

Local Control Funding Formula Differentiated Assistance Determinations



Under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), the California School Dashboard (Dashboard) is used to determine the local educational agencies (LEAs)—districts, charter schools, and county offices of education (COEs)—that are eligible for additional support and assistance.

In 2026, significant updates were made to the criteria used for eligibility. Differentiated assistance criteria are no longer based on a combination of LCFF Priority Areas but instead are based on state indicator Performance Levels/colors.

LCFF Assistance Categories

California's accountability and continuous improvement system is based on a three-tiered system:

- **Universal Support for All (Level 1)**—resources and assistance that are made available to all LEAs
- **Differentiated Assistance (Level 2)**—LEAs that meet certain eligibility criteria for additional support
- **Intensive Intervention (Level 3)**—LEAs with persistent performance issues over a period of time

Who Is Eligible for Differentiated Assistance?

For all districts, charter schools, and COEs, there are only **two** methods to be eligible for differentiated assistance:

- **Method 1:** Meeting the differentiated assistance criteria for entry
- **Method 2:** LEAs that have schools that have not exited Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) within four years

Method 1: Differentiated Assistance Criteria

The new differentiated assistance criteria are as follows:

- The **same** student group had two or more Red state indicators (or, for the English Learner Progress Indicator [ELPI], Red or Orange) in each of the last three Dashboard years (2024, 2025, and 2026).

In past years, there have been different entry criteria for districts and COEs than for charter schools. However, the new criteria are the same for all districts, charter schools, and COEs.

Method 2: CSI to Differentiated Assistance

New to 2026 LCFF assistance, those LEAs that have schools that have not exited CSI within four years will be eligible for differentiated assistance. For example, if a school was first eligible for CSI in 2023 and has not exited CSI after the publication of the 2026 Dashboard, the LEA of the school will be eligible for differentiated assistance. Method 2 determinations will be made available in December 2026.

Three-Year Support Cycle

Beginning with 2026 LCFF assistance, those districts, charter schools, and COEs eligible for differentiated assistance will receive support for three years (2026, 2027, 2028). Differentiated assistance entry determinations will not be made again until the 2029 Dashboard.

State Indicators Used for 2026 LCFF Assistance Determinations

The following state indicators from the 2024, 2025, and 2026 Dashboard will be used for differentiated assistance determinations:

- English Language Arts (ELA) Indicator
- Mathematics (Math) Indicator
- ELPI
- Suspension Rate Indicator
- Chronic Absenteeism Indicator
- Graduation Rate Indicator
- College/Career Indicator (CCI)

Student Groups for Differentiated Assistance

The “All Students” student group has been added to 2026 LCFF Assistance determinations. The student groups used for differentiated assistance determinations are

- race/ethnicity (Black/African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian American, Filipino, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, White, and two or more races);
- homeless students;
- English learner (EL) students;
- foster youth students;
- long-term English learner students (LTEL);
- students with disabilities;
- socioeconomically disadvantaged students; and
- **all students (new to 2026 LCFF assistance determinations).**

Example

Dahlia Unified School District has the following performance on each state indicator for the LTEL student group:

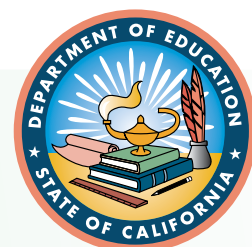
State Indicator	2024	2025	2026
ELA Indicator	Red	Red	Orange
Math Indicator	Orange	Yellow	Red
ELPI	Orange	Red	Orange
Suspension Rate Indicator	Red	Red	Orange
Chronic Absenteeism Indicator	Red	Red	Red
Graduation Rate Indicator	Yellow	Green	Orange
CCI	Orange	Yellow	Red

In this example, Dahlia Unified School District **met** the differentiated assistance criteria because the LTEL student group met the performance color criteria in each of the last three Dashboard years:

- Chronic Absenteeism Indicator—Red all three years
- ELPI—Red (2025) and Orange (2024 and 2026)

For more information, visit the [California Department of Education California School Dashboard and System of Support web page](#).

Contact the Analysis, Measurement, and Accountability Reporting Division by email at dashboard@cde.ca.gov.



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