

Whittier Union High School District
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Press Release

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**WUHSD Superintendent and Board Trustee
Address State Board of Education**

WHITTIER, CA – Whittier Union High School District Superintendent Sandra Thorstenson and Board of Trustee member Leighton Anderson both spoke before the California State Board of Education Thursday, Jan. 16 in favor of preserving local school boards' flexibility within a new set of state regulations that will guide the future expenditure of state funding for public education.

“What we ask from California is, give us the tools and then let us do our jobs,” Anderson said. “We know our kids, we know our community and we know what works and what doesn't. Please let local control have its chance to work for our students and their families.”

Their comments were made during the State Board of Education's hearing on proposed changes to draft regulations that districts need to guide their decisions under the new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). The Board was scheduled to vote to adopt the regulations, which districts will use to draw up their budgets under the state's new finance system.

The regulations attempt to create a balance between providing districts with the flexibility to budget based on their own priorities and requiring that they spend extra money they receive for low-income children, foster youths and English learners.

Citing Whittier Union's continued growth in student academic achievement among all students during the last 10 years and its successful efforts to significantly narrow the achievement gap, Thorstenson said more flexibility in designing a budget will give the district the ability to focus funds where they are needed most. As Whittier Union's achievement data show, flexibility and equity are not mutually exclusive goals, she said.

“We fully support targeted investment directed toward our students most in need,” Thorstenson told the State Board of Education. “Our district has a proven track record of providing effective support and services to our neediest students and our results have been outstanding.”

“The proposed regulations will effectively meet the needs of all our students, especially those who come to our schools facing significant challenges,” she said.

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For decades, public school districts have been required to spend state funds according to state rules and regulations. But the new proposed LCFF would give local school districts the ability to develop their own individual spending plans, called Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAPs), based on the particular needs of their students as well as input from parents and community members. Legislation requires the state regulations be adopted by Jan. 31. Templates for the LCAPs that must be adopted by school districts are due before March 31.

Whittier Union already has begun discussions on the development of its LCAP at each school site, meeting with parents representing a variety of student interests. The district also is hosting four parent/community meetings to discuss the LCAP. All meetings will be held at 6 p.m. in the Board of Trustees meeting room, 9401 S. Painter Ave., Whittier. The LCAP meeting dates are Thursday, Jan. 23; Thursday, Feb. 13; Thursday, March 20; and Wednesday, April 9. For information, visit: www.wuhsd.org or call (562) 698-8121.

The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement. Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.

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