A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats: A Critical Race Theory-Informed Critical Policy Analysis of the Local Control Accountability Plans of Two Southern California School Districts

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Educational Studies)
in the University of Michigan
2023

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my dearest Grannie, my brother Kenneth, my father Darrell, my Popo Raymond, and my dog companion, who got me through this dissertation, Daisy Adair; they all left a lasting imprint on my heart and are missed.

Acknowledgements

In the words of Snoop Dogg (2019), “First off, I want to thank me. I wanna thank me for doing all this hard work. I wanna thank me for having no days off. I wanna thank me for never quitting.” I acknowledge it is important to stop and think about oneself and the tremendous consistency that it takes to work towards one’s goals. But, while the dissertation is largely a solo process, I could not have accomplished this feat without the support and guidance of others. I am a firm believer in acknowledging that successes, while sometimes the product of individual actions, are the product of people and entities providing opportunity.

I am thankful for educators who played pivotal roles in my life. K-12 teachers who recognized and nurtured my emerging brilliance. Particularly my third grade teacher Alvin Brownlee, the only Black man I ever had as a primary or secondary teacher who encouraged me to shine, Laura Galido, my tenth grade Chemistry teacher who a White woman who openly spoke about systemic racism in standardized testing, Mary Prater, my seventh grade Algebra who always challenged in the most supportive way, and Sue Beaver, my elementary school principal who believed me; though I am no longer in contact with these people I can reflect on their role in supporting my academic success. Thank you, Annemarie, for working with me and believing in me. Tejeda, thank you for showing me how to be a critical scholar. Thank you, Pam, for always being supportive, believing in me, and giving me space to grow.

Thank you to my thought partners who I thoroughly enjoy being in community with. Saba, your support helped push me over the hump to finish this, thank you. I also want to thank

and acknowledge some of my SFL people Sida, Mina, and Minh. Thank you to Jon for your help with checking and wrangling my data. My cohort mates will always have a special place in my life collectively, but I want to give a special thanks to Anne-Coleman, Ebony, Mollee, and Naomi. Ashley, you are my favorite thought partner, and I cannot wait for the next thing that we do together.

Thank you to my family and friends. Thank you to my cousin Moe, my uncle Melvin, and my sisters Kaywanee, Erica, and Treasure. Thank you to my bestest and closest friends Angelique, Ashley, Becca, Cynthia, Dora, Joanna, Melissa, Rocio, Tien, and Lizz – I love you and appreciate you. Being an active, supportive, and loving mother is a choice, thank you to my Tata, Mama M, and Auntie Rhonda for being a mother.

Thank you to my committee, Mary, Al, Brian, and Camille, who were interested in working with me on this ambitious project. Mary, a further thank you for your continued support and wanting to be the chair for this dissertation. I want to end my acknowledgements with an ode to music which is an important part of my life and inspires me.

> "I believe in the impossible. If I reach deep within my heart. Overcome any obstacle. Won't let this dream fall apart. See, I strive to be the very best. Shine my light for all to see" (Fantasia, 2004). "I get knocked down, but I get up again – you're never gonna keep me down" (Chumbawamba, 1997). "I battle hard, that's how I'm made. And I may not heal from all these bruises, but I'll be better off this way" (Feldt, 2021). "Wake up. Grab a brush and put a little makeup. Hide the scars to fade away the shakeup" (System of a Down, 2001). "The motivation for me is them telling me what I could not be" (Jay-Z, 2009). "I got pride I could roll out for miles in front of me. I don't need your help, and I don't need sympathy. I don't need you to lower the bar for me" (Clarkson, 2019). "Everybody says they know me better than I know myself. But I don't know nobody else has felt what I felt. Did what I did or been where I been. But have to defend myself again and again" (Lopes, 2001). "Don't treat me like a woman. Don't treat me like a man.

Don't treat me like you know me. Just treat me for who and what I am. There's so much more…I'm so much more. I'm so much more than that" (Johnston, 2002). "Look inside you and be strong. And you'll finally see the truth. That a hero lies in you" (Carey, 1993). "We working twice as hard, taking half the pay. Multiply by two if you black and gay. Keep up because I know it's hard to understand. But multiply by ten if you black and trans" (Bob the Drag Queen, 2023).

"One question haunts and hurts. Too much, too much to mention. Was I really seeking good or just seeking attention? Is that all good deeds are when looked at with an ice-cold eye?" (Menzel, 2003)."I'm tired of you tellin' the story your way. You're causin' confusion; You think it's okay, damn it. You keep changin' the rules, while I, I keep playing the game. I can't take it much longer. I think I might go insane" (Jackson & Jackson, 1995).

"I think there's something you should know. I think it's time I stopped the show. There's something deep inside of me. There's someone I forgot to be. Take back your picture in a frame" (Michael, 1990). "Alright but I'm different, I can't base what I'm gonna be off a what everybody isn't" (Jay-Z, 2009). "Are we supposed to be the same? That's why I will never tame this thing that's burning in me. I am the one who chose my path" (Korn, 2003). "So, take me as I am. This may mean you'll have to be a stronger man" (Brooks, 1997).

"I'm a pro-fectionist, gotta stay on my toes. Anything goes when you play with the pro's" (Lil' Kim, 2003). "So, you say I'm complicated. That I must be out my mind. But you've had me underrated…What's wrong with being confident?" (Lovato, 2015). "Hold your head high, fingers to the sky. They gonna try and try ya, but they can't deny ya. Keep it building higher and higher…Now they don't believe ya, but they gonna need ya. Keep it moving higher and higher" (Spears, 2013).

"I am brave, I am bruised. I am who I'm meant to be, this is me. Look out cause here I come. And I'm marching on to the beat I drum. I'm not scared to be seen. I make no apologies, this is me" (Settle, 2017). "Suddenly I see, this is what I wanna be. Suddenly I see, why the hell it means so much to me" (KT Tunstall, 2004). "There's a million things

I haven't done. But just you wait, just you wait… I will never be satisfied" (Goldsberry, 2015). "I'm gonna take the town and turn it upside down. I'm gonna live, live until I die" (Davis Jr., 1954). "Looks like a girl, but she's a flame. So bright, she can burn your eyes, better look the other way. You can try, but you'll never forget her name" (Keys, 2012).

"Heavy is the crown, but never for a queen. A knife in my heart, it couldn't slow me down. Cause power is power, the fire never goes out. I rise from my scars; nothing hurts me now. Cause power is power. Now watch me burn it down" (SZA, 2019). "I'm an everlasting iconoclast. I came to destroy the past. My stargasm makes the blast. Shake the system, then surpass. Liberate en masse. Eliminate the class. All humans, free at last" (Peaches, 2015).

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Abstract

Through a multi-disciplinary and complex analysis, this study offers new ways of seeing how school districts are (not) able to address the social wrong of Black and Indigenous students' continually having inequitable access to education opportunity and displaying lower education outcomes. Research positions California's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) as an important policy with potentially transformative components for children who could benefit from more assistance under current educational conditions, but also raises issues with respect to the clarity of the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) companion document. While most policymakers and school systems contend that schools are making positive progress given systemic constraints, there is little work attending to school districts' use of local control opportunities to faithfully address the social wrong. The study answers the following questions: "How does the historicity of California public school funding, specifically key moments, social actors, and laws like the Local Control Funding Formula, contribute to an understanding of the documents and students' educational opportunities and outcomes?;" "How do two neighboring California school districts' education planning and accountability documents reveal the goals, funding allocations, and educational opportunities and outcomes for Indigenous and Black students considering the historicity of California public school funding?;" "What does a quantitative critical analysis of district accountability data reveal about the (in)equity of funding for Indigenous and Black students?;" "What types of messages regarding Black and Indigenous children are communicated through California state level discourse, as evident in the districts' planning and accountability documents?;" and "How are Black and Indigenous children discursively positioned in these messages and how may that positioning be relevant to their access to equitable educational opportunities and outcomes?"

This study's analysis situates important systemic issues contributing to a continuation of the social wrong and uses Critical Race Theory as a theoretical foundation to guide the analysis and approach to the data, simultaneously relying on Critical Policy Analysis to investigate the LCFF policy. To evaluate the data, Long Beach Unified School District and Los Angeles Unified School District LCAPs and School Accountability Report Cards, this study uses Critical Policy Analysis, Critical Quantitative Analysis, and Critical Discourse Analysis with Systemic Functional Linguistics as analytical methods. The findings produce five claims: 1) California's historicity of education funding and attention to race has shaped the LCFF and how school districts complete their LCAPs; 2) state level discourse uses race to report on outcomes for Indigenous and Black children while simultaneously implementing superficial approaches to addressing racialized issues; 3) analysis of the district accountability plans reveals that both districts provide surface-level attention to Black and Indigenous students without meaningful goals, actions, or services to address acknowledged conditions; 4) both districts hold their actions in high regard while simultaneously holding children responsible for achieving district goals; and 5) low population percentages of Indigenous and Black students in most schools in both districts make them invisible in accountability data and specific approaches for effectively serving these children and school accountability measures are not articulated in the LCAPs.

Through this research, I offer a contribution to the field by critically engaging with qualitative and quantitative data to present findings with a nuanced perspective that centralizes the disparate impact of a race-evasive policy on Black and Indigenous students. This dissertation offers considerations to the districts studied, California, and education systems seeking to be more equitable.

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Dissertation

A continuing systemic lack of quality educational opportunities for Students of Color broadly has led to decades of public education reform efforts seeking to eliminate observable differences in education outcomes, particularly between students of different racial groups (e.g., for Black students or Indigenous students and their peers). However, this focus on learning outcomes as a driver for change and improvement often is presented in color-evasive, though often positioned as the more innocuous "color-blind," policy efforts that tend to have significant racial implications. Without educational policies that directly address issues considering the role of race and racism, such efforts are limited in their potential to only address systemic issues that all students might face. Instead, policies tend to use proxies for race or ethnicity (e.g., parental income), or focus on other metrics with asserted correlation to academic success (e.g., teacher quality/experience). Rather than directly addressing race or racism, these types of practices legitimize and implement color-evasive approaches that have not addressed the academic needs of the students who deserve high quality education.

However, race tends to be a direct focus when policy documents note diversity or educational outcome metrics, most notably, in reporting state and federal standardized test score results, which consistently inform us that, on average, Students of Color perform academically worse than their peers. Despite consistent, racialized results regardless of income level or school quality, we are encouraged to believe that schooling systems and society itself are not racist and that all students are provided equitable opportunity to succeed. As such, race remains an absent factor in reform efforts to address issues in education.

