**Delimitations**

The qualitative study includes data, perception data, and opinions collected from surveys of state and county leader’s education identified as experts responsible for the implementation of LCAP at the state and county level. The Delphi technique was used to collect data from respondents considered experts in LCAPs. Surveys were developed by the researcher and distributed during the timeframe of October 2016 – November 2016. Respondents will be identified as experts by the researcher based upon the scope of their work, interacting with LCAPs during the past three years of LCAP implementation. The goal of the surveys aims to achieve a convergence of opinion on the topic of “principally directed” as defined in LCFF legislation, and implemented via LCAP.

**Organization of the Study**

The remainder of this study is organized into four chapters, a reference page, and appendices. Chapter II provides background and a review of the literature about public education financing and legislation in California, categorical funding and other compliance oriented funding, and the LCFF. Chapter III explains the research design and methodology of the study, including the population and sample, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis procedures. Chapter IV presents the results of the data collected and an analysis and discussion of the findings of the study. Chapter V contains the summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The gap has been pretty persistent. So I don’t want to set up what hasn’t been done ever as the test of whether LCFF is a success or failure.

-Governor Jerry Brown (Lin, 2016)

California, under the leadership of Jerry Brown, completely overhauled its public school system, starting with the adoption of new state standards (Common Core), a new assessment (Smarter Balanced Testing) and accountability system, to an entirely new budget system (LCFF and the LCAP). Chapter II of this study reviews professional literature and reports related to the new LCFF, and the LCAP. The review of literature begins with the history of school funding in California progressing into the new system. A review of recent reports and criticisms from experts, organizations and special interest groups will conclude this chapter.

Review of the Literature

A Brief History of Public School Finance in California

California’s school finance system started at the local level. School districts had control over local property starting in 1910 (Perry & Edwards, 2009). Funding came from local property taxes and in California’s early days, this produced sufficient funding to ensure California was one of the leading per-pupil spenders in the country (J. V. Heilig, Ward, Weisman, & Cole, 2014). However in the 1970s, as property owners became frustrated with the increase in their property taxes, they began putting pressure on the state legislature to lessen this tax burden. The legislature responded in 1972 by freezing the amount each school district could collect for per pupil spending (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2008; Timar, 2006). This became known as “revenue limit” and the basis for the state’s general aid formula (J. V. Heilig et al., 2014; Kirst, 2006). California lawmakers thought by limiting state revenues to a per-
pupil amount, spending would decline as a student was “lost”, which is what occurred in California in the early 1970s as enrollment dropped (J. V. Heilig et al., 2014).

**Serrano v. Priest**

Up through the 1970s, school district’s funding was dependent on local property taxes, which resulted in unequal levels of funding, leading to impoverished areas receiving far less school funding than higher property tax areas. John Serrano, a parent of several students in LAUSD, brought a lawsuit against Ivy Baker Priest, the California State Treasurer over the disparities, to challenge public education funding. Serrano v. Priest (1971) found a student’s rights were violated due to the unequal funding of school districts (Humphrey & Koppich, 2014; Timar, 2006). The ruling found students were denied an equal educational opportunity, a violation of the “Equal Protection” clause of California’s constitution. The Supreme Court ruled the state must “sever the close linkage between district assessed property value per pupil and total district spending” (California Courts, 2016; Perry & Edwards, 2009).

In Serrano I (1971), the school finance system was found to be unconstitutional and in two subsequent follow-ups to Serrano v. Priest (1976 and 1977) the states legislature’s response in Serrano I was insufficient and subsequently required the legislature to reduce the inequalities among the districts by adjusting districts’ revenue limits (J. V. Heilig et al., 2014; Timar, 2006).

The legislature’s first attempt to resolve this disparity, SB90, was known as the “squeeze formula” (Bersin et al., 2008; Timar, 2006). The formula created revenue limits, which were adjusted for inflation and provided “high-wealth” districts, like Beverly Hills, less funding, while “low wealth” districts received higher funding. Critics predicted it would take decades to balance funding using this method (Timar, 2006).
Proposition 13

Shortly after Serrano v. Priest occurred in the courtroom, another significant shift in school funding took place. In 1978, through a popular proposition by Howard Jarvis, called the People’s Initiative to Limit Property Taxes, Proposition 13 became law. Prop 13, capped property taxes, the base of school funding, effectively freezing property taxes and permitting only modest increases in property taxes. This caused California’s per-pupil spending to drop, as local property taxes were the major revenue source (Fuller & Tobben, 2014; Timar, 2006). The result was a 60% decrease in property tax revenues for local communities, which led to the state assuming primary responsibility for funding schools (J. V. Heilig et al., 2014).

Ultimately, Proposition 13 resulted in a major increase of state control over schools as the local property taxes went to Sacramento, then were distributed back to school districts (AB 8) with additional funding and control from the state (Bersin et al., 2008; J. V. Heilig et al., 2014).

Proposition 98

Approximately 80% of school funding was now derived directly from the state as a result of Proposition 13 (Bersin et al., 2008; Timar, 2006). At the same time, funding for schools dropped. As a result, Proposition 98, called the Classroom Instructional Improvement and Accountability Act amended the constitution in 1988 to create a minimum floor (approximately 40% of the state’s general fund) for K-12 school finances (J. V. Heilig et al., 2014; Timar, 2006). Proposition 98 was considered vital to the foundation of school finance (Kirst, 2006, p. 12). The proposition ensured a funding source that would grow each year depending on the economy and number of students (LAO, 2013; Timar, 2006). The revenue, considered guaranteed funding, is generated through a combination of General Funds and local property taxes. While these propositions determined how much funding the state provided to districts, they did not regulate how these funds were allocated to school districts. It also meant
that funding, dependent on California’s economy, could decline as well (J. V. Heilig et al., 2014).

**Categorical Funding**

With school districts dependent on state money in order to operate, politicians responded by increasing categorical funding, a method by which the state and federal governments allocate resources to school districts in order to target certain students or programs. Categorical grants was a practice that began in 1960s (Bersin et al., 2008; Heilig et al., 2014). Over time categorical funding came to “represent nearly 33% of the money spent by the state on schools” (J. V. Heilig et al., 2014, p.10). One of the downsides to categorical funding was a “hardening of the categories ensued that did not allow localities to shift state funds for local needs, but rather focused upon compliance” (Kirst, 2006, p. 6). This also created regulatory overload (Bersin et al., 2008).

School district’s revenue sources were dispersed in three different methods: (a) general purpose (or base), (b) categorical funding, and (c) local funding. Base funding, the principal component of school funding in California, was based on the ADA of a school district (Timar, 2006). Another substantial portion of a districts’ revenues was from categorical aid. There were four types of categorical funding: (a) entitlement, (b) incentive, (c) discretionary, and (d) mandated cost reimbursements (Timar, 2006). Each of these categorical funds were targeted to reach certain groups of students, such as students with disabilities, EL, LI, etc.

**Entitlement**

Entitlement programs were generally based on certain characteristics, such as disability, EL, or poverty. School districts received these funds based on a formula and the number of students in those categories. The purpose of these funds was typically to address an equity issue, based on the needs of a select subgroup of students. In California, school districts
targeted additional funds to EL and LI students through the Economic Impact Aid (EIA), in addition to Special Education students (Timar, 2006).

**Incentive**

The legislature used incentive programs to encourage school districts to implement new state policies. For example, the K-3 Class-Size-Reduction (CSR) Program, provided additional funding to districts for the purpose of reducing class sizes in Kindergarten through third grade to 20 or fewer students (Timar, 2006). Other examples of incentive grants were AB 466, a professional development program for math and reading standards, and AB75 a Principal Training program.

**Discretionary**

There were also discretionary or competitive grants, for which districts could apply. These grants were targeted at implementing certain programs, such as the Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program (II/USP), which provided funding for low-performing schools. Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) was also a program funded through this type of grant (Timar, 2006).

Beginning in the 1980s, the state legislature rapidly increased the number of categorical funds. Between 1980 and 2000, the average per pupil funding increased 15% in constant dollars, yet during this same time period the funding for categorical programs increased by 165% (Timar, 2006). By 2005, there were 233 state and federal categorical programs. The large number of categorical programs resulted in numerous funding streams and program requirements, rarely reviewed or evaluated once started.

In 2004 AB 825 attempted to consolidate programs by creating six new block grants. These grants were able to absorb 25 categorical programs and did help, but only represented approximately 20% of categorical funding (Timar, 2006).
Mandated Cost Reimbursement

The California Constitution (Article XIOOB, Section 6) compels the state to reimburse districts for the cost of any new program, or increased level of service to an existing program that is required by legislation or state mandate. During the 2003 and 2004 Budget Act, the legislature began deferring the reimbursements to school districts. At one point, it was estimated the state owed districts over $1 billion for deferred mandate reimbursements (Timar, 2006). The state Legislature enacted a “15-year payment plan”, which would repay pre-2004 mandate claims over a 15 year period, however in 2008 the Legislature has not appropriated any funding to fulfill this obligation (LAO, 2014).

AB 1200

Another piece of legislation, AB 1200 was enacted by the state of California in 1991, to ensure districts were sufficiently prepared to meet their financial obligations. It was passed in reaction to several school districts embroiled in financial crises due to financial mismanagement. This bill in effect created a plan, whereby county offices of education developed a larger and more influential role in monitoring school districts. It required county offices of education to ensure districts under their supervision were in compliance and maintained a level of financial stability. AB 1200 also created a Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) be established to assist school districts and county offices of education (Frazier, 1994).

In the mid-2000s the state of California was hit particularly hard by the worst recession in our nation’s history. Funding delays from the state to school districts became commonplace, as the state struggled to meet its financial obligations. School districts were given temporary fiscal flexibility beginning in 2008-2009 school year to help weather the crisis. Lawmakers granted district flexibility in how they could spend their categorical funds, which had been
decreased by approximately 20% at that point (Edwards, 2010). Additionally, the state lowered the penalties imposed on school districts for exceeding class size rations under the K-3 Class Size Reduction program (Edwards, 2010). This seemed to signify the beginning of the end of most categorical funds.

In 2008, Bersin, Kirst, and Liu wrote an article in the Berkley Law brief, titled *Getting Beyond the Facts” Reforming California School Finance*. In this article, Bersin et al proposed a reformed finance system which consisted of five components: (a) base funding, (b) special education, (c) targeted funding for LI students and EL (d) regional cost adjustments, and (e) a hold harmless condition (Bersin el al., 2008). In 2011, Governor Jerry Brown is in office and he appoints his good friend Michael Kirst, as the new president of the CDE, who becomes the architect behind the LCFF.

**LCFF**

In 2013, Governor Jerry Brown, signed into law CAs LCFF. This new piece of legislation represented “the most significant change in California’s funding system for K-12 schools in four decades” (Miles & Feinberg, 2014, p. 1). The LCFF also brought a significant increase in funding to most school districts, $2.1 billion being added in the first year of implementation. During the first year of implementation those districts with the greatest number of high-needs students (those with the highest ratio of LI, EL, and FY) received an average of 6.4% in funding, while those districts with the least needs did not receive any additional funding (Miles & Feinberg, 2014). Although this was a large increase for K-12 education at the time, it actually only brought funding back to the 2007 pre-recession level for some districts (Miles & Feinberg, 2014).
Goals of LCFF

There are two main goals of the LCFF. They are to fund schools equitably, and allow decisions to be made locally.

Governor Brown stated he sought to provide additional funding to school districts in order “to enable educators to overcome barriers that confront non-English speaking families and those with low and very modest incomes” (EdSource, 2016, p. 3). The law funds school districts based on the proportion of the targeted students (LI, EL, and FY) enrolled in the district. The term Brown uses to explain his support of this shift to local control is subsidiarity, a belief educational decisions are best made at the local level. Governor Brown believes “classroom problems are best solved by the people closest to the students” (as cited in Lin, 2016, p. 2).

The funding formula, when fully implemented (projected by 2020-21), provides school districts a uniform base amount per pupil. Grade levels nine through 12 will receive the greatest amounts followed by grades K-3, while districts receive less funding for students in middle grades (EdSource, 2016).

The LCFF does not create new sources of funding for school districts. In the legislation, “full funding” was defined as the end of the transition period from the old revenue distribution system, to the new one. Base funding (with a few exceptions) will be uniform and the proportion of high-needs students will determine funding (EdSource, 2016). At full funding, the district’s per-pupil funding would be at least what districts received in 2007-08 pre-recession levels (Carbal & Chu, 2013; EdSource, 2016).

Supplemental and Concentration Grants

When LCFF passed, Governor Brown predicted it would take until 2020-21 to fully fund the LCFF. However, due to an increase in state revenues during the first three years of
implementation from an improved economy, the majority of extra state funds were directed towards K-12 education. The additional funding has expedited closing the funding gap earlier than predicted (EdSource, 2016). For school districts with a high concentration of high-need students (LI, EL, and FY), funding has increased dramatically. The extra funding for high-needs students is referred to as supplemental and concentration grants and is provided in addition to base funding.

**Supplemental Funds**

In addition to the base funding received by districts, they can also qualify for additional funding based on the needs of their student population. The supplemental add-on grant is an additional 20% of the per-student base grant for every LI, EL, and FY in attendance (EdSource, 2016; LAO, 2015). Those students falling into more than one category are only counted once. The formula is based on what the state refers to as the “unduplicated count”. Since these grants are not provided to districts as a categorical grant, the “district is free to use them as it sees fit to better educate the child” (J. V. Heilig et al., 2014, p. 885).

