

THE EDUCATION TRUST—WEST POLICY AGENDA

EQUITABLE AND ADEQUATE FUNDING

PROBLEM:

Although revenues for K-12 schools have risen, California still ranks 41st nationally in per-pupil spending. In many districts, pensions, health benefits, and other costs are skyrocketing and squeezing out important services. Unfortunately, these decisions often have the most detrimental impact on historically underserved students. The state must take action to adequately fund our schools, ensure that our most impacted students get equitable funding, and create transparency into how public dollars are being spent.

We recommend the following:

- **Increase funding for LCFF, investing in equity first.**
 - Make funding more equitable by increasing the supplemental and concentration grants, or better concentrating those dollars in districts with the greatest needs.
 - Increase per-pupil funding overall by setting higher targets and raising new revenues.
 - Encourage districts to leverage funding sources outside of Prop 98—including federal, state, county, and health and human service funds.
- **Minimize the negative impact of rising pension obligations on services for students.**
 - Identify ways to address pensions and expensive lifetime benefits to reduce debt and future liabilities without harming the teaching profession.
 - Local school boards should refuse to make promises to current employees that their districts cannot afford in the future.
- **Improve transparency so all stakeholders know how public education funding is being spent and what services are being provided.**
 - Make it easier to see exactly how much districts are spending on each action and service and across LCAP goals.
 - Revamp the school accounting code system so that it tracks and reports meaningful categories of spending.
 - Report per-pupil school site expenditure data in easy-to-access state reports.
 - Help county offices of education and districts build the capacity of local stakeholders to engage in district and school budgeting and planning.
- **Fix within-district resource inequities**
 - Require that the district present a plan for how it will address inequitable resources, opportunities, or services within district and schools identified for assistance or intervention.

California still ranks 41st nationally in per-pupil spending, and has more students per teacher, administrator, and counselor than any other state.

To read the full ETW Policy Agenda visit: <http://edtrustwest.org/policyagenda2018>



The Education Trust—West