Broadly, “education has once again become a site of crucial struggles over authority and identity, indeed over both the very meaning of being educated and who should control it (Apple, 2019, p. 277). This study seeks to evaluate a notion of this struggle by analyzing how policy itself operates, and how school districts showcase policy implementation through required policy texts; this study seeks to understand how policy and school districts work to ensure that the institution of education is operating more equitably for Indigenous and Black students.

In this chapter, I begin by explaining the importance of my personal background as it relates to my approach to research. Then, I situate the problem that my study addresses. I then discuss the importance of evaluating education policy with an explicit focus on racial implications. Next, I introduce the Local Control Funding Formula as the education policy being analyzed for this study. Then, I review my pilot study where I studied similar issues. Next, I introduced the two school districts that are the focus of the analysis. I then share the research questions that this study addresses and connect the questions to the methodologies being used. Next, I provide a synopsis of the study’s contributions and significance. Lastly, I provide an overview of the dissertation itself, including highlights from the remaining chapters.

1.1 Positionality and Personal Background

While this study and its analysis were carried out between 2018-2023, the roots and foundational ideas which serve as the catalyst to crafting this research have developed over time and before I began my doctoral journey. Like with most people doing equity-driven work, this began with my earlier life experiences. I grew up and attended schools in the greater Los Angeles area. This dissertation’s roots stem from personal experiences encountering systemic barriers and attending schools lacking funding and widespread opportunity for academic success.

My employment history includes working at nonprofits serving individuals who were largely members of marginalized backgrounds and were typically failed by conventional social systems. For example, through my six years of providing one-on-one and small group tutoring, I worked exclusively with families with lower incomes with children who were predominantly Black or Latin* people and some with disabilities. Through tutoring, I first began by listening to the children to comprehend what they were struggling with in their words. During my graduate studies I continue to be involved in community service efforts. For instance, I spent three years working with the student counseling office advocating for services geared toward graduate and professional students. My passion for this work stemmed from recognizing that graduate and professional students face unique barriers to accessing services in a university setting largely because of their middling status as students and workers.

Though I have personal connections across many political, ethnic, and social identities that are very meaningful and establish a foundation for the work that I do, who I am in a silo does not adequately allow me to complete the aims of this work. I am influenced by historical and current truths which have created and sustain a system of primary and secondary education exclusion extending through post-secondary education. My personal commitment to continually engaging with underappreciated communities like mine is impacted by my commitment to ensuring that more people like me are authentically provided opportunity and representation.

This foundation informs my capacity to use pedagogically productive mechanisms to ensure that I am centering Persons of Color whilst decentering whiteness so that I can more appropriately respond to the needs of learners from diverse backgrounds. I am guided by a desire to make the world a fairer and more equitable place and believe in the value of an education as a great way to achieve such aims. My research agenda involves issues related to opportunity

access, equitable funding, policy implementation, and populations who have been historically marginalized by societal structures, with explicit focus on race/ethnicity, racism, and classism, in education. My theoretical foundation is informed by critical frameworks like critical race theory. I primarily use critical discourse analysis, systemic functional linguistics, critical policy analysis, and critical quantitative analysis as analytical tools.

With this background, I next cover the statement of the problem that this study addresses, centering on a Californian law, the Local Control Funding Formula. This law sought to improve educational opportunities for all students, but especially those that are positioned by the law writers as needing extra assistance to succeed. However, due to how the law was conceived and the deficit ideologies towards students, there continue to be problems with ensuring how all students receive an equitable education, especially Black children and Indigenous children.

1.2 Problem Statement: Understanding the Californian Law Using Critical Methodologies

In 2013 California implemented a policy attempt at school reform, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), which altered the public education power structure, providing school districts with more autonomy over setting goals and spending funds. The law transformed how public education is funded with an explicit focus to funnel funds to schools with populations of students that the state has determined would benefit from services beyond those that all students have access to. Despite this commitment to such learners, race is notably absent in the law; there is no requirement that school systems use racial demographics to determine additional services.

This study recognizes that the LCFF policy is positioned as equity-focused given aims to redistribute funding and resources to students who deserve assistance given socio-political structures and education system constraints. The LCFF broadly defines these students as "unduplicated students" which encompasses the student subgroups of "low-income students,"

hereinafter *children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages*, "English learners," hereinafter *plural lingual learners*, and "foster youth," hereinafter *youth placed in the foster care system*. Thus, these are the students that California legally positions as worthy of more assistance and investment. However, for the 2022-23 school year, 61.5% of all children, nearly 3.6 million students, are categorized as children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages in California and therefore fall in the unduplicated category.[1] Given that most children in the state, across all school districts, are categorized as unduplicated students due to their caretakers being paid poverty wages, I begin with an assertion that the broad category is insufficient on the grounds that it is difficult to categorically identify those students who truly need the investment of opportunity under the state's unduplicated category. However, I also note that these categories can be indirectly leveraged for analysis because Indigenous and Black students are seen in these categories. In particular, the children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and youth placed in the foster care system categories are the subgroups where Indigenous and Black students might be targeted for assistance under this policy.[2] This research operates in the space that it is simply not enough to *know* that Pacific Islander, Latinx, Indigenous, and Black students, for example, do not attain markers of educational success at similar levels to their peers.

The LCFF comes with an implicit goal that the weighted student formula, coupled with other measures like increased local control, will result in all students being deemed successful. While it is still too early to determine the overall effectiveness of the LCFF law, it can be concluded that all students are not yet achieving current baseline markers of success. A critical

[1] These data are consistent with 2018-19 school year data, the primary focus of this study, where over 60.9%, 3.77 million, of California's 6.19 million total students were identified as children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages.

[2] According to 2018-2019 California student figures, nearly 65% of all Indigenous students and over 70% of all Black students were classified as children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. Further, Indigenous and Black students are overrepresented in the youth placed in foster care subgroup at 1.4% and 18.5% respectively versus their representative total population percentages of 0.5% and 5.5.%.

policy analysis of the LCFF helps see that those who have systemically been denied access to educational opportunity continue to be among the student groups which continue to be deemed as less successful on academic outcomes measures. Further, it is apparent that there continues to be equity issues with respect to the education of Indigenous and Black students. This recognition does not dismiss or ignore equity issues in schools that are apparent for other racial groups like Pacific Islander children, Latin* children, etc.

Critical discourse analysis provides a methodological approach to begin to evaluate such an issue under the LCFF policy. By evaluating the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) which school districts produce as an accountability measure under the LCFF, it becomes clear that districts use equity-laden language with markers which show that districts are attentive to the academic outcomes of all students with a prominent focus on Students of Color. However, through using a theory of language to analyze the text, it becomes clear that forward facing commitments to Black and Indigenous students are not clearly supported by goals, actions, and services outlined in district's LCAP document.

This dissertation uses Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a theoretical approach to carry out a critical policy analysis of the LCFF while centering Indigenous and Black students while directly address systemic issues resulting from racism, white supremacy, and white normativity. By exploring two districts' LCAP documents under a critical discourse analysis approach to a policy analysis, this dissertation more deeply analyzes language and representational choices by using systemic functional linguistics as a theory of language. Through this, there is a goal to understand how districts are attentive to the educational needs of Indigenous and Black students through analysis which considers funding allocation, priorities, and goals. Further, there is an explicit interrogation of quantitative data using critical quantitative methods. This dissertation

contributes to the argument that a policy analysis must center race, interrogate the discourse using a theory of language, and consider contextual and historical information.

1.3 Education Policy and a Race or CRT Lens

Equity driven political unrest has at times been more visible in general media representations with calls for systemic reform and attentiveness to racial inequities. In this, organizations have adjusted[3] how they conduct business to heed these calls. For instance, organizations have modified the language that they use to convey a commitment to causes like equity, social justice, and police brutality.

Such efforts to produce forward facing commitments to socially relevant issues also occur in public education where districts may produce statements which seem to have action-oriented services. Indeed, you will find equity language in documents produced by nearly all state and local systems which purport commitments to things like ensuring all students have access to academically succeed. Many districts also produce texts which pledge to attentively address prevalent issues like racial achievement disparities. However, when actions and language are compared, there is often a lack of connection between a district's equity-oriented language and their funding allocation, education actions development, and targeted services.

While most people might believe that all children deserve high-quality primary and secondary public education with equal opportunity to achieve the American Dream, we historically have failed to systematically achieve this standard in the United States. Funding allocation to carryout outlined services is one aspect which decides who has access to education opportunity. This study maintains social justice aims to end institutional racism and eliminate

[3] Organizations may produce goods which align with a cause, for instance as corporations have begun to produce "pride" themed merchandise, branding, and events during Pride Month in the United States.

disparate racial impacts through an attentive focus on evaluating the language in district documents and making connections to education funding allocation and opportunity for Black and Indigenous students.

G. López (2003) suggests that "given the rapidly changing demographic profile of the United States, the study of the politics of education has never been of greater importance" (p. 71) especially since the permanence of racism continues to be absent in policy discussions. G. López challenges the race-evasive efforts within education politics by centering racism's role in continuing an unjust education system through silencing efforts promoting beliefs systems asserting equal opportunity and color-blindness. G. López notes that though invisibilized to some, racism is as ever present today and perspectives using critical race theory can help address efforts to obtain equitable racial progress through subverting white supremacy and privilege.

Despite a general race-evasive approach to policy and services in education, race is often consistently highlighted when noting diversity or educational outcome metrics, most notably, in reporting state and federal standardized test score results. These types of quantitative metrics consistently present a notion that, on average, most Students of Color [Black students particularly and Indigenous students when they are not statistically excluded] perform academically worse than their peers. Despite consistent, racialized results which persist regardless of income level or school quality, some people and institutions posit notions that society itself is not racist, that all students are provided ample opportunity to succeed, and certainly that there is no need to directly address race or racism in education policy.

Alemán Jr (2013) notes that school finance literature, while robust, has failed to provide sustained space for dialogue of institutional racism or historical oppression. However, there is an importance to understanding the history of public education's context and the evolution of laws

shaping education as they can enhance one's understanding of current education finance laws (Alemán Jr, 2013). This study explores how education policy and policy implementation matter and asserts a dire need to directly address race and racism.

My work in this dissertation fills research gaps by infusing criticality and attention to social contexts in ways largely absent from traditional funding research. This dissertation's conceptual framework relies on tenets of Critical Race Theory to help explain a connection between race and education funding and opportunity and seeks to address the notion of a social wrong where Indigenous and Black students continue to receive fewer educational opportunities.