**Concentration Funds**

Those districts with a large number of high-needs students, 55% or more of enrollment, will receive an add-on “concentration grant.” These grants provides districts an additional 50% of the base grant for unduplicated students, in addition to the 20% supplemental grant, for those students above the 55% enrollment threshold (EdSource, 2016; LAO, 2015). This funding is given with considerable openness, in return districts are required to “increase its services for unduplicated students in proportion to the increase in funding the district receives through supplemental and concentration grants” (J. V. Heilig et al., 2014, p. 885) and the funds can be used in a school-wide or district-wide manner (see Table 1).
Table 1

Examples of Local Control Funding Formula Funding for Different Types of Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Funds per student Received in 2012-13</th>
<th>Projected per student funds for 2020-21</th>
<th>Projected per student increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Ramon Valley Unified District 8% high-needs students</td>
<td>$5,794</td>
<td>$8,928</td>
<td>$2,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Sands Elementary School District 55% high needs students</td>
<td>$6,173</td>
<td>$9,846</td>
<td>$3,673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King City Union Elementary School District 91% high needs students</td>
<td>$6,549</td>
<td>$11,429</td>
<td>$4,870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Funds to be “Principally Directed”**

The law articulates districts must use the monies from supplemental and concentration grants to increase or improve services for LI, EL, FY, and homeless children in proportion to the increase in funds (EdSource 2016). The expenditures in the LCAP must be “principally directed” towards serving their high-need students (J. T. Affeldt, 2015). The intent of this law and the increase in funding is to provide districts the opportunity to implement and improve services for their high needs students in order to close the achievement gap. The law requires school districts describe their budget and how they intend to use the additional funds. Furthermore, the district’s plan must align each goal to at least one or more of the state priorities (LAO, 2015).

At this time the LCFF legislation does not require an itemized list of the expenditures, and this is the point of contention. Civil rights advocates are lobbying for more accountability and transparency in how supplemental and concentration funds are spent (EdSource, 2016). In a recent report, *Toward a Grand Vision: Early Implementation of the LCFF*, found some
districts expressed confusion over the purpose of the LCAP and whether or not it was “essentially a reporting of how supplemental and concentration funds were spent – in other words, a compliance document – or an articulation of the district’s overall fiscal strategy for meeting its academic goals” (Humphrey & Koppich, 2014, p. 6).

**Calculating Yearly Allocations**

Under LCFF, school districts follow a state formula in order to determine the amount and percentage of the supplemental and concentration monies that must be spent each year to “increased or improve” services for the identified high-needs students. The amount and percentage of the budget spent on increased or improved services is to be documented in the last section of the LCAP (EdSource, 2016; WestEd, 2014).

The state has made it clear, through state board regulations, that supplemental and concentration funds can be used for school-wide or district-wide purposes, including teacher raises. However, districts need to clearly articulate how the money will benefit these high-needs students (EdSource, 2016).

**Class Size Reduction**

Another provision in the LCFF is new funding to reduce class sizes in Kindergarten through third grade. Districts are given a significant financial incentive, 10.4% in additional base funding, if they reduce their K-3 class size ratios to a maximum average of 24 to 1 in a district (Carbal & Chu, 2013). Districts have an eight-year transition period to incrementally integrate this class size reduction program. Every school in the district is required to meet this class-size ratio in order to not lose any funding (EdSource, 2016).

**Additional Funding Sources**

LCFF comprises 80 to 90% of K-12 school funding. However, two large categorical programs remain in place, the *Home-to-school transportation* fund and the *Targeted*
Instructional Improvement Block Grant. These programs not receiving a yearly inflation adjustment will erode over time (EdSource, 2016). In addition, school districts will continue to receive an additional allocation for special education students.

The LCAP

Under the LCFF, districts have been given control and a great amount of flexibility in how to use their funding. In return, they are expected to raise student achievement. How they plan to achieve this must be clearly articulated in the LCAP (EdSource, 2016).

This shift in decision making to the local level requires school boards to reach out to parents, teachers, students, and community members for their perspectives and input on student achievement and school improvement (Carbal & Chu, 2013). Utilizing input from stakeholders, districts must develop the LCAP describing how the district will utilize the supplemental and concentration funds to “increase and improve services” for students and improve student outcomes. This plan must be organized in the state mandated LCAP template, provided by the CDE.

The LCAP is a three-year improvement plan. Districts must update it annually by July 1 and submit it to the County Office of Education (COE) for review and approval (EdSource, 2016). Each district must create goals within the LCAP, which meet the state’s eight priorities (see Figure 2) along with the local priorities established for all students and for each student group, including students with disabilities, students who have been re-designated as fluent-English proficient, and students in defined racial and ethnic groups. The goals must identify actions, services, programs and costs to achieve the locally identified goals and the metrics used to measure progress. The LCAP must also identify how the actions and services the district is
proposing in its plan, for their high-needs students (LI, EL, and FY) will *increase* or *improve* services (at a minimum), in proportion to the increased funding (supplemental and concentration monies).

**Figure 2.** The Eight State Priority Areas and Associated Metrics for LCAP. Adapted from “Implementation of LCFF and LCAPs” by Legislative Analyst’s Office, 2015, p. 4. Retrieved from http://www.lao.ca.gov/handouts/education/2015/LCFF-LCAP-Implementation-012115.pdf

**Organization of the LCAP**

**Section 1: Engagement**

LCFF requires a school district document, in Section 1, to show how it engaged its stakeholders (parents and guardians, teachers, classified staff, administrators, and students) in the process of developing the plan. The following guiding questions are embedded in the LCAP template, which districts are encouraged to use to promote engagement:

- Did engagement occur early in the process to allow for meaningful discussions?
• What information and metrics did the district provide parents and members of the district advisory committee?

• What changes were made to the district’s LCAP as a result of the suggestions it received?

• Did the district listen to school site councils, which should continue to meet and make recommendations for their school prior to LCFF (CDE, 2016a.)

Section 2: Goals, Actions, Expenditures, and Measures of Progress

California requires districts to establish annual goals for students covering the eight state priorities, along with any local priorities, whereby a goal can address more than one priority in the LCAP. Districts must attach a table for each goal that applies to a specific student group. Conversely, a goal can apply to all students, or districts can select specific groups from which to target. Furthermore, districts need to indicate if the goal applies to all or individual schools and include the metrics to measure the goal.

Section two includes goals for the upcoming three years. Each goal must also include the budgeted expenditures. Starting in the 2015-16 LCA, a section title Annual Update was added, which is a review of progress towards meeting the goal from the previous year. The annual update must also address the effectiveness of said program, as measured by progress on identified metrics. Additionally, the annual update identifies changes that will be made in the upcoming year. This section will also answer the following guiding questions from the LCAP template:

• Did the actions and services meet the needs of all students, including each specific student group (not just those getting extra money) and achieve the desired outcomes?
• What qualitative and quantitative measures were used to review progress in meeting goals?
• What information did the district use to set goals and address priorities?
• Were the unique needs of individual schools considered?
• What is the reason for the difference in the budgeted and actual expenditures?

The LCAPs have become longer and more complex as districts have begun addressing each goal and the annual updates. EdSource (2016) completed an analysis of the 2015-16 LCAPS from the 30 largest districts in California. They discovered the average LCAP was 145 pages, as compared to the previous year LCAPs of 54 pages.

**Annual Update**

The LCAP also includes an Annual Update section. In this section, the district will identify the actions and budget they proposed, and then report on what was actually done and how much money was actually spent. It will also determine if the action was successful and if it will continue the next year or will a change be made for the upcoming year (EdSource, 2016). This is the progress monitoring section of the LCAP and one that is to be used for reflection and planning.

The legislature also identified over 20 metrics that districts must be address in their LCAP. The goals of the district must address each of the metrics associated with the eight state priority areas.

**Section 3: Supplemental and Concentration Funding**

In this section school districts calculate their “proportionality” percentage using a state mandated formula to determine the minimum amount of money required be spent on the district’s high-needs students. This section will cite how the additional funding was used, and if used for district-wide purposes, justify why it was the best use for high-needs students.
Furthermore, districts must calculate the proportionality percentage and explain how the services for LI, EL, and FY, and homeless students you will improve, at a minimum, in proportion to the services for all students. Although districts aren’t required to list expenditures for high-needs students, they are required to provide a “quantitative and/or qualitative description” of how services for those students will proportionally increase.

(EdSource, 2016)

Advocacy groups and the State Board of Education (SBE) disagree over this section of the LCAP. Advocacy groups are demanding greater transparency in this section of the LCAP. They expect districts to provide a detailed accounting of the funds allocated to high-needs students who generate this additional money. The state board’s position is, simply focusing on the expenditures misses the point, because the LCAP focus should be on actions to improve and increase services and programs in proportion to the money received (EdSource, 2016).

In May 2016, Public Advocates won a ruling against the LAUSD by demonstrating that the district utilized $450 million of its supplemental and concentration funds for services aimed at special education students, not considered a high-needs group under LCFF (Noguchi, 2016). Advocates suggest school districts have found ways to game the system or find loopholes. An example of a loophole some districts have used is to carry over the supplemental and concentration funds from one year to the next, and then spend them without restrictions (Noguchi, 2016). Proposed legislation was brought forward in June 2015 to require all districts, upon full funding, to report the supplemental and concentration dollars received yearly and how much was spent on their high-needs students each year (EdSource, 2016).

Eight State Priorities

The state of California has identified eight state priorities that districts are required to address in their LCAP. The priorities are:
A. Conditions of learning:

- Priority 1 (Basic): Degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned and fully credentialed in the subject area for the students they teach.
- Priority 2 (Implementation of State Standards): Implementation of academic content standards and ELD standards adopted by the CDE.
- Priority 7 (Course Access): Students enrolled in a board course of student that includes all subject areas.

B. Pupil Outcomes

- Priority 4 (Pupil Achievement): Performance on standardized test, share of students that are college and career ready, EL students that become English proficient, EL reclassification rate, share of students that pass AP exams with 3 or higher, share of students prepare for college by the Early Assessment Program (EAP).
- Priority 8 (Other Pupil Outcomes): Student outcomes in the areas describe in Ed. Code section 51210(a- i).

C. Engagement

- Priority 3 (Parental involvement): Efforts to seek parent input in decision making at the district and each school site, promotion of parent participant in programs for unduplicated student and special need subgroups.
- Priority 5 (Pupil engagement): School attendance rates, chronic absenteeism rates, middle school drop-out rates, high school dropout rates, high school graduation rates.
- Priority 6 (School Climate): Student suspension rates, pupil expulsion rates, other local measures including surveys on the sense of safety and school connectedness. (CDE, 2016)
Meaningful Engagement

LCFF requires school districts to include parents, students, and community members into the LCAP development process. The law also states, the superintendent must present it to a District Parent Advisory Committee, which is comprised of parents, guardians and includes parents from the LI, EL, FY, or homeless youth. The superintendent must also present the district’s LCAP to an EL Parent Advisory Committee. Additionally, the superintendent must respond to the advisory committee’s suggestions in writing, and hold at least one public hearing on the LCAP prior to it being adopted by the school board (EdSource, 2016).

In addition to these mandates, parents can also participate through their local school site councils and can petition the district or board for greater community involvement in the process. Furthermore, districts are encouraged to provide accessible summaries and easy to read literature explaining the district’s LCAP, which the state is hoping will increase local parent and community engagement in the process. Advocacy groups have begun reaching out to parents, providing parents with training, publications and outreach to elicit greater involvement in the process (EdSource, 2016; A. K. Jongco, 2016).

Expanded role of COE

The role of the COE has expanded in LCFF. County offices of education are required to review all districts LCAPs and annual updates and verify each LCAP complies with the requirements of the law, and the district’s budget aligns with the plans (EdSource, 2016). California Ed Code Section 52070(a) mandates that districts must submit their LCAP to their local county of education within five days of board adoption (California [CA] Legislative Information, 2016b). The county superintendent has until August 15 to seek clarification about the plan the school district from both the educational services and business services department. In response, the county provides districts recommendations to improve their plan
and the school district has 15 days to respond to their recommendations. According to California Ed Code Section 52060-52077 the district’s LCAP plan is either approved or rejected by its COE by October 8 (CA Legislative Information, 2016a).

With 58 county offices of education across the state, it is inevitable plans are interpreted and LCAP regulations enforced with some variation. Therefore, the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) developed a manual for LCAP review in order to provide guidance to these 58 COEs (CCSESA, 2016). The LCAP manual consists of ensuring districts are meeting three criteria for the approval of their LCAPs: (a) adherence to the SBE template, (b) sufficient expenditures in budget to implement LCAP, and (c) adherence to SBE expenditure regulations (CCSESA, 2016). Additionally, a number of county offices of education have begun offering workshops throughout the year on developing the LCAP. New evaluation rubrics have adopted by the SBE in September 2016 and they will allow districts and COEs to evaluate the strength, weaknesses and areas of improvement in their plans.

Early this year, a bill was introduced by the California State Legislature, requiring a pilot program be created to train district and county offices of education on how to use the upcoming state rubric to review district LCAPs (Kirby, 2016). This bill, if approved, would assist county offices of education as they transition into their new enhanced role under LCFF.

**Accountability**

For the past decade, California has utilized the API system to measure and rank schools and districts; whereby schools and districts receive a single number from a low of 200 to a maximum of 1,000 (Polikoff & McEachin, 2013). California set a target for all schools of 800 or higher (CDE, 2015a). In addition to this API score, schools also received API Similar School rankings, being ranked with 100 other schools with similar demographic profiles
(including parent education level, poverty, student mobility and ethnicity) within the state. Both of these scores relied heavily on the state’s standard test, the California State Test (CST) to determine their API number. Additionally, the API Growth measurement was a week measure of growth, as it did not track the performance of individual students (Polikoff & McEachin, 2013).

In addition to the statewide ranking, schools were rated by the Federal Government, mandated by the NCLB. The AYP determined how every public school was performing based primarily on each state’s standardized test, along with other factors, such as graduation rates (Klein, 2015). Goals for proficiency were established and implemented, 2014 being the year all students and schools were to score proficient on their state assessments. This policy recently concluded and new state rubrics are under development and aligned to the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (Briggs, Burns, & Flint, 2016).

Under the LCFF, the state began developing a new accountability system comprised of eight state priorities utilizing 23 data elements, including many elements that have been previously used or collected, in addition to new elements and local metrics which have yet to be determined (CCSESA, 2016a; EdSource, 2016).

