# Criteria and StandardsCounty Offices of Education – Budgets

Deviations from the standards must be explained and may affect the approval of the budget.

| **Criterion** | **Standard**  |
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| 1. Average Daily Attendance | Projected countywide average daily attendance (ADA) has not been overestimated in the first prior fiscal year or in two or more of the previous three fiscal years by more than the following percentage levels:* 3.0% for counties with under 7,000 ADA
* 2.0% for counties with 7,000 to 59,999 ADA
* 1.0% for counties with over 59,999 ADA

Projected funded ADA for county operated programs for any of the budget year or two subsequent fiscal years has not increased from the historical average from the three prior fiscal years by more than two percent each year. |
| 2. Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Revenue | Projected LCFF revenue for any of the budget year or two subsequent fiscal years has not changed from the prior fiscal year by more than the change in population, plus the county office’s cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) plus or minus one percent.For excess property tax counties, projected LCFF revenue has not changed from the prior fiscal year by more than the percent change in property tax revenues plus or minus one percent. |
| 3. Salaries and Benefits | Projected total salaries and benefits for any of the budget year or two subsequent fiscal years has not changed from the prior fiscal year amount by more than the change in funded COLA plus or minus five percent. |
| 4. Other Revenues and Expenditures | Projected operating revenues (including federal, other state and other local) or expenditures (including books and supplies, and services and other operating), for any of the budget year or two subsequent fiscal years, have not changed from the prior fiscal year amount by more than the change in funded COLA plus or minus ten percent.For each major object category, changes that exceed the percentage change in the funded COLA plus or minus five percent must be explained. |
| 5. Facilities Maintenance | Confirm that the annual contribution for facilities maintenance funding is not less than the amount required pursuant to Education Code Section 17070.75, if applicable, and that the county office is providing adequately to preserve the functionality of its facilities for their normal life in accordance with Education Code sections 52066(d)(1) and 17002(d)(1). |
| 6. Deficit Spending | Unrestricted deficit spending (total unrestricted expenditures and other financing uses is greater than total unrestricted revenues and other financing sources) as a percentage of total unrestricted expenditures and other financing uses, has not exceeded one-third of the county office’s available reserves[[1]](#footnote-1) as a percentage of total expenditures and other financing uses[[2]](#footnote-2) in two out of three prior fiscal years. |
| 7. Fund and Cash Balances | Budgeted beginning unrestricted county school service fund balance has not been overestimated for two out of three prior fiscal years by more than the following percentage levels[[3]](#footnote-3) and projected county school service fund (CSSF) cash balance will be positive at the end of the current fiscal year:For counties with total expenditures and other financing uses2:• 1.7% Less than $7,073,000• 1.3% $7,073,000 to $17,684,999• 1.0% $17,685,000 to $79,581,000• 0.7% $79,581,001 and over |
| 8. Reserves | Available reserves1 for any of the budget year or two subsequent fiscal years are not less than the following percentages or amounts[[4]](#footnote-4)4 as applied to total expenditures and other financing uses2:For counties with total expenditures and other financing uses:• the greater of 5% or $80,000 less than $7,073,000• the greater of 4% or $354,000, $7,073,000 to $17,684,999• the greater of 3% or $707,000, $17,685,000 to $79,581,000• the greater of 2% or $2,387,000, $79,581,001 and over |

Provide methodology and assumptions used to estimate ADA, enrollment, revenues, expenditures, reserves and fund balance, and multiyear commitments (including cost–of-living adjustments).