1.4 California's LCFF as our Policy of Focus

The "Local Control Funding Formula" (LCFF) is a law that was passed in 2013and established a weighted formula for per pupil education funding that is distributed from California to every local education agency (LEA) which could be a school district or charter school(s). This weighted formula purports a simplified funding distribution from the state to LEAs due to having fewer categorical funding programs which provide direction on how LEAs must spend funding. Under the LCFF, children labeled as unduplicated students (i.e., plural lingual children, youth placed in the foster care system, and/or children whose caregivers are paid poverty wages) serve as the funding targets. With this, LEAs are provided more autonomy to allocate funding in ways that are meant to allow LEAs increased flexibility to address local needs and serve their local student populations to improve or increase student outcomes.

To maintain accountability for funding distribution under the LCFF policy, LEAs are required to complete a document, called the Local Control Accountability Plan, which must conform to an approved template and is valid for three-year periods with yearly updates. In an LCAP, LEAs are required to outline *how they plan to achieve their annual goals through*

detailing activities, which students are receiving services and how actions address state or local priorities, and *minor details regarding the funding source(s) received by the district*.

The LCAP also provides an opportunity for LEAs to demonstrate and explain resource allocation, particularly for students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages, youth in the foster care system, and plural lingual children. The LCAP is one main measure to ensure that districts allocate resources to students from subgroups who have been traditionally, and purposely, underserved (Knudson, 2019). Therefore, the LCAP is a potential source of data outlining education opportunities for Black and Indigenous students.

1.5 The Pilot Study Preceding this Inquiry

As Indigenous and Black students fall under the category of children who have been traditionally and purposively underserved in education settings, prior to this dissertation study, I conducted a preliminary case study where I used Critical Discourse Analysis with Systemic Functional Linguistics to evaluate how one school district used their LCAP to be attentive to the education of Black students. I evaluated policy document data to reach conclusions surrounding how a district expressed its support to ensure Black students academically achieve.

After analyzing the data, I concluded that the district largely failed to establish goals or services directly targeting its Black students; instead, favoring a broad "all student" support strategy, despite making a specific commitment to Black students at a district board meeting. For example, through analyzing the seven goals set for the school year using modality analysis, a Systemic Functional Linguistics tool, I identified linguistic elements which communicated choices in the goals, establishing a theme where a high level of certainty regarding all student success was consistently invoked. Through using this tool, modal word choices (e.g., "must have," "must," "that are" etc.) were identified as justifications for the goals. These choices were

used to describe how the district expresses confidence in understanding what its student population needs and why they need it. The modality choices in the goals presented the district's plan for students' academic progress, access to materials, etc. with only success as an option and places an onus on students.

The district also touted a district-parent group for "concerned" Black families as evidence of engagement with parents and guardians of Black students. However, an analysis of the agendas and meeting minutes revealed that these monthly gatherings were structured as district official led presentations and information providing rather than attempts to meaningfully engage or collaborate with their Black families and students. Ultimately, I concluded that the district was unable to directly or covertly outline how their goals and services would directly impact Black students who they acknowledge continued to academically lag other subgroups. This preliminary case study serves as a jumping off point into this dissertation work and led to an initial query:

> What can an analysis of similar school districts' LCAPs reveal about how those school districts establish and support services for groups like Indigenous and Black students?

1.6 The Two School Districts of Focus for this Study

In research there appears to be purported legitimacy in learning from school districts whose Students of Color excel on metrics like standardized assessments. Indeed, research has focused on best practices coming from such districts that lead to better results, typically looking at Black and Latin* children and often ignoring Indigenous existence. While this study does not unilaterally focus on districts with best practices, it does include a district, Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD), that has been identified as one which excels with Students of Color and is often positioned as a district to learn from. In identifying an additional school district to study for this dissertation, I selected Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), which is a

neighboring district that is not typically cited as excelling with Students of Color nor positioned as a best practices school system.

Both LBUSD and LAUSD are in Los Angeles County which has the greatest concentration of students in the bottom 99% of the national cost-adjusted school funding distribution per 2015 data (Kelly, 2020). This means that most schools in Los Angeles County, and therefore most students in both districts, maintain the highest concentration of children whose caregivers are paid poverty wages in the country. Mulholland (2019) finds that LCFF supplemental funding identified by status at the district level is not a good proxy to ensure that Black students receive more funding. Building on this, I assert that because most students have caretakers who are paid poverty wages there is a greater need to understand how resources are allocated toward subgroups like Black and Indigenous students who also disproportionately have caregivers who are paid poverty wages. Further, studying the implementation of the LCFF primarily through the LCAP of two neighboring LEAs with similar demographics allows for unique comparisons.

Many of the studies evaluating the LCAP documents tend to focus on districts compliance to requirements under the LCFF. This work aims to add to a growing corpus of research studying LEA LCAPs, by looking at goal planning and resource allocation documents to gain a sense of how districts are attentive to their student needs, which goals are developed, and funding that is allocated to support services. This project critically analyzes two Los Angeles County districts' efforts to support equitable outcomes with a focus on contributing to awareness and understanding of impacts for Indigenous and Black students. This objective lends to the overall aims of this study which is guided by this inquiry which seeks to understand how the

LCAP planning documents are being leveraged by the LBUSD and LAUSD to outline how they provide services which reach Indigenous and Black children.

1.7 The Research Questions in Relation to the Critical Methodologies Applied

This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), with a theory of language in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), as the method allows for the identifications and comparison of district language and action. Galloway et al. (2019) assert that learning spaces for educators must consistently, and explicitly, "center the history of racism, structural inequalities, and power, including how these operate to maintain dominant norms and disparate outcomes by race" (p. 497). Ultimately, the authors find that words matter, and their findings suggest that when policy names and center around topics like anti-racism, it may shift educators away from color-blind or color-evasive practices which fail to address whiteness, racism, and oppression. Simply put, Galloway et al. indicate that language matters in school reform efforts and this dissertation evaluates the LCFF policy through state-level and district-level language.

Those engaging in CPA tend to emphasize those actors in power who define and influence problems, solutions, and the policy process itself (Horsford et al., 2019). There are three phases broadly that encompass this: the problem definition, and what counts as a problem or issue; the policy process, and how the problem gets addressed whether through the legal system or legislatively, and, lastly, the policy implementation, where attention is given to the role of powerful interests and how it is (eventually) institutionalized (Horsford et al., 2019).

The CDA used in this study requires an explicit focus on a social wrong which aligns well with my use of CRT as a theoretical lens and CPA as an overarching theoretical approach. CDA is an approach that has been used in cohesion with a critical policy analysis and allows for the analysis of text. As there is an intention to make meaning of language use in texts, SFL is

used as it provides me with a guiding theory of language to conduct an analysis. These analytical methods come together and support answering the Research Questions:

> Research Question 1: How does the historicity of California public school funding, specifically key moments, social actors, and laws like the Local Control Funding Formula, contribute to an understanding of the documents and students' educational opportunities and outcomes?
>
> Research Question 1A: How do two neighboring California school districts' education planning and accountability documents reveal the goals, funding allocations, and educational opportunities and outcomes for Indigenous and Black students considering the historicity of California public school funding?
>
> Research Question 2: What does a quantitative critical analysis of district accountability data reveal about the (in)equity of funding for Indigenous and Black students?
>
> Research Question 3: What types of messages regarding Black and Indigenous children are communicated through California state level discourse, as evident in the districts' planning and accountability documents?
>
> Research Question 3A: How are Black and Indigenous children discursively positioned in these messages and how may that positioning be relevant to their access to equitable educational opportunities and outcomes?

To begin to answer these complex questions, this study begins with an objective to show that, through analyzing the policy creation process, it is possible to gain a greater understanding of the impact of an apparent race-evasive policy, California's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). This study analyzes the policy creation process by tracing notable decisions and actions over time that ultimately contribute or directly led to the creation of the LCFF in 2013. This

involves discussing the impact of court cases like *Serrano vs. Priest* (1971) and ballot measures impacting education funding like Proposition 13 (1978) or impacting racial conditions like Proposition 209 (1996). Through centering a narrative around the actions of some key persons and organizations, a social actor analysis, an SFL tool, is used to further show that highlighting the role of people spotlights an often unspoken yet important part of the policy process.

A central commitment throughout this study is to center Indigenous and Black students and their education. Quantitative critical race theory is used to analyze School Accountability Report Card data. This is accomplished by analyzing test scores and descriptive statistics from the two Southern California school districts to understand Indigenous and Black student data. This approach provides foundational knowledge on student concentrations and the distribution of Indigenous and Black students across each district and how the data represents these children.

As CDA calls for the direct evaluation of documents using a theory of language, I use SFL to analyze the written text to gain meaning. But the LCAP tends to be a very large document and can be difficult to understand. Therefore, it is important to have a methodological approach to documents. I use SFL tools like Genre analysis to make the document more accessible. Through this, the attentiveness that the districts give to Indigenous and Black students is analyzed for (in)direct mentions using SFL tools lexical chain analysis and Genre analysis.

This study is also attentive to language choices which refer to or include Black and Indigenous students which may be direct or indirect. These types of mentions are also analyzed and contribute to highlighting ways that districts are attentive to issues of equity and race by evaluating their documents. The Appraisal Framework is useful in obtaining such meaning which contributes to answering this study's Research Questions.

Lastly, there is a commitment to show how, through an evaluation of language choices in documents, forward facing commitments are unsupported by actions taken by districts. This involves using SFL's Appraisal analysis to evaluate text choices in district goals, actions, and services. Further, Appraisal analysis allows for an analysis to discuss how an LEA positions themselves and their students.

Though there are guiding and methodological queries which help focus the analytical approach to the data analysis, this study has multiple interconnected questions that it seeks to address. And, as such, all approaches to the data analysis are designed to provide a component of the answer to the study's Research Questions across the two findings chapters.

1.8 Study Contribution and Significance

Through my multi-disciplinary and complex analysis, I offer new ways of seeing how districts are (not) able to solve the problem of Black and Indigenous students' continuing to have less access to education opportunity and displaying lower education outcomes. Through this research, I offer a contribution to the field, by critically engaging with qualitative and quantitative data to present findings with a more nuanced perspective that centralizes the Education Debt and its disparate impact on Black and Indigenous students. This dissertation offers recommendations to the districts studied, the State of California, and all education systems seeking to be more equitable. As Critical Policy Analysis provides a foundation to get to "simple" questions as outlined by Apple (2019) who asserts that researchers have an ethical obligation to uncover the effects of policies, challenge policy positions, and put forth an education defense that advocates for "human flourishing" (p. 277). This study accomplishes these tasks by addressing gaps in policy analysis, quantitative analysis, and discourse analysis

work with direct aims to combat inequity and increase educational outcomes for Indigenous and Black students.