**Evaluation Rubrics**

The LCFF law will require three types of evaluation rubrics. They will include a (a) self-assessment rubric, (b) a support rubric, and an (c) intervention rubric. These rubrics are designed to evaluate performance in eight areas of: (a) basic services, (b) implementation of state standards, (c) parental involvement, (d) pupil achievement (including ELs progress), (e) pupil engagement, (f) school climate, (g) access to a broad course of study, and (h) student outcomes within a board course of study (Briggs et al., 2016). These rubrics are designed to
establish “a holistic, multidimensional assessment” (West Ed, 2015, p. 1) of district and school performance.

**Self-assessment rubric.** The self-assessment rubric was developed and approved by the SBE in September 2016. The new rubrics are designed to assist districts in determining their strengths and weaknesses, which will help guide them in setting LCAP goals. The information contained in these rubrics will provide the public with a quick snapshot of how a district or school is doing (Briggs et al., 2016).

**Support rubric.** The support rubric will be designed to assist county offices of education in providing support and assistance to school districts. If a district does not improve outcomes in more than one state priority for at least one subgroup, the county needs to assign an expert to work with them on this weak area. If the county lacks the resources to assist a district achieve their goals, they can refer them to the CCEE (L. Darling Hammond & Plank, 2015). The district could also receive assistance from the new CCEE. The CCEE will also work with school districts that reach out voluntarily for their expertise and assistance.

**Intervention rubric.** The intervention rubric (under development) will be used by the state superintendent to determine the type of intervention that will needed at an underperforming district. The law states the state superintendent of public instruction can only intervene if the following three conditions are met: the district does not improve results in three out of four consecutive years for three or more student subgroups in more than one state or local priority, the CCEE has provided assistance and determines the district has been unable or unwilling to carry out its recommendations and that the academic performance is so poor that intervention is necessary, and the SBE approves the State Superintendent’s intervention.

WestEd has been contracted by the state of California to develop the rubrics and gather input from stakeholders throughout the state (EdSource, 2016). These rubrics will also aligned
to the new federal ESSA requirements (Briggs et al., 2016). Beginning in November 2016, performance results will be published online.

**CCEE**

The CCEE is a new autonomous state agency established by the Legislature to “advise and assist” school districts and county offices of education in achieving their goals and improving the quality of teaching in their district (CA Ed Code Section 52074). The intent of this new agency was to be more collegial, and collaborative with school district’s to improve, rather than take over a district, as was done previously (CCSESA, 2016b).

Carl Cohn, a retired superintendent from Long Beach Unified School District was appointed their first director. Mr. Cohn began working in August 2015, and has been traveling around the state seeking input from county offices of education and school districts. He hired a small staff to begin the work of supporting districts in implementing effective LCAPs. Since the new evaluation rubrics were approved in September 2016, and have not been implemented yet, the collaborative role in potential interventions will not begin until at least 2018 (EdSource, 2016). The CCEE currently has a $10 million annual budget broker assistance for districts across the state (M. Fullan, 2014).

The CCEE is part of a broad strategy employed in implementing LCFF, of moving from what M. Fullan (2015) calls the “wrong drivers” (negative accountability, individualism, technology and fragmented policies) to the “right drivers” (capacity building, collaborative team work, pedagogy, and systemic policies that stimulate shared coherence). M. Fullan authored three reports in the past two years, California’s Golden Opportunity, in which he and his team worked with a number of groups (Stuart Foundation, CORE, ACSA, California Ed Partners, UC Davis and Linda Darling Hammond) at the state level to assist them in collaborating with state legislatures in transforming the whole system (M. Fullan, 2015).
In M. Fullan’s (2015) report, *A Golden Opportunity: The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence as a Force for Positive Change*, he stated the CCEE could become a valued asset to the system if it is able to identify key areas of need in districts, creates a repository of current, proven expertise and resources available to school districts, brokers capacity building resources, and monitors progress and builds success around district improvement and makes it visible (M. Fullan, 2015).

**Initial LCAP Reviews**

According to Michael Kirst, president of the SBE,

A massive shift in decision making, planning and resource allocation requires patience, persistence and humility... in the meantime, I am encouraged about how the funding formula reforms are moving decision making closer to where it should have been all along – closer to where children are learning and teachers are teaching. (as cited in EdSource, 2016, p. 46)

Other California leaders and advocacy groups who have reviewed the first two years of LCAPs agree with Kirst.

A recent report on the first two years of LCFF implementation by PACE (*Policy Analysis for California Education*), found amongst educators surveyed were still optimistic about the LCFF and how it has improved the funding process. The PACE study reported that many school districts now have money to implement programs that target their EL and FY. In the LCAPs they reviewed, districts where the targeted subgroups made up a largest proportion of their total population, they “reported that all of their actions were intended to positively influence all student groups” (Koppich et al., 2015, p. 2). In those districts that did separate out actions intended for one of the high needs groups, it was mostly for EL. Table 2 lists some of the common services found in LCAPs.
Table 2

Common Services Targeting Subgroups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Learners</th>
<th>Low Income Students</th>
<th>Foster Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• ELD support classes and materials</td>
<td>• Supports for teen parents</td>
<td>• Foster Youth Liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PD for teachers on ELD standards and teaching strategies</td>
<td>• Math/ELA coaches</td>
<td>• Greater collaboration with outside agencies to coordinate services and monitor students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Additional bilingual support staff</td>
<td>• Instructional assistants</td>
<td>• PD for teachers on foster youth and helping students dealing with trauma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Expand translation services
- Parent workshops
- Newcomers/Migrant programs and support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Services Targeting all students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Curriculum and instructional materials (including technology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Common Core implementation support (e.g., coaches, TOSAs, and PD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Course access, increasing a-g and AP courses, and accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supporting highly qualified teachers (through BTSA, training, salaries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expanding career/CTE pathways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Administration and analysis of state and local assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parent outreach and workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enrichment programs (STEM, arts integration, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Programmatic support staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Class size reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Extended learning time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tutoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


However, the PACE report also found that district officials interviewed were concerned that they “are beginning to feel that the control is increasingly being exerted by the state and COEs (County Offices of Education) through the eight priority areas, the still developing accountability system, and the LCAP” (Koppich et al., 2015, p. 4). All eight state priorities need to be addressed and are given equal priority, thus districts question how the LCAP can truly be a reflection of local priorities and needs within this structure.
Advocates Weigh in on LCAPs

Recently a complaint was filed by Public Advocates with the CDE when West Contra Costa Unified moved $4.3 million from supplemental and concentration funds into a reserve fund for potential teacher raises (J. Fensterwald, 2016a). The district did not end up using the funds for that purpose, but the state ruled that West Contra Costa Unified would need to hold a public hearing to address how the money would be used for the high-needs students for which they were intended.

In July 2015, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of southern California filed a lawsuit filed against LAUSD accusing them of improperly counting money (supplemental and concentration funds) it was already spending for special education services for LI and EL learners as meeting the obligations for their supplemental and concentration dollars (EdSource, 2016).

The CDE determined LAUSD improperly credited $450 million of supplemental and concentration funds to their special education students as meeting the requirements of LCFF (J. Fensterwald, 2016b). The CDE found that they counted this expenditure twice, which meant they spent much less than required for their high-needs students (LI, EL, and/or FY). In the ruling, CDE noted “the district could also lower that amount (the $450 million settlement) by documenting that some special education services, such as language supports for EL with disabilities, qualified as appropriate expenditures for high-needs students under the funding formula” (J. Fensterwald, 2016b, p. 3).

Some districts have begun to hold their unspent supplemental and concentration funds in an account for future use on the high-needs students, rather than sweep it into the general fund for the following year. A school district consulting firm, School Services of California, has warned its members about how they should use their unspent supplemental and
concentration funds (J. Fensterwald, 2016a). When LCFF is fully funded, districts may be required by the state, to make up their shortfall of spending from previous years.

Other recent studies conducted by Education Trust-West, the ACLU, and the LAO has identified additional areas of need and concern. The concerns expressed were:

- Many district’s LCAPs only identified spending in the eight priority areas and did not account for the full LCFF funding or include base spending (Koppich et al., 2015).
- It was challenging to determine how supplemental and concentration monies were spent, and identify what spending was for existing programs versus new programs or initiatives (Koppich et al., 2015).
- Many LCAPs did not contain an explanation the rationale for using supplemental and concentration funds for district wide initiatives (EdSource, 2016; Koppich et al., 2015).
- Districts view the LCAP as a compliance document (Koppich et al., 2015).

In an open letter from the ACLU and Public Advocates, Inc., written to County and District Superintendents, they wanted to ensure district’s LCAPs complied with the legal requirements of LCFF. They specifically highlighted a few issues they found in reviewing LCAPs. The following issues identified were:

- Ensure LCAP’s goals address each of the state’s eight priority areas (J. Affeldt & Sapp, 2014).
- Ensure stakeholder engagement (including parent and student) in creating LCAPs.
- Ensure LCAPs identify and justify school-wide and district-wide use of supplemental and concentration funds (J. Affeldt & Sapp, 2014).
• Ensure districts have a mechanism in place to measure how LCAP money pushed down to schools for their use are “directed towards meeting the (LEA’s) goals for unduplicated pupils” (J. Affeldt & Sapp, 2014, p. 2).

• Ensure final LCAP is approved at the same meeting as the board adopts the district budget (J. Affeldt & Sapp, 2014).

Two of the five concerns brought forward by the ACLU and Public Advocates group relate to the use of supplemental and concentration funds. Furthermore, in another letter from the same two advocacy groups to President Kirst of the SBE, they shared the following concerns:

• Most districts fail to account for the majority of LCFF funds, as “the law is clear that a district must list all actions to meet its LCAP goals for all students in each of the eight state priorities” (A. K. Jongco & Gupta, 2016, p. 3).

• Most districts are not ensuring that district-wide and/or school-wide expenditure of supplemental and concentration funds have a justification of how that money is “principally directed” towards and effective in meeting the goals of the high-needs students that generate the money (A. K. Jongco & Gupta, 2016).

The letter proposed the SBE make changes to the LCAP template, specifically section 3A, and specifically justify how the funded actions are “principally directed” to meet the district’s goals for high-needs students.

Public Advocates Inc. has also released a report, Keeping the Promise of LCFF: Key Findings & Recommendations After Two Years of LCFF Implementation. In this report they have identified five challenges and opportunities and the one area that was highlighted in the report was “districts are not properly justifying their use of supplemental and concentration funds by describing how they are principally directed and effective to serve the high-need students who generate those dollars” (J. K. Jongco, 2016, p. 2). Furthermore, many districts
“fail to clearly explain how they are meeting their minimum obligation to increase and improve services for high-need students as compared to all students in proportion to the additional funds these students generate” (J. K. Jongco, 2016, p. 2).

An area of confusion and contention between school districts and advocate groups is that the majority of districts include only a portion of their total budgets in their LCAPs. The portion of the budget that is in the LCAP are the supplemental and concentration funds, which is what districts consider to support the eight state priorities and improve services for their high-needs students (Hahnel, 2014). Advocate groups claim it is difficult for these groups and parents to make sense of LCAP expenditures that only reference the supplemental and concentration funds, as it is difficult to tell what services have been increased or improved, compared to the core program offered to all students (Hahnel, 2014).

Another district targeted by the ACLU for misuse of supplemental and concentration funds is Fresno Unified School District. The ACLU claims funds intended for high-need students was used on things like school renovations, custodial support, a Fresno Police Department program, and a gunshot tracking technology system—Shot Spotter (Mays, 2016). The ACLU complaint stated, “Being able to pinpoint where shots are fired will not help any student in the district, let alone high-need students specifically” (Mays, 2016, p. 2). Additionally, they call out the use of $4 million for employee supports and $6 million for bathrooms and custodians. Fresno Unified School District’s response was “We take great pride in funding schools equitably, making decisions locally and measuring school achievement broadly” (Mays, 2016, p. 2). The complaint was filed as a Uniform Complaint under the CDE and the ACLU has stated they will probably file a lawsuit.
Advocate groups have expressed frustration in how loosely districts have interpreted the requirements regarding supplemental and concentration funds. The Education Trust-West has seen examples of districts proposing to use these funds (supplemental and concentration), for special education services...(and to) increase salaries and retirement payments for teachers, without regard for whether those teachers are focused on the particular needs of LI, EL, and FY student. (Hahnel, 2014, p. 17)

Another report, A Review of Year Two LCAPS: A Weak Response to California’s English Learners by Californians Together, which focused specifically on the needs of ELs found most district’s LCAPs “revealed mostly general descriptions of District-wide use of supplemental and concentration funds related to goals for its unduplicated pupils” (Olsen, Armas, & Lavadenz, 2016, p. 7). During their review of LCAPs, the reviewers did not find one LCAP across the state that was rated as good or exemplary across their indicators. There was little to no discretion of how services were increased or improved for the English Learners (Olsen et al., 2016).

**Principally Directed Mandate**

One item in common in all the reviews and critiques of LCAPs has been concern over how school districts are utilizing their supplemental and concentration funds to ensure they are used in accordance with the “principally directed” expectation of the LCFF. The state has currently expressed that school districts can utilize supplemental and concentration funds for school-wide or district-wide purposes. However, critics are growing louder in their concern about district LCAPs and how it does not appear that districts are not using their supplemental and concentration funds to target their high-needs students or effectively articulating how they are using supplemental and concentration funds to target their high-needs students (EdSource,
A recent editorial by Pivot Learning claimed,

There are no ‘thou shalt not’s’ for LCFF. Districts say they are following the rules as they interpret them. Advocates for families and youth call them out for violating the rules as they define them. Everyone gets confused and no one is satisfied. (Ramanathan, 2016, p. 2)

A significant measurement in the recently released rubrics will be the equity report. Districts will be required to demonstrate the effectiveness the programs and initiatives they have implemented, which are “principally directed” at their high-needs students, utilizing supplemental and concentration funds. During the first three years of implementation of LCFF, the rubrics were under development. Now, as the state is about to implement the new accountability program, districts will be under increased scrutiny from not only advocates and critics, but also the CDE to ensure they utilize their supplemental and concentration funding in a way that is “principally directed” at the high-needs students that generate the additional funding and that it was effective.