Provide information on additional indicators as requested.

| **Supplemental Information** | **Provide supplemental information as follows:**  |
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| S1. Contingent Liabilities | Identify any known or contingent liabilities from financial or program audits, state compliance reviews, litigation, etc., that may impact the budget. |
| S2. Use of One-time Revenues for Ongoing Expenditures | Identify any ongoing county school service fund expenditures in excess of one percent of the total county school service fund expenditures that are funded with one-time resources in the budget year, and explain how the one-time resources will be replaced to continue funding the ongoing expenditures in the following fiscal years. |
| S3. Use of Ongoing Revenues for One-time Expenditures | Identify any large non-recurring county school service fund expenditures that are funded with ongoing county school service fund revenues. |
| S4. Contingent Revenues | Identify projected revenues for the budget year and two subsequent fiscal years that are contingent on reauthorization by the local government, special legislation, or other definitive act (e.g. parcel taxes). If any of these revenues are dedicated for ongoing expenses, explain how the revenues will be replaced or the expenditures reduced. |
| S5. Contributions | Identify projected contributions from unrestricted resources in the county school service fund to restricted resources in the county school service fund for the budget year and two subsequent fiscal years. Provide an explanation if contributions have changed from prior fiscal year amounts by more than $20,000 and more than ten percent. Explanation should include whether contributions are ongoing or one-time in nature.Identify projected transfers to or from the county school service fund to cover operating deficits in either the county school service fund or any other fund for the budget year and two subsequent fiscal years. Provide an explanation if transfers have changed from the prior fiscal year amounts by more than $20,000 and more than ten percent. An explanation should include whether transfers are ongoing or one-time in nature.Estimate the impact of any capital projects on the county school service fund operational budget. |
| S6. Long-term Commitments | Identify all existing and new multiyear commitments[[5]](#endnote-1) and their annual required payment for the budget year and two subsequent fiscal years. Explain how any increase in annual payments will be funded. Also explain how any decrease to funding sources used to pay long-term commitments will be replaced. |
| S7. Unfunded Liabilities | Estimate the unfunded liability for post-employment benefits other than pensions (OPEB) based on an actuarial valuation, if required, or other method; identify or estimate the actuarially determined contribution, if applicable; and indicate how the obligation is funded (pay-as-you-go, amortized over a specific period, etc.).Estimate the unfunded liability for self-insurance programs such as workers’ compensation based on an actuarial valuation, if required, or other method; identify or estimate the required contribution; and indicate how the obligation is funded (level of risk retained, funding approach, etc.). |
| S8. Status of Labor Agreements | Analyze the status of all labor agreements.Identify new labor agreements, as well as new commitments provided as part of previously ratified multiyear agreements; and include all contracts, including all administrator contracts (and including all compensation). For new agreements, indicate the date of the required board meeting.Compare the increase in new commitments to the projected increase in ongoing revenues, and explain how these commitments will be funded in future fiscal years.If salary and benefit negotiations are not finalized at budget adoption, upon settlement with certificated or classified staff:The county office of education must determine the cost of the settlement, including salaries, benefits, and any other agreements that change costs, and provide the California Department of Education (CDE) with an analysis of the cost of the settlement and its impact on the operating budget. The CDE shall review the analysis relative to the criteria and standards, and may provide written comments to the president of the governing board and the county superintendent of schools. |
| S9. Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) | Confirm that the county office of education’s governing board has adopted an LCAP or an update to the LCAP effective for the budget year.  |
| S10. LCAP Expenditures | Confirm that the county of education’s budget includes the expenditures necessary to implement the LCAP or annual update to the LCAP.  |

California Department of Education

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Revisions effective July 1, 2024

1. Available reserves are the unrestricted amounts in the Stabilization Arrangements, Reserve for Economic Uncertainties, and Unassigned/Unappropriated accounts in the County School Service Fund and Special Reserve Fund for Other Than Capital Outlay Projects. Available reserves will be reduced by any negative ending balances in restricted resources in the County School Service Fund. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A county office of education that is the Administrative Unit of a Special Education Local Plan Area may exclude from its expenditures the distribution of funds to its participating members. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Percentage levels equate to a rate of deficit spending which would eliminate recommended reserve for economic uncertainties over a three-year period. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 4 Dollar amounts to be adjusted annually by the prior year statutory cost-of-living adjustment, as referenced in *Education Code* Section 2574, rounded to the nearest thousand. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Include multiyear commitments, multiyear debt agreements, and new programs or contracts that result in long-term obligations. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)