1.9 Overview of the Dissertation

Thus far, the dissertation has provided an evaluation of the guiding conceptual framework for this dissertation where I have outlined how the social wrong is manifested across education funding policy and reproduced in school districts. I also have introduced the framework which allows me to answer the Research Questions posed here.

In Chapter 2, I expand on the conceptual framework. I also provide a literature review that will outline what research says about school funding policy and specifically about California's Local Control Funding Formula policy and Local Control Accountability Plans.

In Chapter 3, I describe the methods that guide my analysis; positioning Critical Policy Analysis as the primary tool to evaluate the Local Control Funding Formula policy and using Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Quantitative Analysis, and Systemic Functional Linguistics as tools to analyze my data. I also share the data corpus for this study.

Chapters 4 and 5 consist of my findings which will outline the results of my qualitative and quantitative analysis. In Chapter 4 I use critical policy analysis informed by critical race theory to investigate the Local Control Funding Formula. Further, through CPA, I contribute a more robust contextual story which situates the creation of the LCFF first through a historical lens before discussing the law itself while pinpointing impact for Indigenous and Black children. Specially, this analysis involves investigating California education finance policy after *Serrano v. Priest* leading up to the passage of the Local Control Funding Formula. This CPA engages data with an attentive focus on people (e.g., Jerry Brown), court cases (e.g., *Williams v. California*, 2004), and legal actions (e.g., Proposition 13). These instances over time are

analyzed for their contributions to shaping education funding policy and education for Indigenous and Black children in California. This chapter demonstrates a consistent lack of action to choose policies which center Black and Indigenous children particularly in the face of local and national attempts to undermine efforts to achieve equity. The analysis shows persons and organizations have played a huge part in shaping education finance policy in a manner which has consistently failed to provide equitable opportunities for Indigenous and Black children.

In Chapter 5, I share descriptive statistics of the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Long Beach Unified School District. Further, I also use SFL's Genre analysis and lexical chain analysis to uncover how the districts (in)directly mention Indigenous and Black students in their documents. Findings related to the School Accountability Report Card quantitative data provide clear evidence of where Black and Indigenous students are in the two case study districts of Long Beach Unified School District and Los Angeles Unified School District. Results show that ninety-five percent of Indigenous students and thirty percent of Black students attend schools in which they comprise two percent or fewer of the total student population. Such statistics indicate that in these two districts Indigenous students, especially, and Black students are in environments where they are with few or none other persons from their racial background. Further, the test score results highlight, particularly for Black students, that most Black and Indigenous students do not meet the state standard for math or English language arts. The results also indicate that there are differences in achievement based on which schools the students are in, particularly for Black students. Using the Lexical Chain analysis, a Systemic Functional Linguistic tool, to look for mentions of race throughout the documents, I find that both districts make mention to Black students more than any other race group. Most of the mentions across both district plans refer to expected or actual measurable outcomes (standardized test scores).

Neither district targets Black or Indigenous students with a particular goal, action, or service. These preliminary findings indicate that the two districts might be using the local control mechanisms at their disposal differently to meet their students' needs.

However, Chapter 5 continues with a presentation of SFL Appraisal analysis findings which, through analyzing language choices, highlights ways that the districts mention and attend to Black and Indigenous students. Through Appraisal analysis, I show that in general there is a lack of alignment between the district's 2018-2019 goals, actions, services, and funding allocations. This misalignment becomes starker when considering the implications for Indigenous and Black students. Each LEA's goals are analyzed for instances of modality and obligation which allowed for conclusions regarding the viability of the goals and who is responsible for goal completion. The findings conclude that district goals are not attainable, and children are positioned as the actors solely responsible for completing district goals. In their LCAPs, both districts align their goals strongly to state standards while forgoing the opportunity to directly name and attend to local concerns. The analysis further investigates how students and the districts are positioned while also analyzing (in)direct mentions of Indigenous and Black students through the district LCAPs. The findings show that the LEAs use indirect terms and recognitions to refer to broadly refer to students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages and/or Students of Color. However further analysis highlights this prominence is often wrapped in negative judgements and valuations regarding these groups of children.

Lastly, the final chapter will include the Discussion and provide my thoughts based on my findings in conversation with existing research and implications for future studies, policy, and school districts. I summarize the evidence to support my overall findings. I outline the study's contributions by making connections to previous research. Then I intentionally build on

critical methods like CRT and CDA to address issues in education for Black and Indigenous children.

Chapter 2 Review of Literature

In this section, I begin by providing a general review of education funding in the United States. I discuss California's 2013 Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) a legislative attempt to solve to enact a new local education agency (LEA) finance system through a weighted formula focusing on (sub)groups of children deemed to be worthy of additional financial support, to achieve academic outcomes comparable to other (sub)groups of students. Again, the LCFF calls these children "unduplicated students" or "unduplicated pupils" and contains students belonging to one or all the three groups of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, youth who have been placed in the foster care system, or plural lingual children. Some relevant research focusing on the LCFF and its companion piece the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) is reviewed to establish aspects which scholars have attended to since the law's passage. Next, Critical Race Theory (CRT) and its promise for addressing educational policy is reviewed. Then, studies using Critical Quantitative methods (QuantCrit) are reviewed in relation to using quantitative methods to address equity and add nuance to complex racialized issues. After briefly discussing Critical Policy Analysis (CPA), I then highlight the use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to do complete the critical work of a policy analysis. Lastly, I conclude with a discussion of Systemic Functional Linguistics and its necessity for providing analytical tools to complete a CDA approach. I conclude with reflections on this study's Research Questions.

2.1 Review of Education Funding

In the United States, individual states, which are deemed to have constitutional authority over education, and have a deciding role in how funds are allocated and/or determining the funding system, which often results in funding inequities. Figlio (2004) offers guidance to those undertaking education funding research providing key issues to consider when designing studies and reporting findings. Figlio (2004) outlines that large disparities have existed in school spending, between states and within states since the inception of schools in the U.S and attributes this to the decentralized nature of schooling and a reliance on local governance. Definitional differences cause issues in policy creation and conversations surrounding finance reform aims. Figlio (2004) advises that before determining effectiveness, the goals of state finance reform should be determined. A shared understanding in important about whom equity is for, the unit of analysis, the stage of education being considered, and whether there are any special interest groups (e.g., Students of Color, low-income, students with special needs) (Figlio, 2004). Funding policies often incorporate a narrative tied to a defining equity as equal resources (i.e., per-pupil funding) or equal outcomes (i.e., standardized test scores) (Figlio, 2004).

Throughout the United States levels of school funding vary state to state. Within states LEAs receive different funding amounts, and within LEAs schools in the same school systems receive different funding amounts. This is all due to locally driven funding policies that are property tax driven or subsidized by surcharges like millages (Biddle and Berliner, 2002; Spatig-Amerikaner, 2012). These inter- and intra-state differences create noticeable racialized trends. Present day schools are more racially segregated than since Brown v. Board of Education (1954) and is related to the way schools are funded (e.g., Garda Jr, 2007; Ostrander, 2015). Schools that are lower funded tend to be urban districts which have high numbers of Students of Color and

lower (or inadequate compared to population) property tax revenues or rates, leading to a continuation of *de facto* (in fact) school segregation through education finance structures (Ostrander, 2015).

Literature (e.g., Spatig-Amerikaner, 2012; Bifulco, 2005; Baker, 2014) is consistent in finding that schools with majority populations of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages receive less funding in comparison to schools with lower populations of children whose caretakers are paid poverty incomes, and that schools with higher percentages of Students of Color receive less funding than those with lower percentages of Students of Color. This phenomenon is a pandemic across the United States and California is no exception.

2.2 Introduction to the LCFF in Research

Since the legislative implementation of California's current K-12 school funding policy the LCFF, scholars have researched outcomes related to this law. For example, scholars have studied LCFF's impact on school library funding (Lofton et al., 2018); superintendents' or senior district staff perceptions and experience implementing the LCFF (e.g., Fuller & Tobben, 2014; J. Marsh, et al., 2018); and LCAP services for youth who have been placed in the foster care system (e.g., Humphrey, Koppich, Campbell, et al., 2015). The LCFF has also been studied after two years (e.g., Koppich et al., 2015), and three years (e.g., Humphrey, Koppich, Lavadenz, et al., 2017) of implementation. Further, the LCAPS of some LEAs have been studied (e.g., The Education Trust-West, 2016). Through these studies, there has been a lack of focus on race itself, let alone how racism or white supremacy functions within how the LCFF is implemented at the LEA level as seen in LCAPs.

However, such research provides a foundation of key issues related to LCFF implementation and LCAP creation that have emerged since its passage. This research

understandably highlights that the execution of the LCFF and engaging with the LCAP creation process has been difficult for LEAs. While early data suggested that there was buy-in, there have been errors along the way. For example, research showcases that transparency (e.g., explaining how services will benefit unduplicated students, outlining expenditures, meaningful community engagement, creating a digestible LCAP) has been difficult to achieve thus far (e.g., Affeldt, 2015, Chen & Hahnel, 2017), and The Education Trust–West, 2016). Early research on LEA's LCAPs is useful in understanding issues relevant to this dissertation study.

2.3 Early Research Approaches to Evaluating the LCFF Discover Conflicting Information

Using district LCAP data collected during January 2015, Humphrey, Koppich, Campbell, et al. (2015) focus on how some LEAs outline their actions, services, and goals for youth who have been placed in the foster care system[4] in the first year of the LCFF. The data were collected via site visits (two districts with exemplary reputations for their youth who have been placed in the foster care system programming and their county office of education) and telephone interviews (four districts with significant populations of youth who have been placed in the foster care system). The authors' report that the initial LCAPs failed to address the needs of youth who have been placed in the foster care system in specific and comprehensive ways and that the needs of youth who have been placed in the foster care system tended to be embedded in general programs that targeted all students. The findings suggest that at least initially, even in districts with a strong track record for providing quality services for youth who have been placed in the foster care system, there was a struggle to identify specific actions and services in LCAPs that targeted youth who have been placed in the foster care system. This research raises concern over

[4]Again, youth placed in the foster care system are one of the "unduplicated student" subgroups to which LEAs receive additional funding.

the local control responsibility for LEAs to increase or improve services for students whom LEAs are required to targeted like youth who have been placed in the foster care system.