**Research Gap**

School districts in California developed their first LCAP for the 2013-2014 school year. The following year, for the 2014-2015 LCAP the Annual Update portion of the LCAP was added to the plan. For the third year of implementation, 2015-2016 there still did not exist a state rubric to measure the effectiveness of LCFF on student achievement. Nonetheless, school districts and county offices of education are expected to implement an LCAP that demonstrates increased local involvement by stakeholders and follows the intent of the LCFF legislation. An area that has received increased scrutiny by critics and advocacy groups is how districts are adhering to the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF. This mandate states that the district
goals funded with supplemental and concentration funds should be “principally directed” towards the students that generate the funding (LI, EL, and FY) and that the actions and services are “effective” in meeting the district’s goals. Several recent complaints filed by advocate groups against school districts in this area demonstrate a need for greater understanding and identification of practices that districts can employ to ensure they are adhering to the “principally directed” mandate. This study will add to the limited research currently available on the LCFF.

**Summary**

As discussed in the review of literature, California has experienced significant policy shifts within the past five years with the adoption of new CCSS, the LCFF, and a new Assessment system, California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). The new accountability system will drive these new reforms, which was approved by the CDE at their September 2016 meeting. The new accountability system “originated in the radical decentralization of power and authority from Sacramento to local schools and their communities brought about by the Legislature’s adoption of the LCFF in 2013” (L. Darling Hammond & Plank, 2015, para. 1).

Under LCFF, school districts are responsible for developing their own local goals, linking their own strategies, initiatives, and programs and aligning them to the state priorities. The LCAPs will be evaluated using the newly adopted rubrics for effectiveness in improving the eight state priority areas (L. Darling Hammond & Plank, 2015).

Although the rubrics are new and about to be implemented, districts have completed their third LCAP and will be held accountable for ensuring they have utilized their supplemental and concentration funds in a way that was “principally directed” to the high-needs students that generated the extra funding.
A thorough review of the literature was conducted and the information gathered was used to provide a greater understanding of the immensity of this study (see Appendix A).
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

Chapter III reviews the purpose of this study and research questions. An overview of the research design describes how the Delphi study was conducted, to obtain answers to the research questions. The methodology is then explained, followed by an explanation of the population, sample, and instruments used. A description of the data collection process, the data analysis process, and information on validity and limitations of the study, conclude this chapter.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods Policy Delphi Study was to determine the practices experts identify as effective for utilizing supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF, to determine how the experts rated the effectiveness of the different practices, and to determine what strategies experts recommend for implementation of the five practices identified as most effective.

Research Questions

The following questions were used to address the purpose of the study:

Round 1

1. What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing supplemental funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

2. What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

Round 2

3. How do experts rate the effectiveness of the practices identified for supplemental funds in Round 1?
4. How do experts rate the effectiveness of the practices identified for concentration funds in Round 1?

Round 3

5. What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for supplemental funds from Round 2?

6. What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for concentration funds from Round 2?

**Research Design**

The selected design for this study was a mixed methods Policy Delphi design. The selection of a methodology is based on the problem and purpose of the study (Roberts, 2010). The purpose of the study was to determine a consensus of what experts perceive as the most effective ways for utilizing both supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of the LCFF in California Public K-12 education. Additionally, experts will identify strategies they perceive as most effective for the implementation of the five most effective identified practices. It was determined the Delphi Method was the most appropriate method to use to conduct the study. As part of the methodology selection process, the researcher considered the data needed for collection. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through the three rounds of the Delphi process. Population and sample design was also a consideration as experts must be identified and their participation secured for the process. Furthermore, the type and quality of data collected ensures the researcher can acquire the consensus of expert’s opinions as well as a deeper understanding and comprehension of the research topic.

A Policy Delphi method was introduced by Rand Corporation in 1975 and is distinctively suited to study subjects with little historical evidence (Franklin & Hart, 2007). A
Policy Delphi is designed to stimulate the generation of alternatives and ideas regarding a topic by collecting the judgments of experts on a particular topic (Franklin & Hart, 2007). A Policy Delphi is ideal “if the researcher is interested in studying an institutional or environmental phenomenon that has no historical context” (Franklin & Hart, 2007, p. 245). The entire LCAP and LCFF process have no historical context. For this reason, a Policy Delphi was selected for this study.

The Policy Delphi design methodology is “a series of sequential questionnaires or rounds, interspersed by controlled feedback that seeks to gain the most reliable consensus of opinion” (Powell, 2002, p. 376). The researcher selected this methodology as the LCFF and LCAP are relatively new, and there exists an incomplete state of knowledge (Powell, 2002). Data included an open ended qualitative question in rounds one and three and quantitative Likert scale ratings in Round 2.

By using both quantitative data and qualitative data, the researcher was able to develop a consensus among the experts chosen for the study. The number of participants considered ideal for a policy Delphi is between 10 to 50 participants (de Loë, Melnychuk, Murray, & Plummer, 2016). The data collected provided the researcher with a depth of understanding and insight from the various experts assembled for this study (Powell, 2002). A total of three rounds of questions were presented to the expert panel. The first round asked an open ended qualitative question regarding the experts’ perception of the most effective practices for implementing the LCFF. The second round was a quantitative question asking the experts to rate the practices identified. Round 3 sought to encourage a convergence of opinion as to the strategies most effective for implementation of the practices. There is an absence of research on this topic, and the Policy Delphi process was appropriate for developing a consensus of expert opinion to guide future practice in this area.
Population and Sample

A population is “a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research” (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010, p. 129). The population for this study included all administrators at county offices of education that are involved in reviewing LCAP in California. The characteristics of this population include administrators in the educational services and fiscal (business) departments at the county offices of education with direct involvement in the last three years of LCAP review and approval process. There are 58 County Offices of Education across California and a total of 116 administrators that possess approval authority in those offices.

Target Population

The target population is the group of participants from whom the data was collected for this study (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010). They represented specific criteria from the population, which was used to generalize the results of the research.

The target population for this study was educational services and fiscal (business) administrators from the 10 largest county offices of education in California. The 10 largest counties are Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Clara, Alameda, Sacramento, Contra Costa, and Fresno. These county offices were purposefully selected, as administrators who work in the top 10 offices of education have reviewed a greater number of LCAPs and have a larger base of knowledge from which to pull. County offices of education have been reviewing LCAPs since June 2014. In June 2015, LCAPs expanded to include the Annual Update section. With the latest edition of LCAP reviews, June 2016, county offices of education have completed the review process for their third year.
Additionally, county offices of education participants are trained by the CCSESA, in the LCAP review process (CCSESA, 2016a) (see Table 3).

In order to be selected as a part of the target population, potential participants had to meet the following criteria:

1. Must currently be in a position that approves or denies LCFF Plans.
2. Must have been in this position since the beginning of the LCFF process, 2014.
3. Must have reviewed and passed judgment on a minimum of 30 LCFF Plans.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County Office</th>
<th>Administrators Doing LCFF Review</th>
<th>Administrators Doing LCFF Review and Meeting Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Los Angeles</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. San Diego</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Riverside</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. San Bernardino</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Alameda</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sacramento</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Contra Costa</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Fresno</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Sample**

Researchers use a sample from a desired population, as it is impossible to conduct a study of an entire population (Patton, 2015). A sample is the group of subjects from whom the data are collected (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010). Sampling is the process researchers utilize for selecting a people from which to sample from the target population. There are three stages in the sampling process, they include: defining the population of interest, identifying the sample, and determining the sample method and sample size (Patton, 2002).
The sample for this study was designated administrators from the educational and fiscal services divisions of the ten largest county offices of education in California. The county offices of education have been tasked with reviewing and approving all district’s LCAP. As part of this process county administrators have reviewed a large cross section of LCAPs from multiple districts.

To create the sample for this study, both purposive and random sampling methods were used. Purposive Sampling is when particular features from the population will be informative about the topic of interest. From this a judgment is made about which subjects should be selected to provide the best information to adders the purpose of the research (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010). Random Sampling is when a group of participants is selected on the basis of each participant having the same probability of being selected. (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010).

**Purposive Selection**

In order to participate in the study, administrators had to meet the following criteria:

1. Must currently be in a position that approves or denies LCFF Plans.
2. Must have been in this position since the beginning of the LCFF process, 2014.
3. Must have reviewed and passed judgment on a minimum of 30 LCFF Plans.

Administrators were purposively identified for potential participation based on these criteria.

**Sample Selection Process**

The sample selection process used the following steps:

1. The purposive process used the selection criteria to identify potential sample participants,
2. The researcher made contact with all qualified potential participants via email or telephone to solicit their participation.

3. A list of those participants willing to participate was developed.

4. One participant was selected at random from each of the 10 counties.

5. The selection of the initial 10 participants was followed by the random selection of an additional participant from five more counties for a total of 15 expert participants.

6. The selected participants were contacted and provided with Informed Consent (see Appendix B), a Letter of Invitation (see Appendix C), Demographic Questionnaire (see Appendix D), and Participant Bill of Rights (see Appendix E).

In a Delphi study, participants are “selected specifically for their knowledge or position on an issue, and who have agreed in advance to participate” (de Loë et al., 2016, p. 81). The selection of participants was purposeful, insomuch as they possess a level of knowledge needed for the topic, yet the selection was random as participants were selected because they worked in one of the county offices of education across the state of California. A purposeful-random sampling, or selection design lends itself to increased credibility and manageability.

**Sample Size**

In a Delphi Study, recommended sample size is between 12 and 40 expert participants, if a homogeneous group is used, the sample may be smaller (between 10 to 15) participants (Nworie, 2011). The sample size of 15 was sufficient for this study, given the newness of the LCFF legislation, and the methodology of using the Policy Delphi design to make use of expert judgment in identifying practices and strategies for implementation of the LCAP process.
**Instrumentation**

A series of questions were developed to answer the research questions. The questions were emailed in three rounds. The first round of questions was open ended. The second round of questions was designed to rate on a Likert scale the answers from the first round. The third round of questions was designed to distill the information collected in the second round, as well as provide the panelists an opportunity to provide feedback on strategies districts could take to implement the agreed upon practices.

Digital survey software, Survey Monkey, was utilized to create the electronic survey instruments. An email was sent to participants with directions and guidelines for use of the electronic survey instrument. The email also contained Round 1 survey questions, allowing the participants to review the questions prior to beginning the survey (see Appendix F).

**Round 1 Survey Questions**

1. What practices do districts use to ensure supplemental funds are used in accordance with “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

2. What practices do districts use to ensure concentration funds are used in accordance with “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

After round 1 responses were received via electronic survey, results were gathered. From the responses, a list of expert panel identified practices for supplemental and concentration funds was generated. Aggregated responses to Round 1 questions became the Round 2 lists to be rated.

**Round 2 Survey Questions**

Panel experts were asked to use a 6 point Likert scale to rate the effectiveness of each of the practices identified from Round 1 (see Appendix G).
1. The aggregate responses regarding practices districts use to ensure supplemental funds are used in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF are listed below. Please rate the effectiveness of each of these practices from 1 to 6, with 1 being lowest and 6 being highest, on the Likert Scale provided.

2. The aggregate responses regarding practices districts use to ensure concentration funds are used in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF are listed. Please rate the effectiveness of each of these practices from 1 to 6, with 1 being lowest and 6 being highest, on the Likert Scale provided.

Mean scores of ratings of the practices for supplemental and concentration funds were placed in lists from highest to lowest. The five practices that received the highest ratings for supplemental and concentration funds lists were used to develop the questions for Round 3.

**Round 3 Survey Questions**

In Round 3, the final round of this study, participants are asked to consider the five responses rated “extremely effective” from Round 2, and describe the most effective strategies that school districts can take to ensure highly rated practices for use of supplemental and/or concentration funds are used in their district (see Appendix H).

1. Considering the five responses rated most effective from Round 2, describe the most effective strategies that school districts take to ensure highly rated practices for use of concentration funds are used in their district?

2. Considering the five responses rated most effective from Round 2, describe the most effective strategies that school districts take to ensure highly rated practices for use of concentration funds are used in their district?
Field Test

A field test of the instruments was conducted prior to sending out the survey, with several volunteers familiar with the research topic. A field test, or pilot study, is “designed to obtain preliminary information” (Patten, 2012, p. 57) on how the study will work. The volunteers who participated in the field test did not participate in the study. Each volunteer was asked to complete each of the three surveys to provide feedback on readability, clarity, and the design of the survey (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010). After each round, feedback was gathered. Insights gained from the field test were used to adjust the instrument.

Data Collection

Immediately following approval from the Brandman University Institutional Review Board (BUIRB), the researcher communicated with administrators from the ten largest county offices of education across California, via email to participate in the study.

A list of 20 potential expert panel members was selected. Each member of the expert panel was contacted, via email, by the researcher to inform them of the study and of their willingness to participate and gain consent for participation. Information regarding confidentiality and use of the responses was included in the informed consent. Once consent was received and confirmation of expert criteria confirmed, 15 participants were emailed an email link to participate in round one of the study. Survey Monkey was utilized to create the survey, and a copy attached to the email. In the original email, a deadline for questionnaire completion, terms and definitions, as well as contact information was provided.

The advantage of the Delphi methodology is it provides an opportunity for participants to provide initial feedback, and then after the initial results are aggregated, the participants are able to provide additional feedback. This provides rich data, as the experts are able to view
what other experts in the field shared and modify their input based on this additional information.

**Round 1 Data Collection**

The first survey question was open ended, and intended to elicit any and all ideas the participant wanted to share. Detailed steps for data collection in round one included:

1. Selection of the panel of experts.
2. Construction and distribution of the survey via Survey Monkey.
3. Completion and return of the first survey via Survey Monkey.
4. Organization, categorization and development of a list of responses for each category of responses.
5. Construction of the second survey, based on the responses from first round.

**Round 2 Data Collection**

Round two of the data collection process involved asking the panel of experts to provide a rating based on a Likert Scale from their responses in round one. Detailed steps for data collection in round two included:

1. Distribution of the second survey via Survey Monkey.
2. Completion and analysis of mean scores of the second survey via Survey Monkey.
3. Organization and categorization of highest to lowest rated individual responses for each suggestion.
4. Identification of top five rated practices for supplemental funds and for concentration funds.
5. Construction of the third, and final survey based on highest rated practices from second round.
Round 3 Data Collection

Detailed steps for data collection in round three included:

1. Distribution of the third survey via Survey Monkey.
2. Completion and analysis of the third survey responses.
3. Tabulations of individual strategies for each practice.
4. Organization of group responses into frequency tables.

Data Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect data in this mixed methods study. After each survey was completed, the data was aggregated. The data was reviewed multiple times throughout the collection processes. Any new ideas were noted and incorporated, if applicable. Each round of data was compared to the previous round. The data was coded and organized to identify similarities. Quantitative data was gathered from the Likert scale responses in the second round. Median and means were developed from the responses. A cut point was selected and used to determine impact. The interval data from the Likert survey questions provided the researcher with data to evaluate and determine the top five practices in each category.

Round 1 Data Analysis

In the first round, the question was open ended, free response. Data was recorded.

Detailed steps for data analysis included:

1. Organize data collected into lists.
2. Code data for ease of retrieval and organization.
3. Develop a data analysis matrix to store data.
4. Integrate related themes and practices in preparation for the development of round two questions.
Round 2 Data Analysis

In the second round, participants were asked to rate each item on a Likert scale. Using a rating scale allowed the researcher to organize and compare the data collected. Detailed steps for data analysis included:

1. Calculate means from the Likert responses.
2. Organize the responses to identify the highest rated practices.
3. Determine highest rated practices to use for the third round, which will determine consensus.

Round 3 Data Analysis

Aggregated responses from the second round were presented in the third round. Detailed steps for data analysis included:

1. Organize data collected into tables by practice.
2. Code data to assist in sorting and organizing.
3. Place strategies into frequency matrices for each practice.
4. Identify the strategies most frequently named for each practice.

Limitations

This mixed methods, Delphi study included data from surveys presented to a cross section of COE administrators, identified as experts in the area of LCAP and LCFF. Roberts (2010) indicated that some of the standard “limitations are sample size, methodology constraints, length of study and response rate” (p. 162). One of limitations of the study was the number of participants available for the study. The small sample size produces a limitation. The sample was limited to 15 county offices of education administrators from counties across northern and southern California, which could result in the generalizing of data.
Sample selection was not random because the individuals who participated in the study came from county offices of education across all of California. Additionally, these experts had, at most, only three years of experience working with LCAPs, as the county offices of education began reviewing plans in the summer of 2014. Each year of implementation brings a new level of understanding from the previous year. However, given the small sample size and relative newness of the LCAP, it is possible that the results may be challenging to generalize (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010).

The data analysis process of a policy Delphi can be considered subjective, as the development of the surveys is subjected to the “knowledge, experiences, and perceptions of the researcher” (Franklin & Hart, 2007, p. 245). Additionally, the researcher’s personal bias can be an influence on the data collected. However, one of the strengths of the Delphi methodology is the benefit of participants being able to reflect on other participant’s input and change their own input based on those reflections. This sensitivity to “environmental change is both a benefit and limitation of the method” (Franklin & Hart, 2007, p. 244).

The policy Delphi study is ideal for exploring changes as they occur. “The benefits of the method simply outweigh the costs if the researcher is interested in studying an institutional or environmental phenomenon that has no historical context” (Franklin & Hart, 2007, p. 245). The LCFF and LCAP are entering their fourth year of implementation and this method is ideally suited to explore this new policy.

Summary

Chapter III included a review of the purpose of the study and research questions. The method in which this mixed methods study was conducted to answer the research questions was described. Due to the research questions, it was determined the optimal methodology to use for this study was a policy Delphi study. Information about how the study was presented,
including the population, sample, instruments, and field test. Additionally, the data collection process, explanation of the data analysis, and limitations of the study were presented.

Chapter IV will present the results, analysis and discussion of the data collected in this study. Chapter V concludes with the summary, findings, conclusions and recommendations for additional research.
CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Overview

Chapter IV presents an analysis of the data collected from this study. The study aimed to determine the practices experts identified as most effective for utilizing supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF, to determine how experts rated the effectiveness of different practices, and determine what strategies experts recommend for the implementation of the five practices identified as most effective. Additionally, this chapter restates the study’s purpose, research questions, methodology, population, and sample followed by a presentation of the data organized by research questions. Chapter IV concludes with a summary of the findings.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy Delphi Study was to determine the practices, experts at County Offices of Education identify as effective for utilizing supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF. It was also to determine how the experts rated the effectiveness of the different practices in order to generate the five most effective practices for both supplemental and concentration funds. Additionally, the study sought to determine strategies experts recommend for the implementation of the five practices identified as most effective.

Research Questions

The following questions were used to address the purpose of the study:

Round 1

1. What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing supplemental funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?
2. What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

Round 2

3. How do experts rate the effectiveness of the practices identified for supplemental funds in Round 1?

4. How do experts rate the effectiveness of the practices identified for concentration funds in Round 1?

Round 3

5. What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for supplemental funds from Round 2?

6. What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for concentration funds from Round 2?

**Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures**

The selected design for this study was a Policy Delphi design in order to gather data from an expert panel of COE administrators across the state of California. The selection of a methodology is based on the problem and purpose of the study (Roberts, 2010). The purpose of the study was to determine a consensus of what experts perceive as the most effective ways for utilizing both supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of the LCFF in California public K-12 education. Additionally, experts will identify strategies they perceive as most effective for the implementation of the five most effective identified practices. It was determined the Delphi method was the most appropriate method to use to conduct the study. As part of the methodology selection process, the researcher considered the data needed for collection. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through the three rounds of the Delphi process. Population and sample design
were also taken into consideration as experts must be identified and their participation secured for the process. Furthermore, the type and quality of data collected ensures the researcher can acquire the consensus of expert’s opinions as well as a deeper understanding and comprehension of the research topic.

The Policy Delphi design methodology is “a series of sequential questionnaires or rounds, interspersed by controlled feedback that seeks to gain the most reliable consensus of opinion” (Powell, 2002, p. 376). The researcher selected this methodology as the LCFF and LCAP are relatively new, and there exists relatively little researcher (Powell, 2002). Data included an open ended qualitative question in rounds one and three and quantitative Likert scale ratings in Round 2.

By using both quantitative data and qualitative data, the researcher was able to develop a consensus among the experts chosen for the study. The number of participants considered ideal for a policy Delphi is between 10 to 50 participants (de Loë et al., 2016). The data collected provided the researcher with a depth of understanding and insight from the various experts assembled for this study (Powell, 2002). A total of three rounds of questions were presented to the expert panel. The first round asked an open ended qualitative question regarding the experts’ perception of the most effective practices for implementing the LCFF. The second round was a quantitative question asking the experts to rate the practices that were identified. Round 3 sought to encourage a convergence of opinion as to the strategies most effective for implementation of the practices. There is an absence of research on this topic, and the Policy Delphi process was appropriate for developing a consensus of expert opinion to guide future practice in this area.
Population and Sample

The population for this study included administrators at COE involved in reviewing LCAPs in California. The characteristics of this population include administrators in the educational services and fiscal (business) departments at the COE with direct involvement in the last three years of LCAP review and approval process. There are 58 COEs across California and a total of approximately 116 administrators that possess approval authority in those offices.

The target population for this study was educational services and fiscal (business) administrators from the 10 largest COE in California. The 10 largest counties are Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Clara, Alameda, Sacramento, Contra Costa, and Fresno. These county offices were purposefully selected, as administrators who work in the top 10 offices of education have reviewed a greater number of LCAPs and have a larger base of knowledge from which to pull. COE have been reviewing LCAPs since June 2014. In June 2015, LCAPs expanded to include the Annual Update section. With the latest edition of LCAP reviews, June 2016, COE have completed the review process for their third year.

All of the participants in this study were trained to review LCAPs by CCSESA, and most recently by the CCEE the new organization that developed out of the LCFF legislation.

Presentation of the Data

Data is presented for each research question, beginning with research question one. Each of the three rounds of the Delphi study is reported consecutively for each research question.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asked: What practices do experts identify as most effective for
utilizing supplemental funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

**Round 1.** In Round 1, participants were asked to respond via electronic survey to the open-ended question: *What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing supplemental funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?*

Principally directed was defined as the need to *demonstrate their supplemental and concentration expenditures are focused on initiatives for their high needs pupils (LI, EL, and/or FY), rather than on initiatives for all pupils* (J. K. Jongco, 2016; LAO, 2015).

The Round 1 questionnaire was emailed to selected members listed on the COE websites as overseeing the LCAP process. The email invitation was sent to the administrator in Educational Services and Business Services that had oversight of the LCAP process providing information on the study along with the informed consent. The 10 largest COE were targeted because administrators in those counties would have greater interaction with more LCAPS than smaller counties.

During the invitation process a majority of those that responded from the Business Services Department stated they were not involved in reading or reviewing the LCAPs for content. They informed the researcher they strictly review the dollar amounts in the LCAP to ensure they match the dollar amounts the district had in their board-adopted budgets. Realizing their review process would make them unable to contribute to the study, the researcher eliminated this population from the study. In addition, three of the targeted districts either did not respond, or responded they were unable to participate in the study, resulting in three alternate COE being included in the study.

Fourteen expert panel members responded. The researcher reviewed, sorted and categorized panel members’ responses. Some respondents provided commentary, rather than
answering the question. For example, one respondent stated, “it is hard to use the word ensure when speaking of how districts utilize funds as principally directed can be subjective in some way.” These comments, though insightful, did not identify a practice. Similar responses were combined, as were components of larger themes.

The researcher generated a list of 15 perceived practices based on the panel members’ responses. The list was then presented to several K-12 administrators to seek input and additional analysis of the key practices identified. Based on the input from administrators involved in the LCAP process, five of the practices were eliminated or combined with other practices. This list of 10 practices is outlined in Table 4.

Table 4

*List of 10 Perceived Effective Practices for Local Control Funding Formula Supplemental Funds*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify student groups supported by supplemental &amp; concentration funds and describe how they benefit students</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligning district goals, actions, services, supports, programs, resources, etc. to 8 state priorities.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigning resource codes to track funds spent on actions/services for unduplicated students.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging with COE during development of LCAP for feedback on the appropriate use of supplemental and concentration funds.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure systems and resources for monitoring and support of supplemental funds are in place to determine effectiveness.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection, evaluation and analysis of current practices/programs to identify research based practices to determine &quot;effective&quot; use of supplemental funds</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify &quot;base program&quot; to avoid supplanting.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District LCAP teams are comprised of multiple representatives from various divisions (Educational Services, Student Services, Business/Fiscal Services, Personnel, etc.)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with districts to calibrate understanding of supplemental, concentration and &quot;principally directed&quot; mandate.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question 2 of the survey was the same as Research Question 1, except it focused solely on the concentration funds of LCAP. The researcher generated a separate question for concentration funds, as some districts only receive supplemental funds and do not qualify for concentration funds. Concentration funds are awarded to districts whose LI and EL populations exceed 55% of their enrollment. These districts receive an additional 50% of the adjusted base grant for each LI and EL above the 55% threshold (LAO, 2013). Table 5 lists responses to Research Question 2.

Table 5

| List of 10 Perceived Effective Practices for Local Control Finding Formula Concentration Funds |
| Practices experts identify as most effective for utilizing concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF |
| Practices | Frequency |
| Supplemenal & Concentration funds are viewed as the same. These two terms are used when calculating a district's funding entitlement but functionally they are the same. | 9 |
| Analyze data to determine needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure LCAP goals and actions address the needs identified in the data. | 5 |
| COEs provide training to districts. Districts then provide information to schools and stakeholders regarding appropriate use of funds. | 5 |
| Review data, surveys and effectiveness of existing services and supports in order to determine goals, actions and services designed to "increase or improve services" of their English Learners, Foster Youth and Economically Disadvantaged. | 5 |
| Describe the level of involvement with parent and community groups. | 4 |
| Address the equity issues that the data present. | 4 |
| Use research to identify programs, goals, actions, services, supports and resources determined to be effective. | 4 |
| Ensure district budget systems allow for the tracking and monitoring of funded goals, actions, and services to verify expenditures. | 3 |

The researcher generated a list of 15 perceived practices based on the panel members’ responses. The list was then presented to several K-12 administrators to seek input and additional analysis of the key practices identified. Based on the input from administrators involved in the LCAP process, seven of the practices were eliminated or combined with other
practices. However, eight of the 14 responded simply “same as above” when answering the second question.

**Analysis of round 1.** All 14 participants responded to the Round 1 questionnaire and provided at least one answer to each of the questions. Nine of the participants stated they view both *supplemental and concentration funds the same* when reviewing LCAPs. Additionally, eight participants simply responded to question one, and then in the second question they responded same as above.

Ten of the 14 panelists described some form of *identifying students (unduplicated) that were targeted with funds and how they benefitted (increase or improved service).* Nine of the 14 participants answered *that district goals, actions, services, supports, programs, resources, etc. should be aligned to the eight state priorities.*

Eight of the 14 participants indicated that districts need to *analyze state and local data to inform program, goals, actions, services to determine the needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure money is used primarily on the targeted subgroups.* Eight of the 14 participants also described a good practice for districts would be to *assign resource codes to track funds spent on actions/services for unduplicated students.* Eight of the 14 shared, *engaging with County Offices of Education during development of the LCAP for feedback on the appropriate use of supplemental and concentration funds* would be a good practice in which to engage.

Seven out of 14 panelists shared, districts should *ensure systems and resources for monitoring and support of supplemental funds are in place to determine effectiveness.* Seven of 14 panelists stated, *reflection, evaluation and analysis of current practices/programs to identify research based practices to determine "effective" use of supplemental funds.*

Six out of 14 participants described districts need to *identify "base program" to avoid supplanting.* Six out of 14 panelists also shared, *district LCAP teams should be comprised of*
multiple representatives from various divisions (Educational Services, Student Services, Business/Fiscal Services, Personnel, etc.).

Five out of 14 panelists indicated, districts should work with districts to calibrate understanding of supplemental, concentration and "principally directed" mandate.

The second question response with the highest frequency was Supplemental & Concentration funds are viewed as the same. These two terms are used when calculating a district's funding entitlement but functionally are the same.