J. Marsh et al. (2018), using a representative sample of 350 California superintendents (with a 48% response rate) stratified by district size and percentage of unduplicated students, report weighted survey responses, collected during the 2017-18 school year, detailing the participants' resource allocation and governance under the LCFF. While 94% of superintendents do strongly or somewhat agree that some students should receive additional funds is an admirable figure, not all those in leadership positions who responded to the survey agreed and certainly there is a difference between strongly agree and somewhat agree. Results show that not all, about 6%, of California superintendents strongly or somewhat agree with a key premise of the LCFF weighted student formula, that there are students who should receive additional resources (J. Marsh et al., 2018, p. 2). The LCFF, in theory, depends on LEAs and district officials being wholly committed to ensuring that unduplicated students are disproportionately invested as compared to other students. Among large district superintendents, the authors found that 75% of these superintendents who strongly agree with the resource allocation idea are statistically different from the 20% of those who somewhat agree. Such findings spotlight a potential issue with those who may strongly agree and somewhat agree as if there is lukewarm or no reception to this core idea, it becomes difficult for the equitable actions, which could benefit children who have been historically denied education, to be achieved.

The survey results also suggest that school district size appears to have differing impacts on governance and budgeting. The findings show that 29% of superintendents agree that the LCFF has weakened essential protections for high-needs students that were once embedded in the categorical system (J. Marsh et al., 2018, Figure 4) and that 78% of superintendents with high

unduplicated pupil counts agree that the LCFF has created new administrative burdens. The results show that larger districts are surer that under the LCFF they can better achieve alignment between their goals, strategies, and resource allocation decisions. However, the authors found that there was a statistical difference between the 45% of superintendents that strongly agree and the 44% that somewhat agree with alignment capability. There was also a statistical difference for high unduplicated count districts between the 39% that agreed and 47% that somewhat agreed. These findings suggest that there may be differences in what districts with high unduplicated pupil counts and/or that are large districts are able to accomplish even with increased funding supports. J. Marsh et al. (2018) found that nearly three-fourths of superintendents, particularly those in districts with high-unduplicated student counts, strongly or somewhat agree that the LCFF has afforded fiscal flexibility to spend to meet their local needs and allowed the district to rethink priorities. However, there was a statistical difference ($p<0.05$) between those superintendents that strongly agree and somewhat agree. These findings suggest evidence that districts with large numbers of unduplicated students are budgeting and allocating funds in ways that allow them to meet the needs of students who need the most help, but that there are differences in superintendents' confidence levels that funding flexibility is leading to better attention to these students. Indeed, as my pilot study indicates, as discussed in Chapter I, large districts may struggle with meeting the needs of the students most impacted by inequitable funding issues, and unduplicated students generally, as evidenced by funding allocations and stated goals.

Chen and Hahnel (2017) compared per-pupil funding figures in the lowest and highest poverty quartile school districts with a general population of at least one hundred total students; notably LAUSD and LBUSD, the districts studied here, were among those LEAs identified.

Fiscal data were used to explore revenue fluctuations between 2003-04 to 2015-16 in the identified LEAs (Chen & Hahnel, 2017). The authors acknowledge that the LCFF lacks an intention to increase overall funding in schools but enacts a redistributive strategy that combats the ill effects from the Great Recession and seeks to return overall funding levels to 2007-2008 school year levels, plus inflation. The authors find an improvement in funding equity levels under the LCFF, while simultaneously noting challenges at the highest poverty quartile districts, difficulties in precisely accessing how districts spend funds, and that funding is still woefully low. The LCFF appears to be increasing equity and combating the decreased funding that some districts experienced during the Great Recession, California's funding strategy under the LCFF only seeks to return districts to those 2007-08 funding levels accounting for inflation but not increased costs.

Chen and Hahnel (2017) also found that the weight formula funding aspect has coincided with the districts with the highest concentrations of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages reaping the most funding increases as the economy improved after the Great Recession. While preliminary evidence suggests funding equity has improved in these districts since the implementation of the LCFF, those schools with the highest concentrated populations of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages continue to have less access to support personnel (e.g., counselors, librarians, and psychologists) and opportunities (e.g., rigorous courses, music, and computer science) in comparison to those schools with lower percentages of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. This might appear to show that the LCFF has had a positive impact on equity particularly for children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages.

However, it is "nearly impossible" to know how districts plan to spend allocated funds, how they spend funds, and whether the schools with the most children whose caretakers are paid

poverty wages in districts receive more funding given the long, dense nature of LCAPs and a lack of standardization for reporting school site expenditures (Chen & Hahnel, 2017). The California Department of Education (CDE) required template compounds the lack of clarity "and the state does not require districts to clearly show how the supplemental and concentration grant funds generated by high-need students are spent" (Chen & Hahnel, 2017, p. 2). Chen and Hahnel find that despite districts with the most children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages receiving more funds under the LCFF, the schools in these districts continue to offer lower educational opportunities and resources and that, despite the clarity of aims in the LCFF, there remains a lack of information on how districts allocate and spend funds. The dissertation explores the LCAP documents to gain any insights which connect the allocated funding, and thus spending priorities, to identified goals and connect these to services for Indigenous and Black students and unduplicated students broadly.

> Despite persistent policy and budget constraints, districts still have the power and responsibility to do things differently to close opportunity and achievement gaps. Even if they have the funds to create new programs, simply adding new programs on top of weak base services will do little to improve equity. The true power of California's new funding model and flexibility is that LCFF can be used as a lever for change. (Chen & Hahnel, 2017, p. 12)

Chen and Hahnel suggest that one way to increase equity under the LCFF is for districts to allocate more funding and flexibility to school sites, as some districts like the LAUSD have, through a version of the weighted formula to redistribute its funds to schools in a more equitable manner. As racial/ethnic disparities are a reality, some districts like San Diego Unified School District have made a commitment to eliminating institutional barriers which prevented Black and Latin* children from accessing college preparatory coursework (e.g., course which meet A-G

requirements) (Chen & Hahnel, 2017). Chen and Hahnel suggest that funding dollars should not be the only way in which equity be considered, encouraging LEAs to make changes in how they allocate people, time, and services for students who deserve a greater investment and schools and to be certain to document such changes in their LCAP. The LCAP is key component to understanding how the LCFF is being implemented at the LEA level and provides a manner for understanding how districts are using the LCFF to serve all students, but especially those like Indigenous and Black children.

2.4 Research Focusing on the LCAP

Some researchers have designed studies where the LCAP is an explicit focus of their analyses. Affeldt (2015) presents a reflective analysis of implementing the LCFF and evaluating LEA's LCAPs and identifies critical steps to be taken to enable "all students" to attend and graduate college or be career ready. Affeldt, who serves as the President of Emery Unified School District, oversaw creating an LCAP and implementing the LCFF in its first year, providing a reflection as a district administrator and educator. Affeldt also serves as a civil rights attorney with Public Advocates Inc., a notable legal organization involved in numerous educational issues throughout California, in San Francisco, working with local communities in advocating for changes to district LCAPs, positioning the author as an LEA leader, community advocate, and attorney.

Given these roles, Affeldt outlines where improvements can be made in the legal context of the LCFF. The LCFF established a proportionality concept where LEAs are required to proportionally increase or improve services for unduplicated students, the children whose presence triggers the increased funding, under Cal. Educ. Code § 42238.07(a) in comparison to

services for all students (Affeldt, 2015, p. 4).[5] In short, districts must spend more on children labelled as unduplicated students than it does for children not deemed to be unduplicated. While LEAs have an ultimate mandate to align their LEA mission to California's statewide priority areas, they "are given wide discretion in what goals they will set and how they will expend dollars to achieve those locally-derived goals" (Affeldt, 2015, p. 5). Affeldt suggests that LEAs are permitted to freely spend a small portion of their funds and that LEAs should want to strongly align to the eight state priorities given their multi-dimensional shift in accountability (Affeldt, 2015). Without a true increase in funding, the redistributive weighted formula aspect providing LEAs with equitable funding for children labeled as unduplicated pupils will struggle to meet its promise to these children and allocate funds appropriately.

Affeldt notes potential misallocation of funds by districts while also noting a lack of clarity for LEAs when allocating funds and outlining services. Affeldt acknowledges that districts are not permitted total flexibility in spending funds meant for the children identified as unduplicated students for whom LEAs receive additional funds. Affeldt suggests that the weighted student funding formula is important as it redistributes state funding and places an emphasis on student (sub)groups, but that funding inadequacy will ultimately undermine the LCFF's educational outcome equity components and risk the LCFF being branded as a failure. This reinforces the notion that while funding levels are increasing, funding under the LCFF is not intended to surpass pre-Great Recession levels which in the end is not an increase in funding for school systems.

[5] However, "charters have more freedom than school districts. Charter LCAPs are to be organized around the priorities set forth in their charter and need only address state priorities to the extent they are aligned to the grade levels served and the nature of the program established in the charter (Cal. Educ. Code § 47606.5)." (Affeldt, 2015, p. 6)

Ultimately Affeldt positions the LCAP as important as it is the "vehicle that transparently displays the district's educational and spending plan for addressing the 8 state priorities and provides both a platform for community engagement" (Affeldt, 2015, p. 6). However, Affeldt suggests that success will require that districts mindfully engage with students and parents to ensure that needed supports are identified, addressed, and implemented for learning opportunities to be effective. Affeldt cautions that for the LCAP to fulfill its intended role, LEAs cannot continue to outline minimal programming and expenditures and that clarity as to what counts as increasing services for unduplicated students is warranted.

Indeed, Affeldt points to specific issues with LEA-produced LCAPs. These problems relate to a lack of adherence to guidelines, issues with accessibility and transparency, and troubling outlining services for unduplicated students. Affeldt describes some better formulated "LCAPs in terms of accessibility, community involvement and thoughtful goal-setting and action-planning," (p. 11) but noted that no LEA produced an LCAP that adhered to every requirement. Further, the author notes that community groups expressed disappointment with districts due to a deficient capacity to meaningfully engage with parents and students. Affeldt notes that community members felt they were provided insufficient notice for LCAP meetings and that the meeting times were inconvenient. Despite LCAP shortfalls across LEAs, including the author's, there was the belief that shortfalls "can and should improve with time and experience and proper county office oversight" (Affeldt, 2015, p. 11).

Though the LCFF intends for additional funds to target students who deserve more assistance through the increased or improved services mandate, LEAs face pressures that will increase, particularly when the economy stalls, to deprive students of these additional funds (Affeldt, 2015). Affeldt suggested that for the 2014-15 school year, LAUSD potentially

neglected to allocate supplemental or concentration funds for some children identified as unduplicated students, essentially "depriving those students of $133 million in *actual* [emphasis added] new or improved services in 2014-15 alone" (p. 12). Such potential issues, Affeldt asserts, can be addressed with greater state guidance regarding the mandate to target children identified as unduplicated students and how to better represent services and funding allocations in the LCAP. Affeldt cautions that overall K-12 funding in California remains a glaring gap and suggests that the formula itself does not provide adequate additional funds. Again, Affeldt suggests that this identified deficit will upend the LCFF. The LCAP remains a cornerstone of possibility for LEAs to outline their services and collaborate with their communities to establish goals and services and thus a rich data resource.