Five out of the 14 participants, recommended districts analyze data to determine needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure LCAP goals and actions address the needs identified in the data. Five of 14 participants stated, County Offices of Education provide training to districts. Districts then provide information to schools and stakeholders regarding appropriate use of funds, as well as, review data, surveys and effectiveness of existing services and supports in order to determine goals, actions and services designed to "increase or improve services" of their LI, EL, and FY.

Four of the 14 participants indicated the following three practices, districts should describe the level of involvement with parent and community groups, address the equity issues that data presents, and use research to identify programs, goals, actions, services, supports and services determined to be effective. Three out of 14 participants stated, ensure district budget systems allow for the tracking and monitoring of funded goals, actions, and services to verify expenditures.

Panel members’ responses to Round 1 became the basis for Round 2 of the Policy Delphi study. The eleven responses to Round 1, Research Question 1, and the eight responses to Round 1, Research Question 2 were entered into an electronic survey, using Survey Monkey for Round 2.
Round 2. In Round 2, the expert panel was asked to rate the effectiveness of the 10 practices identified for supplemental funds and the eight practices for the eight practices identified for concentration funds. In the electronic survey instructions for Round 2, panel members were told responses from Round 2 were distilled, categorized, and consolidated based on common responses from participates from various County Offices of Education in California (see Appendix G).

The 14 panel members received the Round 2 survey via email and were instructed to rate the effectiveness of each of the practices. A six point Likert scale was developed for rating the effectiveness of each identified practice. Participants ranked the effectiveness of each item from a low of “extremely ineffective”, to high of “extremely effective.” They were also informed in the survey instructions that their ratings from Round 2 would be aggregated with responses from panel members from across COEs in California to determine the most effective practices. Of the 14 panel members, 13 responded to Round 2. Panel member’s ratings of the most effective practices to the least effective are summarized from Round 2 are in (Question 1) Table 6 and (Question 2) Table 7.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection, evaluation and analysis of current practices/programs to identify research based practices to determine &quot;effective&quot; use of supplemental funds.</td>
<td>5.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze state and local data to inform program, goals, actions, services to determine the needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure money is used primarily on the targeted subgroups.</td>
<td>5.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The district may provide targeted services or materials to targeted groups.</td>
<td>5.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District LCAP teams are comprised of multiple representatives from various divisions (Educational Services, Student Services, Business/Fiscal Services, Personnel, etc.)</td>
<td>5.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure systems and resources for monitoring and support of supplemental funds are in place to determine effectiveness.</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
Table 6

**Ranking based on Effectiveness of Supplemental LCAP Practices from Research Question 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engaging with COE during development of LCAP for feedback on the appropriate use of supplemental and concentration funds.</td>
<td>5.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligning district goals, actions, services, supports, programs, resources, etc. to 8 state priorities.</td>
<td>5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify student groups supported by supplemental &amp; concentration funds and describe how they benefit students.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with districts to calibrate understanding of supplemental, concentration and &quot;principally directed&quot; mandate.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify &quot;base program&quot; to avoid supplanting.</td>
<td>4.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7

**Ranking based on Effectiveness of Concentration LCAP Practices Research Question 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyze data to determine needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure LCAP goals and actions address the needs identified in the data.</td>
<td>5.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review data, surveys and effectiveness of existing services and supports in order to determine goals, actions and services designed to &quot;increase or improve services&quot; of their English Learners, Foster Youth and Economically Disadvantaged.</td>
<td>5.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement systems for monitoring effectiveness of actions and services</td>
<td>5.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure district budget systems allow for the tracking and monitoring of funded goals, actions, and services to verify expenditures.</td>
<td>5.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address the equity issues that the data present.</td>
<td>5.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COEs provide training to districts. Districts then provide information to schools and stakeholders regarding appropriate use of funds.</td>
<td>5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use research to identify programs, goals, actions, services, supports and resources determined to be effective.</td>
<td>5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental &amp; Concentration funds are viewed as the same. These two terms are used when calculating a district's funding entitlement but functionally they are the same.</td>
<td>4.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis of round 2.** Panel members rated the effectiveness of each of the 10 practices in Research Question 1, and eight of the practices outlined in Research Question 2. They rated the degree of effectiveness on a six-point Likert scale ranging from one, highly ineffective to six, highly effective. Mean ratings were calculated for each of the 18 practices.
Mean ratings ranged from a high of 5.7 to a low of 3.54. In order to develop the third round survey, the top five practices were determined using the mean.

From Research Question 1, the effective practice with the highest mean rating of 5.77 was reflection, evaluation and analysis of current practices/programs to identify research based practices to determine “effective” use of supplemental funds. The second highest rated effective practice, with a mean rating of 5.62 was analyze state and local data to inform program, goals, actions, services to determine the needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure money is used primarily on the targeted subgroups.

Two practices had a mean rating of 5.54, they were the district may provide targeted services or materials to targeted groups, and district LCAP teams are comprised of multiple representatives from various divisions (Educational Services, Student Services, Business/Fiscal Services, Personnel, etc.). The fifth practice identified as effective by the panel members, at a mean rating of 5.38 was ensure systems and resources for monitoring and support of supplemental funds are in place to determine effectiveness.

From Research Question 2, the effective practice with the highest mean rating of 5.77 was that districts should analyze data to determine needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure LCAP goals and actions address the needs identified in the data. The practice with the second highest mean rating of 5.62 was review data, surveys and effectiveness of existing services and supports in order to determine goals, actions and services designed to "increase or improve services" of their LI, EL, and FY students.

The remaining three practices that were highly rated for being effective were, Implement systems for monitoring effectiveness of actions and services, with a mean rating of 5.54. Ensure district budget systems allow for the tracking and monitoring of funded goals,
actions, and services to verify expenditures, with a mean rating of 5.46 and address the equity issues that the data present, with a mean rating of 5.23.

**Round 3.** In Round 3, the final round of the study, panel members were asked to review the most effective practices districts could use to ensure both supplemental and concentration funds are used in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF from Round 2. Then they were asked to describe the strategies school districts could utilize to implement the five highly effective practices they identified in Round 2. The electronic survey was emailed to the original 14 panel members providing informed consent. Twelve of the 14 panel members (83%) responded to Round 3. Panel members’ responses are included for supplemental funds (Research Question 1) in Table 8 and concentration funds (Research Question 2) in Table 9.

Table 8

**Strategies Districts can utilize to Implement Effective Supplemental Practices (Research Question 1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for supplemental funds from Round 2?</th>
<th>Effective Practice 1</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection, evaluation and analysis of current practices/programs to identify research based practices to determine “effective” use of supplemental funds</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular meetings among educational leadership (including business) to review and analyze data,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triangulate data (qualitative, quantitative, perception, local indicators, and state metrics)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use new LCFF Rubrics/Dashboard</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
Table 8

*Strategies Districts can utilize to Implement Effective Supplemental Practices (Research Question 1)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Practice 3</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The district may provide targeted services or materials to targeted students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use research, including past success, to determine resources (funding, human resources, training, etc.) to implement targeted services to the unduplicated students</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Practice 4</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District LCAP teams are comprised of multiple representatives from various divisions (Educational Services, Student Services, Business/Fiscal Services, Personnel, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District leadership needs to determine who is responsible for different portions of LCAP, then meet regularly with this team to monitor implementation, tracking, monitoring, analysis, etc. across all departments</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Practice 5</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure systems and resources for monitoring and support of supplemental funds are in place to determine effectiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop an internal accountability team to monitor implementation of actions and services, develop a budgetary tracking system, and conduct a return on investment analysis for each action/service to determine if student achievement is positively being impacted.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9

*Strategies Districts can utilize to Implement Effective Concentration Practices (Research Question 2)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Practice 1</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyze data to determine needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure LCAP goals and actions address the needs identified in the data.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District leadership meets regularly to analyze data, determine the targeted students’ needs, and implement actions/services</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with stakeholder groups to review the data</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Practice 2</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review data, surveys and effectiveness of existing services and supports in order to determine goals, actions and services designed to “increase or improve services” of their English Learners, Foster Youth and Economically Disadvantaged.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use the annual update process, to report out and address the needs of all groups.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
Table 9

Strategies Districts can utilize to Implement Effective Concentration Practices (Research Question 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for concentration funds from Round 2</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective Practice 3</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement systems for monitoring effectiveness of actions/services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate with other departments and districts to determine best systems and practices for monitoring actions/services</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Districts need training on how to monitor effectiveness</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Practice 4</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure district budget systems allow for the tracking and monitoring of funded goals, actions, and services to verify expenditures.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish unique identifier within account code strings for district expenditure in order to track usage of supplemental &amp; concentration funds</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate LCAP responsibilities across divisions and ensure LCAP is a standing agenda item for all meetings</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Practice 5</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address the equity issues that the data present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult with stakeholder groups</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor the data and implement evidence-based actions/services to address the gaps</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Analysis of round 3.** The results from Round 3 were organized into tables by practice, and then coded and organized. The strategies that appeared most frequently for the five effective practices from Round 2 were identified. Again, as in Round 1, the two funding sources are viewed as essentially the same by the expert panel and their answers are interchangeable between the two questions.

An emerging theme found in both practices and strategies is collaboration and teamwork across all departments and divisions. This theme is present in both questions, as well as in the practices and strategies that were identified in all three rounds of the study. The two strategies that had the highest frequency (9 out of 12) were in response to (Effective Practice 4, Research Question 1) *district leadership needs to determine who is responsible for different portions of LCAP, then meet regularly with this team to monitor implementation, tracking, monitoring, analysis, etc. across all departments,* and (Effective Practice 5,
Research Question 1) develop an internal accountability team to monitor implementation of actions and services, develop a budgetary tracking system, and conduct a return on investment analysis for each action/service to determine if student achievement is positively being impacted.

This theme was present in a three of the five practices/strategies to implement in question one; regular meetings among educational leadership (including business) to review and analyze data; LCAP team works with the CBO to ensure supplemental funds spent for “principally targeted” students; develop an internal accountability team to monitor implementation of actions and services, develop a budgetary tracking system, and conduct a return on investment analysis for each action/service to determine if student achievement is positively being impacted.

Question 2 also had a similar focus on the importance of a collaborative and inter-department (division) team that meets regularly and works together on the LCAP. Three of the five practices/strategies were; district leadership meets regularly to analyze data, determine the targeted students’ needs, and implement actions/services; collaborate with other departments and districts to determine best systems and practices for monitoring actions/services; coordinate LCAP responsibilities across divisions to ensure LCAP is a standing agenda item for all meetings.

The second theme that emerged from Round 3 of the study was the need to train districts on the LCAP process, especially on the new and California School Dashboard system that is scheduled to debut in March 2017 (CDE, 2017). Four of the strategies described by the panel of experts were; the new California School Dashboard system needs to be deeply understood by districts first; use new LCFF Rubrics/Dashboard; training for district staff in
understanding how to write goals (many goals written as an outcome, such as “increase test scores...”); districts need training on how to monitor effectiveness.

The last theme that was surfaced through the answers to Round 3 was regarding the need to implement accountability systems in the district. There were four strategies identified that addressed this need to ensure monitoring of data and meeting with stakeholders to share out the data, the strategies were: triangulate data (qualitative, quantitative, perception, local indicators, and state metrics; put in place a data analyst for collection and proper communication of collected data; work with stakeholder groups to review the data; establish unique identifier within account code strings for district expenditure in order to track usage of supplemental & concentration funds; monitor the data and implement evidence-based actions/services to address the gaps.

Additional Comments

In Round 3, in addition to describing strategies there were two comments shared regarding the how to ensure supplemental and concentration funds are used in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF that share some insight regarding COE administrator’s state of mind around the LCAP process. One panel member shared, to date we have not had funds long enough to determine if the new money is making an impact, or if districts are using supplemental funds to supplant general funds and continue work they had already been doing. This is the problem with the way the LCAP reads, we don’t know if an action or service is new or just being paid for with the new money. Another expert panel member shared, the new LCAP template should help address the compliance oriented concerns.
Summary

Chapter IV presented the data and findings of this Policy Delphi Study. The study sought to determine the practices experts identify as effective for utilizing supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF, to determine how the experts rated the effectiveness of the different practices, and to determine what strategies experts recommend for implementation of the five practices identified as most effective. The population was COE administrators across California. The target population educational services administrators from the 15 largest counties in California. A total of 14 administrators from across California COE participated in the study.

The following questions guided this study.

Round 1

1. What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing supplemental funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

2. What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

Round 2

3. How do experts rate the effectiveness of the practices identified for supplemental funds in Round 1?

4. How do experts rate the effectiveness of the practices identified for concentration funds in Round 1?

Round 3

5. What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for supplemental funds from Round 2?
6. What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for concentration funds from Round 2?

In Round 1 of the Policy Delphi study, COE administrators were asked to answer two questions regarding the practices they deemed as most effective for utilizing both supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF. Fourteen participants responded to Round 1 and they identified fifteen effective practices for supplemental funds, and eight effective practices for concentration funds.

The responses to each question became the basis for Round 2 of the Policy Delphi study. In Round 2, panel members were asked to determine the degree of effectiveness of each of the practices identified in Round 2. Thirteen of the 14 panel members responded to Round 2. Their ratings from Round 2 were analyzed using the mean to determine the top five most effective practices for each of the two questions.

In Round 3, panel members were asked to review the five most effective practices they identified in Round 2 for both supplemental and concentration funds in order to ensure they are used in accordance with the “principally directed mandate” of LCFF. Then the participants were asked to describe the strategies that a school district could utilize to implement each of the most effective practices.

Twelve of the 14 panel members responded to survey Round 3. The researcher reviewed, coded, sorted and categorized panel members’ responses. Similar responses were grouped together according to emerging themes and presented in tables aligned to the two research questions, which resulted in the finding of this study. In order to ensure intercoder reliability, an independent review of the data was conducted by a colleague familiar with this study.