2.5 LCFF Research Focusing on Funding with Respect to Adhering to Equitable Allocation and Transparency

Funding allocation and spending is an important aspect of the LCFF particularly for children identified as unduplicated pupils. LEAs are tasked with equitably serving these children to account for a system which has historically generally failed to provide children identified as unduplicated students with equal opportunities. As Affeldt raises some concerns with respect to a continuance of inadequate funding levels under the LCFF, due to a lack of a true increase in funding which will ultimately upend the LCFF, other scholars have raised concerns with respect to lack of LCAP transparency (e.g., The Education Trust–West, 2016) and blatant racial inequalities at the local level (e.g., Delahaye, 2016).

The Education Trust–West [TETW] (2016) reviewed forty 2015-2016 school year district LCAPs, including the Los Angeles Unified School District. The LCAPs were evaluated for transparency regarding the extent to which LEAs demonstrated that the additional supplemental

and concentration grant funds were targeted towards children identified as unduplicated students (TETW, 2016). TETW reported that it was difficult to understand how the districts were spending funds, including their additional supplemental and concentration funds, which made it difficult to track whether districts were indeed targeting children identified as unduplicated students. Further, the information reported was deemed difficult to read and not community friendly. Despite this, the report determined, by looking at annual update information, that the supplemental and concentration funds were "likely" underspent (TETW, 2016). Despite the complexity of the LCAP and underreporting, it is possible to gleam meaning from the documents and speak to whether LEAs are indeed allocating or spending money appropriately and whether those services are reaching the intended children.

The increased flexibility in programming and budgeting leads to broad interpretations which ultimately means the LCFF is prone to unintended, inequitable consequences (del Pozo, 2016). Delahaye (2016) believes that LEAs will mismanage funds because they have too much discretion despite intentions to establish equitable funding. Indeed, since the inception of the LCFF there have been complaints and lawsuits lodged against LEAs alleging the misappropriation of funds. As Affeldt suggested, Delahaye articulates that within the first year of the LCFF, advocates sought an injunction to prevent the Los Angeles Unified School District's LCAP from being implemented and alleged that the district would underspend over $400 million on unduplicated students.

Building off the legal history of California public school funding and the authority granted to LEAs under the LCFF, Delahaye (2016) examines issues with school funding under local control and offers recommendations of better implementation. Delahaye concludes that the LCFF ultimately aligns with the intention of Serrano v. Priest (1971), which essentially declared

that California must establish a funding strategy in California which did not provide less opportunities based on location, given its attention to provide children identified as unduplicated students with "the additional support and resources necessary to close the achievement gap" (p. 6). Such a conclusion suggests that a focus of the LCFF is to eliminate the "achievement gap" for children who have been historically denied access.

Delahaye acknowledges arguments supporting local funding control but notes that "blatant racial inequalities tend to manifest at the local levels," given long histories of local governments denying Students of Color education access and/or providing inferior access to education opportunities (p. 7). Delahaye warns that "the virtues of local control may always carry institutional racism whether or not it is intentional" (p. 7). Delahaye (2016) suggests that when education funds are mismanaged, children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, who are disproportionately Students of Color, are effectively discriminated against and work against the premise of the LCFF to eliminate differences in achievement through its focus on ensuring that unduplicated students receive an education they deserve. Further, the language of the statue for allocating the additional LCFF funds for children identified as unduplicated students is broad and "if not carefully interpreted gives localities unrestrained discretion over what it means to "increase or improve" services "in proportion" for these students (Delahaye, 2016, p. 8).

Overall, funding levels have increased for the districts with the highest poverty, yet there are reasons to remain concerned for Students of Color generally. H. Rose (2022) analyzes the relationship between revenue and the notion of poverty over three schools under the LCFF and highlights how some districts can raise more revenue to accumulate more funding than allocated under the LCFF, thus diminishing the intended reform. Those LEAs which tend to be able to

raise more revenue generally have more White students and/or children whose caretakers are paid more than living wages.

Since LCFF implementation, districts serving Students of Color are still receiving less funds than districts with majority White students. Lombardo (2019, February) cites California as one of twenty-one states where districts with mostly White students receive more funding than those with majority Students of Color. This finding suggests that the equity-minded focus of the LCFF still has not solved funding inequity when race/ethnicity are considered.

Considering that California public schools comprise a majority Students of Color and Indigenous, Black, and Latin* students are more likely to be categorized as children identified as unduplicated students this funding deficit remains concerning. As the LCFF fails to directly address race, this early data suggests that districts with large numbers of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and lower percentages of Students of Color population may be privileged with funding. In short, whilst not mentioning race, the LCFF appears to be benefitting non-Latin* White students in a state where the overwhelming majority are Students of Color.

2.6 Critical Approaches to Understanding the LCFF

While most of the LCFF research covered thus far can be characterized as compliance-focused, there has been research focused on integrating critical approaches to understanding the LCFF. Other studies of the LCFF also approach the law from a perspective focused on the impact of race and racism. Further, there have been approaches to understanding how the LCFF is functioning for Students of Color.

Daramola et al. (2022) draws on Critical Race Theory to understand district practices under the LCFF, while attending normative practices which assert that community engagement practices to be based on white middle-class values and deficit views of Communities of Color

and other communities. The authors analyze a subset of case study data where protocols to probe racism were included to address the manifestation and shaping of the LCFF community engagement process by racism. The authors incorporated the CRT concepts of interest convergence, whiteness as property, and voice to guide the analysis. Racism was present across the seven districts in many ways including whiteness as property, the right to exclude, and the appearance of racial justice (Daramola et al., 2022). Further, district administrators relied on racist ideologies or employed racist actions to avoid engaging with Communities of Color, whether consciously or not. The authors also note that without illuminating racial power and privilege, community engagement practices risk perpetuating racism.

Whilst the LCFF does not focus on Black students or any student by racial group, given racialized academic outcomes, researchers have promoted understanding how the LCFF and LCAPs are being positioned to promote more resources for Students of Color. And despite a tremendous literature corpus outlining persistent lower academic achievement and other metrics of Black children in California and nationwide, the LCFF does not require that LEAs focus on Black children (Clark-Louque et al., 2019). Through centering voices of those who district LCAP's are supposedly designed for, students, in a survey and phenomenological approach the authors' study offers ways to understand how Black students perceive their academic, school engagement, and safety or school climate experiences. The authors conclude that a lack of a policy remedy through the LCFF to address the needs of Black students, leaves district and school administrators unprepared to truly address these children's needs.

Greer and Kressler (2022) found that Black students are mentioned in seven of the eleven districts in their study, all of which have large percentages of Black children, but conclude that LEA actions, services, and expenditures lacked specification as to how they would support Black

students despite the LCAP being the only current mechanism to identify whether funds are appropriately spent as intended. There is a disconnect between the LCFF defined constructs of achievement, engagement, and school climate and how the students in the study applied the terms (Greer & Kessler, 2022). Such data calls into question climate data that LEAs report which may not be truly representative of students', or community members', feelings as the constituents may be operationally defining terms differently. Further, that even when an LEA LCAP mentions a students' race group, the district may fail to specify support that aims to provide services to children in that group.

2.7 LCFF Research Conclusions

Early research of the LCFF has also raised important issues with respect to successful implementation of the accountability measures (e.g., LCAP, community engagement, transparency). This research has also suggested there have been issues with appropriately targeting services for children identified as unduplicated students, notably youth in the foster care system. The data suggest that superintendents in large districts generally think positively about the LCFF and key equity-based aims about the law (e.g., focus on children identified as unduplicated students), but that there are statistical differences between those that strongly agree and somewhat agree. Further, larger LEAs tend to express more confidence in the alignment between their goals, services, and funding allocation to ensure student success. While funding has increased, particularly for LEAs with higher percentages of children identified as unduplicated students, these funding levels are only reaching pre-Great Recession levels plus inflation as planned under the LCFF. This failure to faithfully increase funding may eventually cause the LCFF to be deemed a failure as LEAs are not receiving adequate funding to truly serve students. Regardless, the LCFF affords LEAs an opportunity to develop and outline services in a

manner which more faithfully attends to the needs of those students who generally are denied access to opportunities and services.

Though provided increased autonomy, through LEA LCAPs there is a strong alignment to state priorities. There have been considerable issues with LCAPs that are not easily readable and contain clear information regarding funding distribution and establishing goals, actions, and services. These issues related to district LCAP clarity have undermined transparency, a key component of the LCFF. Though researchers have noted the density and vagueness of LCAP documents, it is still possible to discern important takeaways regarding funding allocation and spending with respect to services for children identified as unduplicated students.

At the state level, primary data suggests that LEAs with higher percentages of White children receive more funding under the LCFF signaling that the LCFF itself may be failing to distribute funding equitably to those who are most likely to be labeled as unduplicated students. Some scholars warn of the continued ill effects for Students of Color that can come with mismanaged funds at the local level given the historicity of racial inequalities manifestation regardless of intentionality. District leaders may (un)intentionally rely on racist or deficit ideologies when engaging with Communities of Color. Though LEAs may discuss Students of Color like Black students in their LCAP, they tend to fail to outline how designed goals, services, and funding allocations will benefit Black students. Such research reinforces the importance of addressing race and racism.

There is a need for studies that focus on race and draw implications of the LCFF and LCAP for Indigenous students, Black students, and other Students of Color (Nodine, 2022). This study adds to add to our understanding about the issues related to equity of educational

opportunity and resource allocation as outlined in district LCAPs for Black and Indigenous students and thus recognizes a need to explicitly focus on race.

2.8 Critical Race Theory and Education Policy

Race continues to be a factor in considering school achievement regardless of parental wages as student race matters even when parents are paid middle class wages.[6] Howard (2016) outlines a plethora of data which positions Black children as experiencing unique challenges in schools which often disrupt the learning opportunities and obstruct the education opportunities for these Black students. Howard ultimately makes an argument for reimagining schooling for the sake of the Black students' humanity and learning pursuits. Howard concludes that Black minds matter and schooling must support this. Noel (2002) reminds us that any discussion of Indigenous education in the United States must recall the intention of the US government to separate Indigenous persons from the white society onto reservations with an intention, particularly between 1820-1940, to surveil or exterminate Indigenous children rather than provide a legitimate education.