Chapter V presents conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter V offers a review of the purpose of this study, the research questions, the methodology, population and sample. Then the chapter presents a summary of the major findings. Chapter V also includes a report of the unexpected findings. The researcher will then present conclusions based on the research findings. From those findings, implications for action and recommendations for further research are identified.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Policy Delphi study was to determine the practices experts in the field identify as effective for utilizing supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF, to determine how the experts rated effectiveness of the different practices, and determine what strategies experts recommend for the implementation of the five practices identified.

Research Questions

The following questions were used to address the purpose of the study:

Round 1

1. What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing supplemental funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

2. What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

Round 2

3. How do experts rate the effectiveness of the practices identified for supplemental funds in Round 1?
4. How do experts rate the effectiveness of the practices identified for concentration funds in Round 1?

Round 3

5. What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for supplemental funds from Round 2?

6. What strategies do experts identify as most effective for implementation of the five practices rated most effective for concentration funds from Round 2?

Research Methods

A Policy Delphi was selected for this study to in order to gather data from an expert panel of COE administrators from across the state of California. The study sought to identify practices for both supplemental and concentration funds, rate the effectiveness of the practices, and finally identify strategies that would be most effective in implementing the highly rated practices. LCFF and LCAP are a relatively new concept in California and a Policy Delphi was utilized in order to gather perceptual data from an expert panel of COE administrators. For purposes of this study, an electronic questionnaire was used to assess the COE administrator’s that oversee LCAPs to gather their perceptions. The questionnaire was distributed in three rounds.

Fourteen of the 15 expert panel members (93%) responded to the electronic survey for Round 1 of the Policy Delphi study. Results of the Round 1 questionnaire were analyzed and became the foundation for Round 2 questions. Thirteen of the 15 expert panel members (87%) responded to the electronic survey for Round 2 of the study. Round 2 responses became the basis for the third, and final round of questions. For the final round, 12 of 14 expert panel members (86%) responded to the survey.
Major Findings

The major findings of this Policy Delphi are organized and presented by rounds.

Research Questions

Research Question 1. *What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing supplemental funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?*

Round 1. The major findings for these questions yielded 18 practices identified as most effective for using supplemental and concentration funds to ensure districts were following the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF. Additionally, most experts expressed that *supplemental and concentration funds are viewed as the same* by COE staff and thus their answers for supplemental were the same as they would be for concentration funds.

Round 2. In Round 2, the expert panel members rated the 18 identified practices on a six-point Likert scale, from extremely ineffective to extremely effective. Based on the analysis of ranking of practices from Research Question 1 and 2, the top five most effective practices were identified. Research Question 1, ranked in order from most effective were: reflection, evaluation and analysis of current practices/programs to identify research-based practices to determine "effective" use of supplemental funds.

1. Analyze state and local data to inform program, goals, actions, and services to determine the needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure money is used primarily on the targeted subgroups.

2. The district may provide targeted services or materials to targeted groups.
3. District LCAP teams are comprised of multiple representatives from various divisions (Educational Services, Student Services, Business/Fiscal Services, Personnel, etc.)

4. Ensure systems and resources for monitoring and support of supplemental funds are in place to determine effectiveness.

**Research question 2.** What practices do experts identify as most effective for utilizing concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF?

The top five practices ranked in order from most effective were:

1. Analyze data to determine needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure LCAP goals and actions address the needs identified in the data.

2. Review data, surveys and effectiveness of existing services and supports in order to determine goals, actions and services designed to "increase or improve services" of their LI, El, and FY students.

3. Implement systems for monitoring effectiveness of actions and services

4. Ensure district budget systems allow for the tracking and monitoring of funded goals, actions, and services to verify expenditures.

5. Address the equity issues that the data present.

**Round 3.** Three themes arose from the panel members’ response to the three-round questionnaire regarding identifying strategies a school district could implement to ensure both their supplemental and concentration funds are used in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF. The first theme was the need for district leadership to assemble a team and collaborate across all departments and divisions to
monitor implementation, tracking, monitoring, and analysis of the LCAP. This theme was true for both supplemental and concentration funds. The experts consistently stated in their answers to both supplemental and concentration that they viewed both as the same. This will be discussed in further detail in the unexpected findings of this chapter.

The second theme to emerge from the study was the need to train districts and administrators on the LCAP process, particularly on the new California School Dashboard system that is scheduled to debut in March 2017 in a pilot form. It will officially become a cornerstone of the California’s new accountability system in the 2017–2018 school year. The dashboard was previously referred to as the LCFF Rubrics under the LCFF legislation, and this new tool is integrated into the new LCAP template that will be used for the 2017-2018 school year. The expert panel shared they believe the new tool needs to be deeply understood by districts.

The third, and final, theme to emerge from the study was the need to implement an internal accountability system at the district level for LCAP. In the final round of the survey, the panel members shared strategies such as triangulating the data, using a data analyst to collect and review data collected, as well as the need to work with stakeholder groups to review data.

The study was designed to study supplemental funding and concentration funding as two separate and unique items. However, throughout the study it was apparent from the comments from panel members, and in their answering of the questions that they viewed these two as one in the same when reviewing how the funds are utilized.
Unexpected Findings

Three unexpected findings emerged from the data collected in this study. First, the review of literature, related to supplemental and concentration funds, identified how districts receive these two different funds. Supplemental funds are provided to LEAs based on a formula, for each LI, EL, and FY student, a district will generate an additional 20% of the qualifying student’s adjusted grade span base rate (LAO, 2013). Concentration funds are provided to districts when their EL/LI populations exceed 55% of their enrollment. What the review of literature did not identify was the practice of COE to view both the supplemental and concentration funds in the same manner when reviewing LCAPs. In Round 1 of the survey, a number of respondents made statements such as, I don’t know any districts that track the concentration funds differently or separately, functionally they are the same. However, one participant did state he was aware of a district that spent their supplemental and concentration funds in proportion to the percent of unduplicated students if an action serviced all students. Although this study separated supplemental and concentration funds into two separate questions, the expert panel members in this study saw them as functionally the same.

A second unexpected finding emerged during the development and distribution of the electronic questionnaire. The researcher sent out invitations to COE administrators. The business services administrators contacted to participate in the survey, declined, stating they did not review LCAPs for content, instead they strictly focused on actual budget numbers and ensuring the district’s board adopted budget matched the budget numbers in the LCAP document. This unexpected finding might change for the 2017-
2018 year as the state’s new LCAP template has been updated to ensure a higher level of transparency in the budget.

The third unexpected finding expressed by three participants during the Round 1, was districts are trying to close large funding gaps and they are having to redirect supplemental and concentration funds to items they have always done but pay for them with supplemental and concentration dollars. In essence, many school districts are supplanting.

Conclusions

This study was developed to determine the practices experts identify as effective for utilizing the supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF. The study also sought to identify the strategies experts identified as most effective for implementing the five practices rated as most effective for both supplemental and concentration funds. The following conclusions can be drawn from this study.

Conclusion 1

District leadership must establish an interdepartmental LCAP team for the purpose of developing, implementing, informing, monitoring, and evaluating their LCAP. Prior to LCAP, educational services involvement in the budget process was to ensure the categorical funds, such as Economic Impact Aide (EIA), were used for the appropriate and designated purpose. For example, in the case of EIA, money from this categorical was required to be spent on English language acquisition programs, support and services for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, and for LI Youth (CDE, 2013). Now, under LCFF, categorical funding has been eliminated and the process for developing a
plan (including budget) for this funding (LCAP) is now the responsibility of the educational services department. It is essential district leadership ensure there is a system in place for educational and business services departments work collaboratively to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate the Local Control and Evaluation Plan.

Conclusion 2

During the first three years of LCAP implementation the CDE has not provided a rubric or guide has for districts. However the new LCFF rubric will debut in March 2017 now referred to as the California School Dashboard. This new dashboard will consist of various dashboards of both state and local metrics, such as graduation rate, state assessment results, suspension rates, parent involvement, implementation of state standards, etc. One of the features of the new dashboard is the Equity Report, which will disaggregate each metric by sub-groups. The new LCAP template will indicate the needs, as identified in the School Dashboard, which the plan will need to address with actions and services. Additionally, a new organization (CCEE) was developed to support COEs and districts in the implementation of their LCAP. The CCEE began holding workshops for COEs in the fall of 2016. From these workshops, a new Early Adopter Professional Network was formed. The EAPN rolled out to districts via their local COE and began working with districts in January 2017. The new template, dashboard and CCEE are currently being put into place to address the lack of guidance for districts in developing their LCAPs.

Conclusion 3

The final conclusion from this study is the lack of accountability systems in place at the district level to monitor the effectiveness of actions and services implemented. The
business division has focuses on the language of “increase or improve” services for high-needs students as the litmus test for use of the supplemental and concentration funds. The LCAP template used for the past two years was lengthy and complicated making it difficult to track expenditures. It did not clearly articulate how high-needs students, who earned the district the extra funding, were receiving extra support through supplemental and concentration funds. For the past three years districts that qualified for concentration funds received such large increases in funding that energies were focused on implementation rather than on monitoring and evaluation of the programs. Now that the state has released a preview of the new rubrics and dashboard and new state monies have dried up, districts have an improved understanding of what the COEs are and state are expecting in their LCAPs.

Implications for Action

California implemented three major initiatives in the past five years: (a) new content standards in ELA, Mathematics and Science; (b) a new assessment system; and (c) a new school finance system. These new initiatives were launched without all the essential components in place, which forced the practitioners in the field to “build the plane as it is flying.” For example, the state adopted new standards, yet textbook companies were not ready to support them with curriculum that was approved for state adoption. Then new assessments were implemented and for two years (spring of 2013 and 2014) students did not receive any results from the new state assessment that was based on the new standards. With the passage of LCFF a new school finance system was implemented, with no rubric, the promise of a new accountability system, and two different LCAP templates in a matter of three years.
Implication for Action 1

The LCAP process must be leveraged by superintendents to ensure their educational services, human resources and business services divisions work collaboratively, to ensure student outcomes improve in all of eight of the state priorities. Under LCFF, school districts are now expected to make their own decisions on how funding from the state is utilized. School districts are no longer bound by the constraints of categorical funding. However, with this freedom to make local decisions, district leadership must develop internal systems to collaboratively develop, implement, regularly monitor and thoroughly evaluate the Local Control and Evaluation Plan to ensure the effective use of LCFF funds. Having a well-defined internal system for developing and monitoring the LCAP will ensure all LCAP goals are successfully met.

The LCAP template itself, stresses the importance of reflecting on the expected outcomes as compared to the actual outcomes of the actions and services that were place each year. A summary is then developed for each goal identifying what will change for the following year, based on the outcomes. This process is key in providing district leadership teams the information needed for any midcourse corrections that might be needed. This process needs to be utilized and documented in the LCAP.

Implication for Action 2

These findings and conclusions imply that the CDE collaboration with County Offices of Education must develop a working definition for the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF. This mandate needs to be clearly defined in order to provide clear guidance for school districts to avoid compliance issues. Recent lawsuits and criticisms regarding LCAPs revolve around how a district allocates LCFF funds. Critics contend
the funds should be directed at increasing or improving services for the students who generated the additional funds (LI, EL, and FY). Until this is done, there will continue to be lawsuits and objections from public advocacy groups, such as the ACLU, over how districts allocate their supplemental and concentration funds. Furthermore, without clarification, districts and decision makers leave themselves open to malpractice and contribute to perpetuating the student achievement gap. The essence of LCFF aims to prepare every student for college and career pathways. LCFF recognizes that in order for this to occur, students that are identified as LI, FY and EL require alternative, supplemental, concentrated opportunities and/or additional educational experiences to achieve this outcome. As districts continue to fund programs and practices that may benefit all, they are neglecting their responsibility to fulfill the requirements associated with the core mandates of LCFF.

Implication for Action 3

A third implication is the need for districts to receive extensive training on the upcoming California School Dashboards the new LCAP template. In order to ensure the success of local control, the CDE, along with the COE must provide training for district administrators on how the dashboards were developed, the equity report contained within them. It is vital that districts and decision makers understand the details of the new dashboard and how to interact with it in order to utilize the information contained within them, such as the Equity report, to guide the work that will form the heart of their new LCAP for 2017-2018 year. Training must be focused on understanding how to analyze the results shared in the new dashboards, in order address the identified gaps in achievement.
Another component of the training from COE must focus on the process of program evaluation. Districts need to become skilled at evaluating the outcomes of their actions and services in the LCAP. Are they successfully closing the achievement gaps with this funding? Have outcomes improved for all students, and how do they know this? Are they considering both state and local metrics when evaluating the success of LCAP initiatives? Governing Boards are now in the driver’s seat, and they will be held accountable by their stakeholders to ensure their district is obtaining a suitable return on their investment of LCFF’s supplemental and concentration funding.

**Implication for Action 4**

A final implication is regarding how County Offices view supplemental and concentration funds view these two funds. In this study, the researcher learned that COE administrators do not distinguish between the two funds in the LCAP, however they should. By requiring districts to identify their base program, this would clearly articulate to stakeholders and special interest groups how the supplemental funds and then concentration funds are utilized to enhance the base program for high need students.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

LCFF is still in its infancy and developing. It is a topic rich for study. The following recommendations are made for further research, which were derived from the findings and conclusions of this study:

- What will the impact of LCAP on union and negotiations be in the future, as a number of districts have provided raises utilizing supplemental and concentration funds. The rationale being, by providing raises they are increasing or improving services for their students, as these raises have been
typically tied to an increase in minutes to the school day. This especially becomes problematic when a “me too” clause is in place, and the raises are then given to bargaining members who already work full time.

- The first three years of LCPA implementation resulted in significant increases in funding, especially those districts that receive concentration funding. How will the LCAP conflict between fiscal and ed services departments affect decision making in the future when budgets will need to be cut and the California School Dashboard highlights areas of concern (those in red and orange) that the district needs to address.

- There will be unanticipated consequences with LCFF, as there is with any new initiative. What are potential unanticipated consequences of LCAP funding in the future? How does it not become just another categorical model?

- Interview district superintendents for their perception on LCFF/LCAP implementation and how they are using this state initiative to improve student achievement in their local district.

- Interview assistant superintendents of educational services and business services on LCFF/LCAP implementation and their perceptions of LCAP, as well as how they use supplemental and concentration funds.

- Replicate this study after COE have had the opportunity to work with districts on the new LCAP template (2017-2018 school year) and California School Dashboard.
• Study how districts that receive only supplemental funds compare to those that receive both supplemental and concentration funds. Do they implement, monitor and evaluate their LCAP differently? Is one more effective than the other?

• Consider focusing on one of the targeted groups in LCFF, such as LI. Identify the effective practices and strategies districts are implementing to target this group. How do they determine the needs of this particular group?

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

I transitioned from a site administrator to a district administrator during the year the LCFF was unveiled. While attending a West Ed workshop on LCFF, the new school funding formula, we were told the LCAP would be a way for districts to “tell their story” and not be limited by the old compliance-oriented categorical model. It sounded remarkably simple and too good to be true, considering how much additional funding a high-poverty district, such as the one I worked in would receive under this new funding model. It was about local control. Districts were told, the LCAP would allow them to decide how to allocate funds as they desire.

However within the second year of implanting the new LCAP model, the ACLU began sending letters and filing lawsuits warning districts that their LCAPs were not targeting actions and services to the students that generated the money, thus not following the “principally directed” mandate. By the time we began writing the third LCAP for our district, the LCAP was beginning to feel more and more compliance oriented. This spurred my interest and desire to write this dissertation and spend time deeply analyzing and understanding the process. In doing the research for this study, I came across
Governor Jerry Brown’s constructs to explain his philosophy behind LCFF, subsidiarity. Subsidiarity is a principle that states matters should be handled by the local level, rather than by a central authority (the state or federal government).

This principle, while exciting to a school district, becomes problematic because the CDE has not clearly defined a key component of the law, the “principally directed” mandate. With the “principally directed” mandate being left open to interpretation by attorneys, advocates, and COEs, district administrators need to be thoughtful in how they utilize their supplemental and concentration funds. Until there is a clearly defined definition of this mandate, subsidiarity, or local control should come with a warning label for districts.
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# APPENDIX A

## Literature Matrix

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<td>West Ed-mapping cont. for rubric (2015)</td>
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APPENDIX B

Informed Consent

RESEARCH STUDY TITLE: A Policy Delphi to Determine Effective Practices for Utilizing Supplemental and Concentration Funds in Accordance with the Principally Directed Mandate of LCFF

BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY
16355 LAGUNA CANYON ROAD
IRVINE, CA 92618

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: David Howland, Doctoral Candidate

TITLE OF CONSENT FORM: Research Participant’s Informed Consent Form

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: The purpose of this mixed methods Policy Delphi Study was to determine the practices experts identify as effective for utilizing supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF, to determine how the experts rated the effectiveness of the different practices, and to determine what strategies experts recommend for implementation of the five practices identified as most effective.

In participating in this research study, you agree to complete three electronic surveys (via Survey Monkey). The surveys will take approximately 10 -15 minutes to complete. The surveys will ask questions designed to determine effective practices for utilizing supplemental and/or concentration funds in school district’s LCAPs. Additionally, you will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire that will include questions that capture your background information.

I understand that:

a) There are no known major risks or discomforts associated with this research.

b) There are no major benefits to you for participation, but a potential benefit may be that you have an opportunity to contribute to research that may impact the field education. The information from this study is intended to inform school districts and county offices of education what practices experts identify as effective for utilizing supplemental and/or concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF and to determine what strategies experts recommend for implementation of the practices identified.
d) Any questions I have concerning my participation in this study will be answered by David Howland, Brandman University Doctoral Candidate. I understand that David Howland may be contacted by phone at (909) 240-7072 or email at dhowland@mail.brandman.edu.

e) I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Also, the investigator may stop the study at any time.

h) I also understand that no information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call of the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, and 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form and the Research Participant’s Bill of Rights.

I have read the above and understand it and hereby voluntarily consent to the procedures(s) set forth.

____________________________________  ______________________
Signature of Participant or Responsible Party   Date

____________________________________  ______________________
Signature of Principal Investigator   Date

Brandman University IRB, DATE
APPENDIX C

Letter of Invitation

Date:

Dear Prospective Study Participant:

You are invited to participate in a research study designed to discover and describe practices that districts use to ensure supplemental funds are used in accordance with “principally directed” mandate of LCFF in their Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP). The principal researcher of this study is David Howland, Doctoral Candidate for Brandman University’s Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership program. You were chosen to participate in this study because you work at a County Office of Education (COE), and are involved in the Local Control and Accountability Plan approval process. Approximately 20 COE administrators will engage in this study. Participation should require approximately 30 minutes of your time over the course of three Delphi surveys and is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this mixed methods Policy Delphi Study was to determine the practices experts identify as effective for utilizing supplemental and concentration funds in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF, to determine how the experts rated the effectiveness of the different practices, and to determine what strategies experts recommend for implementation of the five practices identified as most effective.

Results from the study will be summarized in a doctoral dissertation.

PROCEDURES: If you decide to participate in the study, you will be sent three rounds of a survey via email by the researcher. The survey will be via Survey Monkey and your responses will remain anonymous.

RISKS, INCONVENIENCES, AND DISCOMFORTS: There are no known major risks or discomforts associated with this research.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS: There are no major benefits to you for participation, but a potential benefit may be that you have an opportunity to contribute to research that may impact the field education. The information from this study is intended to inform school districts and county offices of education what
ANONYMITY: Records of information that you provide for the research study and any personal information you provide will not be linked in any way. It will not be possible to identify you as the person who provided any specific information for the study.

You are encouraged to ask any questions, at any time, that will help you understand how this study will be performed and/or how it will affect you. You may contact the principal researcher, David Howland, by phone at (909) 240-7072, or email dhowland@mail.brandman.edu. If you have any further questions or concerns about this study or your rights as a study participant, you may write or call the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, and 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

Respectfully,

David Howland
Principal Researcher
APPENDIX D

Demographic Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS: Please write or the response with which you most closely identify. Your name will remain confidential throughout the duration of this study.

1. Name

2. Position:

3. How many years of experience in current position?

4. What type of training have you participated in with regards to evaluating LCAPs?
APPENDIX E

Participant’s Bill of Rights

BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Research Participant’s Bill of Rights

Any person who is requested to consent to participate as a subject in an experiment, or who is requested to consent on behalf of another, has the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is attempting to discover.
2. To be told what will happen in the study and whether any of the procedures, drugs or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice.
3. To be told about the risks, side effects or discomforts of the things that may happen to him/her.
4. To be told if he/she can expect any benefit from participating and, if so, what the benefits might be.
5. To be told what other choices he/she has and how they may be better or worse than being in the study.
6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study.
7. To be told what sort of medical treatment is available if any complications arise.
8. To refuse to participate at all before or after the study is started without any adverse effects.
9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form.
10. To be free of pressures when considering whether he/she wishes to agree to be in the study.

If at any time you have questions regarding a research study, you should ask the researchers to answer them. You may also contact the Brandman University Institutional Review Board, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. The Brandman University Institutional Review Board may be contacted either by telephoning the Office of Academic Affairs at (949) 341-9937 or by writing to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA, 92618.
APPENDIX F

Policy Delphi Study, Round 1 Questionnaire

* 5. What practices do districts use to ensure supplemental funds are used in accordance with the "principally directed" mandate of LCFF? (please list as many as you can think of)

* 6. What practices do districts use to ensure concentration funds are used in accordance with "principally directed" mandate of LCFF? (please list as many as you can think of)
APPENDIX G

Policy Delphi Study, Round 2 Questionnaire

Policy Delphi, Round 2, LCFF’s Principally Directed Mandate

Instructions

This round of the Delphi study includes aggregated responses from Round 1. Responses were distilled, categorized, and consolidated based on common responses from participants from various county offices of education in California. Round 2 asks participants to determine the degree of effectiveness of each of the practices identified in Round 1. Please read all items in each section and consider the degree of effectiveness of each of the practices before rating. A summary of the items is attached to the email if you would prefer to read a list of factors prior to completing Round 2. Participants’ ratings in Round 2 will be aggregated to determine the most effective practices districts can use to ensure their supplemental and/or concentration funds are used in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF.

Round 2 contains two sections, one for supplemental funds and the other for concentration funds. The aggregate responses regarding practices districts use to ensure supplemental funds are used in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF are listed below.

Please rate the effectiveness of each of these practices from 1) “Extremely Ineffective” to 6) “Extremely Effective”, on the Likert Scale provided.

*1. Practices utilizing Supplemental funds:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Description</th>
<th>Extremely Ineffective</th>
<th>Moderately Ineffective</th>
<th>Slightly Ineffective</th>
<th>Minimally Effective</th>
<th>Moderately Effective</th>
<th>Extremely Effective</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identify student groups supported by supplemental &amp; concentration funds and describe how they benefit students.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyze state and local data to inform program, goals, actions, services to determine the needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure money is used primarily on the targeted subgroups.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Districts evaluate Single Plans for Student Achievement for instruction or actions/services for unduplicated pupils for any site LCFF allocations.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligning district goals, actions, services, supports, programs, resources, etc. to state priorities.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify “case program” to avoid supplanting.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with districts to calibrate understanding of supplemental, concentration and “principally directed” mandate.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</table>
### 2. Practices for utilizing **Concentration** funds:

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<tr>
<th>Supplemental &amp; Concentration funds are viewed as the same. These two terms are used when calculating a district's funding entitlement but functionally they are the same.</th>
<th>Extremely Ineffective</th>
<th>Moderately Ineffective</th>
<th>Slightly Ineffective</th>
<th>Minimally Effective</th>
<th>Moderately Effective</th>
<th>Extremely Effective</th>
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<tr>
<th>Analyze data to determine needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure LCAP goals and actions address the needs identified in the data.</th>
<th>Extremely Ineffective</th>
<th>Moderately Ineffective</th>
<th>Slightly Ineffective</th>
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<th>Extremely Effective</th>
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<tr>
<th>Address the equity issues that the data present.</th>
<th>Extremely Ineffective</th>
<th>Moderately Ineffective</th>
<th>Slightly Ineffective</th>
<th>Minimally Effective</th>
<th>Moderately Effective</th>
<th>Extremely Effective</th>
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<tr>
<th>CDEs provide training to districts. Districts then provide information to schools and stakeholders regarding appropriate use of funds.</th>
<th>Extremely Ineffective</th>
<th>Moderately Ineffective</th>
<th>Slightly Ineffective</th>
<th>Minimally Effective</th>
<th>Moderately Effective</th>
<th>Extremely Effective</th>
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<tr>
<th>Ensure district budget systems allow for the tracking and monitoring of funded goals, actions, and services to verify expenditures.</th>
<th>Extremely Ineffective</th>
<th>Moderately Ineffective</th>
<th>Slightly Ineffective</th>
<th>Minimally Effective</th>
<th>Moderately Effective</th>
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<tr>
<th>Use research to identify programs, goals, actions, services, supports and resources determined to be effective.</th>
<th>Extremely Ineffective</th>
<th>Moderately Ineffective</th>
<th>Slightly Ineffective</th>
<th>Minimally Effective</th>
<th>Moderately Effective</th>
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<th>Review data, surveys and effectiveness of existing services and supports in order to determine goals, actions and services designed to &quot;increase or improve services&quot; of their English Learners, Foster Youth and Economically Disadvantaged.</th>
<th>Extremely Ineffective</th>
<th>Moderately Ineffective</th>
<th>Slightly Ineffective</th>
<th>Minimally Effective</th>
<th>Moderately Effective</th>
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<th>Implement systems for monitoring effectiveness of actions/services.</th>
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<th>Slightly Ineffective</th>
<th>Minimally Effective</th>
<th>Moderately Effective</th>
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**Thank you! Round 2 is done. Look for the last and final Survey within a week.**
APPENDIX H

Policy Delphi Study Round 3 Questionnaire

Round 3, LCFF’s Principally Directed Mandate, Most effective

Instructions

First, THANK YOU for your participation. I really appreciate your time and efforts in completing these three surveys.

In round 2, you determined the effectiveness of each practice identified in Round 1. Round 2’s results determined the five most effective practices districts could use to ensure both supplemental and concentration funds are used in accordance with the “principally directed” mandate of LCFF.

In the third and final round of this study, please review the five responses rated “extremely effective” from Round 2, and describe the most effective strategies a school district can implement to ensure highly rated practices are used in their district. (Realizing that during Round 1 most participants shared that Supplemental and Concentration funds are viewed the same, however for purposes of this study they have been separated).

1. The following five practices were rated the most effective by this panel of LCAP Experts that districts could use to ensure their supplemental funds are used in accordance with the "principally directed" mandate of LCFF.

Considering the five practices rated most effective from Round 2 (below), describe the strategies school districts could utilize to implement these practices.

- Reflection, evaluation and analysis of current practices/programs to identify research based practices to determine “effective” use of supplemental funds.

- Analyze state and local data to inform program, goals, actions, services to determine the needs of underprivileged pupils to ensure money is used primarily on the targeted subgroups.

- The district may provide targeted services or materials to targeted students.

- District LCAP teams are comprised of multiple representatives from various divisions (Educational Services, Student Services, Business/Fiscal Services, Personnel, etc.)

- Ensure systems and resources for monitoring and support of supplemental funds are in place to determine effectiveness.
2. The following five practices were rated the most effective by this panel of LCAP Experts that districts could use to ensure their concentration funds are used in accordance with the "principally directed" mandate of LCFF.

Considering the five practices rated most effective from Round 2 (below), describe the strategies school districts could utilize to implement these practices.

1. Analyze data to determine needs of unduplicated pupils to ensure LCAP goals and actions address the needs identified in the data.

2. Review data, surveys and effectiveness of existing services and supports in order to determine goals, actions and services designed to "increase or improve services" of the English Learners, Foster Youth and Economically Disadvantaged.

3. Implement systems for monitoring effectiveness of actions/services.

4. Ensure district budget systems allow for the tracking and monitoring of funded goals, actions, and services to verify expenditures.

5. Address the equity issues that the data present.

THANK YOU for taking time out of your day to complete this final survey. I really appreciate your h