A decolonizing pedagogy situates the importance of social justice from a perspective serving working-class Indigenous and nonwhite people and recognizes the present day U. S. has "…reinforcing systems of colonial and capitalist domination and exploitation that enslaved Africans and dispossessed Indigenous populations throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries" (Tejeda et al., 2002, p. 10). Further, the decolonizing pedagogy also reminds that meanings are not neutral and "are always situated socially, culturally, and

[6] For example, Howard and Reynolds (2008) highlight on-going concerns about Black students in middle-class school settings and note that parent involvement is oft cited as a contributing factor to differential results in educational outcomes by race. However, the authors caution the need to consider the impact of cultural capital and differing ideas surrounding defining parental involvement when considering this potential impact.

historically, and they operate within the logic of differing ideologies that imply differing sets of social practices" (Tejeda et al., 2002, p. 9). Ultimately, these types of practices, in turn, tend to serve and sustain sets of interests, typically white interests, while simultaneously work against other interests, generally Black and Indigenous interests. In the argument for decolonizing pedagogy, the authors cite history and social science as ideal and relevant for uncovering these practices but note that neocolonial representations can be found in the learning of different topics. For example, in California, voters have passed propositions to roll back the already limited gains achieved through the Civil Rights movement and ban the teaching of home languages in classrooms which some interpret as *mere vestiges* of a persistent racial discrimination and social inequality in spite of determined efforts to uphold the American Dream and ideals, but these types of policies are reflections of historical practices designed to reproduce domination along racial and social class (Tejeda et al., 2002).

To solve issues that have racial implications, it is imperative that race be a genuine, explicit focus. The theoretical concept of Critical Race Theory (CRT) (e.g., Chapman, 2013; DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; R. Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995; G. López, 2003; Roithmayr, 1999; yosso, 2006; see also Delgado Bernal, 2002; Lynn & Parker, 2006; Parker & Lynn, 2002; Solórzano, 1998; Tate, 1997) allows an explicit focus on race to guide this project's focus. CRT asserts that race is not a biological fact, as science has dismissed the notion of racial differences, but a social construct with very real social significance with relevance in people's everyday lives (whether people acknowledge or recognize the significance) (e.g., Sablan, 2019; Brayboy, 2021; George, 2021). Benson (2022) acknowledges the current state of collective agitation regarding CRT, noting that this backlash is the result of perceived threats to white supremacy and the benefits that whiteness affords in the

U.S. However, CRT must not be reduced to branding exercises by those who wish to stifle the empowerment of Communities of Color by uphold racist ideologies and denying reality; CRT matters (Martinez, 2022).

CRT enables a researcher to maintain the stance that, unfortunately, racism is a normal part of the US society rather than being aberrant or individual (R. Delgado & Stefancic, 2013). Because racism is so entangled in our everyday social order, it requires an active approach to be recognized; otherwise, it continues to appear normal and natural to most (Ladson-Billings, 1999). A CRT foundation allows for racism and race to be forefronted and addressed while actively pushing back against notions of normality and fairness of current dominant structures and ways of being in education.

A CRT approach can be used to investigate accepted realities in education and to understand actions that are being implemented or taken which contribute to results such as educational outcomes. For example, Howard and Reynolds (2008) propose using CRT to interrogate Black males' education in terms of standardized testing and school discipline. Certainly, similar approaches using CRT have been applied to the American education of Black girls' (e.g., Evans-Winters & Esposito, 2010) and Indigenous students (e.g., Haynes Writer, 2008; Yohannan, Crossing, Aguilar, & Proctor, 2021). These types of approaches to using CRT in education highlight an importance to bringing a critical framework to understand true realities of the (mis)education of our Indigenous and Black students.

A CRT in education tenet focuses on a commitment to social justice where the classroom is acknowledged as a political place and thus there is a requirement for research to advance issues of social justice within schools (yosso, 2006). Another tenet, the centrality of experiential knowledge, calls for the knowledge and experiences that Persons of Color bring to the table to be

legitimized and viewed as a strength area for research and inclusion (yosso, 2006). These two tenets of CRT provide a foundation for an explicit focus on advancing social justice through recognizing the strengths and knowledge that Students of Color bring into classrooms. Further, there are choices made, which are apparent in LCAP documents, which display political choices which actively fail to support the educational needs of Black and Indigenous children. This gets actualized by a meaningful inclusion of Parents of Color in school resource distribution planning processes, distributing funding equitably, and ensuring educational opportunities across districts. For me, these tenets are pivotal for asserting educational improvement through active choice.

CRT is positioned by Roithmayr (1999) as a "revolutionary intellectual movement that puts race at the center of critical analysis" (p. 1). Conventional models pertaining to law and society call for race-neutrality in addressing concepts like equity and opportunity; further, they suggest that merit and merit standards are supposed to be race-neutral and objective. However, such standards and measures were created during a (more prominent) social context of racial exclusion by those who had social power and explicitly excluded Persons of Color, notably Black and Indigenous persons. As the classroom is the place "where knowledge is constructed, organized, produced, and distributed," (Roithmayr, 1999, p. 5) it continues to be a central site where social and racial power are constructed and ingrained. Thus, we should not and cannot be neutral about race. This study focuses on race and those who have been denied access to opportunity since this country's founding. Race-evasive policies and stances ignore the historical and current realities that Black and Indigenous children and persons face.

CRT can be used to understand the use of education policy and education laws to strip and subjugate Indigenous and Black people in the United States. "CRT asserts that laws and policies aimed at equity and equality suffer from interest convergence and only symbolically aid

Black peoples" (Nelson & Williams, 2019, p. 94). Further CRT confronts dominant narratives which purport neutrality or colorblindness. When CRT intersects with education policy and education laws there is an opportunity to apply critical evaluation of social implications related to contemporary, and historical, education practices (Nelson & Williams, 2019).

On the surface such policies appear to be meritocratic but tend to systemically work to disadvantage certain groups often based on race (Bradbury, 2020). There is solid rationale for "why policy requires analysis in terms of racial inequity" (Bradbury, 2020, p. 243) and as such race-evasive policy discourse is *problematic*. A CRT informed policy analysis can provide a framework to study the maintenance of racial inequity through policies often designed to systematically discriminate against groups like Indigenous and Black people (Bradbury, 2020).

For example, a CRT policy analysis can be positioned to answer a question like *how does this policy or finance structure damage or disadvantage Students of Color as groups or individuals?* or *does this policy advantage one group more so than another, and if so, what is the purpose of the imbalance?* (Bradbury, 2020). Further, this approach provides space for analysis of the *context of influence*, the area where policy develops, which allows for understanding the people involved as well as the truths that are established or reinforced in the process of creating policy; this process allows for questions like *how are those in power positioned as caring about racial equity (regardless of results) because of the policy?* (Bradbury, 2020).

Leong (2013) reminds us that Black people and some Indigenous people, racialized bodies, were thought to be property as an example of the power of whiteness to assert property ownership over land, space, and even human bodies. Further, white institutions and White people gave themselves the sole authority to "police their own boundaries by deciding who was and was not white" (Leong, 2013, p. 2159). Such exercise of the power of exclusion was essential and

continues today. Equal protection laws are heralded as color-blind and fair for all. These laws are an enduring example of whiteness as property as courts are frequently tasked with deciding whether something is *facially* neutral with respect to race (Leong, 2013). Though equal protection laws are positioned as being important for the rights of People of Color, such laws can be used to ensure that race is not considered in any circumstance. This facially neutral concept pinpoints race not being used to discriminate but also not being used to uplift. This colorblindness is a color-evasive tactic meant to protect "the property interest in whiteness by defending the status quo of the distribution of social resources" (Leong, 2013, p. 2160). Such tactics are harmful when it comes to school funding, education access, and education opportunity. These tactics are amplified for Black and Indigenous children who have historically been subjugated to exclusionary practices.

Further, Leong asserts that *racial capitalism*[7] has negative consequences for society and individuals given a reliance on racial identity commodification and because it displaces meaningful social reform in favor of superficial value assignment on Persons of Color. This commodification results from, sometimes well-intentioned, discussions regarding diversity which create social value for white institutions and White people to derive capital from racial identities belonging to Persons of Color (Leong, 2013). However, Persons of Color generally do not benefit nor does society (Leong, 2013). The theory of racial capitalism is an important lens to incorporated when evaluating laws, or institutions like LEAs, which provide the appearance of being interested in the progress of Persons of Color.

House (1999) suggests that such prevailing beliefs about the ability and character of Black people and other groups like Indigenous persons lead to education policies which have

[7] Defined as "the process of deriving social and economic value from the racial identity of another person" (Leong, 2013, p. 2152)

adverse effects on these children while operating under a guise of being fair or democratic. Regardless of active intention by those enacting policies, the entire education system has racial consequences and has been influenced by beliefs that White people have about Persons of Color, particularly Black people (House, 1999). While policies regarding school financing, district/school boundaries, or offered curricula have little or nothing to do with race, in-depth analysis of how such policies function in unison uncovers how these policies provide Indigenous and Black children with inferior education as "American education as a whole functions as a racist system, whatever its virtues might be" (House, 1999, p. 11).

Centering race and racism while directly confronting whiteness and white supremacy are key ideas from CRT which hold value. Decentering whiteness is critical for a justice-oriented approach (Randall, 2021). Whiteness maintains a preferred status by presenting it as objective, neutral, and/or invisible often through coded discourses surrounding race (Randall, 2021). Whiteness tends to define what is and what is not, always eschewing anything not deemed to support whiteness itself. These discourses protecting whiteness led to benefits (e.g., access to social services like education) better known as white privilege which tend to be unacknowledged (Randall, 2021). "Whiteness covertly positions white people, white ideas/values, white experiences and behaviors as superior" (Randall, 2021, p. 84). Randall argues that a commitment to neutrality, with respect to assessment design, helps sustain *whiteness-as-superior* biases when assessing design assessments. I argue that a commitment to neutrality, or race-evasiveness, in education policy helps sustain whiteness and white supremacy and actively works to ensure that Indigenous and Black students never achieve equity in access to education.

Equity-focused policies, particularly when race-evasive, typically fail to meet their full promise, given lack of intentional focus on race and racism, and their entrenchment in society

and institutions, and adequate financial teeth. CRT allows for recognition that racial progress cannot occur with policy alone and that white privilege must be addressed and recognized (G. López, 2003). A major issue with Civil Rights era discourse, in which CRT maintains roots, for example, is that it reduces racism to an individual construct rather than one that is societally (re)constructed and upheld in the larger social order (G. López, 2003). Belief systems that focus on overt individual acts erase race and racism from being connected to larger issues like education access and equitable funding. G. López suggests that "given the rapidly changing demographic profile of the United States, the study of the politics of education has never been of greater importance" (p. 71) especially since the *permanence* of racism continues to be absent in policy discussions. There is no compelling reason that education policy cannot and should not directly address race and racism. Policy has a role in perpetuating racism through colorblind rhetoric and through failures to address race and racism. It is imperative that race be a specific focus given that there is a consistent focus on reporting educational outcomes and standardized test scores by race/ethnicity.

DeCuir and Dixson (2004) assert that the legacy of racism makes schooling problematic for Black students. In this study CRT is used to examine Black students' counterstories in attending an elite, predominantly White student-serving independent school. The students' stories demonstrate how racism is manifested in different educational contexts and how race and racism personally affect students (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004) and illustrate how CRT can be used to uncover covert racist practices and the policies that support them. For the authors, a goal is to make these practices and policies transparent to provide space for students, parents, and community members to devise strategies of resistance.

Accordingly, when these things are uncovered, there is value in efforts to directly address and remove such constructs from policy itself and dismantle the practices altogether. CRT demands a focus on racialized components often embedded in discourse itself. This dissertation study directly analyzes discourse under a CRT framework with a focus on Indigenous and Black children. The study adds to the uncovering of racism embedded in policies whilst ultimately advocating for the empowerment of Communities of Color and removing negative constructs from use in policy and institutions.

CRT in education brings attention to ways of thinking (i.e., cultural deficit thinking) which negatively positions Communities of Color based on race and traits which are often deemed to be uncouth. More troubling, cultural deficit ideologies place a blame on children and communities rather than on institutions. Bertrand, Perez, and Rogers (2015) note how education policy insiders in their study appeared to rely on cultural deficit discourses, placing blame on students, their families, and their communities as the source for their lack of academic success while also acknowledging structural and historical issues which have set groups of people up for failure. Buoyed by racial stereotypes, cultural deficit thinking places the blame on individuals, families, and communities, not social or structural issues, through assertions that Communities of Color have ways of living and socializing (e.g., nonstandard English and non-standard familial structures) that perpetuate poverty and a lack of academic success (yosso, 2006). Indeed, such cultural deficit models have yielded popular terms like *at risk* and *disadvantaged* to label Students of Color like Black and Indigenous students. Such an emphasis in policy and in classrooms sends a message to students that there is something different or wrong with them and that if they could just learn to be different, their lives would change. Further, that this is the only way to attain educational success and opportunity. These models ignore the possibility of

different structures to be enacted in schools and through policy that builds on the inherent strengths of Communities of Color in ways that the current system acquiesces toward middle class White American families and values.

As some researchers who have studied the LCFF concluded, in general, across educational contexts LEAs tend to fail to meaningfully engage communities and incorporate negative assumptions about Communities of Color despite a commitment to serve and work alongside such communities. Indeed scholars (e.g., Cooper, 2009; Hetrick et al., 2019; yosso, 2006) note the cultural capital that Communities of Color maintain is often dismissed and devalued in educational settings. However, research supports that Communities of Color have immense resources which can be leveraged to benefit educational services. While recounting a central role of Black parents assisting to improve large school systems in the U.S. through grassroot efforts and activism, Cooper (2009) notes that there has been a lack of recognition of the value of Black parental engagement. Educators and scholarship alike have failed to emphasize the positive (un)traditional efforts of Black parents, particularly Black mothers, and communities to encourage school improvement and resist institutional racism (Cooper, 2009).

Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit), an offshoot of CRT focusing explicitly on Indigenous people, also informs my study. TribalCrit recognizes three types of knowledge: cultural knowledge (ways of being and knowing), knowledge of survival (related to accomplishing and a willingness to change), and academic knowledge (knowing acquired in academic institutions) (Brayboy, 2006). Brayboy (2021) notes that published, in the Western sense, roots of TribalCrit can be traced back to 1916 and Arthur C. Parker whose work points out that if the United States government failed to respectfully treat and acknowledge Indigenous peoples and worldviews that Indigenous people would continue to remain in a struggle.

Unfortunately, Parker's premonition has come to pass, and the struggle of Indigenous people, though distinct, can be seen as intrinsically linked with that of Black people.

Through an Indigenous lens, power is a form of sovereignty (e.g., self-identification, self-education) and "rooted in a community's conceptions of its needs and past, present, and future" (Brayboy, 2006, p. 435). A TribalCrit approach in education research attempts to improve learning environments for Indigenous students by uncovering inconsistencies within structural systems and institutions (Brayboy, 2006); K-12 districts and schools are such structural systems and institutions.

Further, basic tenets of TribalCrit include that colonization is endemic to United States society; white supremacy, colonialism, and imperialism constitute a guiding foundation for U.S. policies toward Indigenous people; that when studied through an Indigenous lens, concepts like culture, knowledge and power take on new meanings; and, that educational and governmental policies are intertwined in achieving a (problematic) goal of assimilation (Brayboy, 2021). Therefore, TribalCrit brings colonization into the analysis as a pervasive societal component that is relevant when analyzing education discourses.

CRT allows researchers to address issues that have racial implications whilst making race an explicit focus. CRT establishes that race is not a biological fact, but rather a social construct with social significance and implications. With this, CRT asserts that racism is structurally a normal part of society and cannot be reduced to individualism. Centering race and racism to combat the effects of white supremacy is an important strategy. CRT promotes an active approach to understanding how white supremacy and whiteness function under guises of neutrality. For this reason, a CRT approach dismisses colorblind approaches to policy. CRT allows a researcher to understand how whiteness controls access to racial justice. There are

racialized consequences to enacting policy, regardless of whether race is explicitly invoked. Race-evasiveness in education policy negatively impacts outcomes for Indigenous and Black students. CRT permits a lens on deficit ways of thinking which often negatively values Communities of Color and blames these communities for (perceived) shortfalls which should be seen as positives. TribalCrit centers colonization and encourages uncovering inconsistencies with education systems to improve conditions for Indigenous children. Whilst all these tenets of CRT and TribalCrit are important and elements will be apparent through this research study, the findings will primarily be guided by two tenets.

First, that racism is ordinary and exists in all institutions including education. This study asserts a need to acknowledge the commonplace nature of racism and seeks to advance knowledge on racism's operation in education policy. Second, that there is an inherent value to experiential knowledge from People of Color. This study acknowledges that perspectives coming from Persons of Color, particularly Indigenous and Black people, tend to be missing in the policy development process and advocates for the intentional inclusion and honoring of Indigenous and Black perspectives which seek to uplift Black and Indigenous peoples.

2.9 Quantitative Critical Race Theory to Understand Education Issues

Quantitative work continues to be seen by some (e.g., policymakers) as more valid or informative than qualitative work. Singer (2019) cautions that the quantitative educational research arc should not be rigid, but rather adaptable with changes over time. Singer "asks us to question whether our laser focus on causal inference—which will remain crucially important—has crowded out other methods for studying equally important—yet not necessarily causal—questions" (Singer, 2019, p. 570). Critical quantitative work must have a place in quantitative educational research.

While quantitative inquiries(e.g., Furquim & Deane et al., 2022; Jacob et al., 2018) can address research questions which consider critical issues of importance without explicitly using critical quantitative analytical methods. Critical quantitative work can complement qualitative work by offering mathematical data to support arguments about the prevalence of institutional and methodological issues. For example, critical quantitative methods have been used to study queer and trans undergraduate student retention (Garvey, 2020); to discuss methodological issues with the collection of gender and sex data (Garvey, et al., 2019); and to challenge normative educational research practices (Garcia & Mayorga, 2017). This practice is known as quantitative critical race theory, critical quantitative research, or simply QuantCrit. Garcia, N. López, and Vélez (2018) covers the legacy of QuantCrit traditions overtime, asserting a long lineage ripe with methodological opportunities which would allow for researchers to disrupt and address racism with quantitative methods. QuantCrit allows for an explicit intention to address issues of equity and access for Persons of Color and other groups.

However, quantitative work that achieves this goal must consider the issues discussed above. While positionality statements are generally commonplace in qualitative research practices, quantitative research tends to be positioned as neutral. Gillborn et al. (2018) assert that "*numbers are no more obvious, neutral, and factual than any other form of data*" (p. 163) and statistics result from similar veins of social construction as interview data where there is the potential to obscure or mispresent issues which could be vital for social justice. Crawford (2019) challenges ideas which suggest that quantitative data can evaluated without considering the racial and political landscape in which it was created.

Generally, critical quantitative work has aims to: question analytic research and offer differing quantitative practices to better describe those who have failed to be adequately

represented in research; conduct research that is culturally relevant by studying people in their context; and use quantitative data to reveal inequities and while also uncovering the perpetuation of systemic inequities and inequalities by identifying the roles of institutions or social environments (Wells & Stage, 2015). A critical perspective in quantitative analysis heavily influences the work and findings (Wells & Stage, 2015). Critical quantitative studies, especially those focused on race, often draw on frameworks like CRT (e.g., Covarrubias, 2011; Garcia et al., 2022; Teranishi, 2007).

Broadly, quantitative critical race theory is an application of CRT to using and understanding quantitative data and the approach can be shaped by a clear series of questions (Castillo & Gillborn, 2020). In essence, a quantitative critical race theory approach does not superficially reject numbers or statistics nor promote numerical data as neutral or having an enhanced status (e.g., Gillborn et al., 2018; Castillo & Gillborn, 2020).

Sablan (2019) suggests though quantitative methods tend to be thought of as being without bias and helpful in addressing issues of equity and access for all Students of Color, infusing CRT principals into this work introduces criticality and reminds a researcher of the white supremacist origins of such data. CRT as a theory or methodology can be leveraged as a tool when collecting and analyzing all data, including quantitative data (Sablan, 2019). When CRT is used with quantitative data, methods like descriptive statistics can be leveraged to document racial inequity (Sablan, 2019).

Wells and Stage (2015) offer several examples of research using critical quantitative approaches to address issues of equity (e.g., Teranishi, 2007). They note that past work using critical quantitative frameworks have been attentive to issues related to gender, US citizenship status, children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, and, primarily, race/ethnicity. The

authors note that while race/ethnicity has been a focus, there are racial and ethnic subgroups that have been ignored in higher education and in critical quantitative research. Important groups have been overlooked (e.g., Indigenous persons); "marginalized subgroups are precisely those that can and should be examined through a critical quantitative lens" (Wells & Stage, 2015, p. 104). This study uses CritQuant to understand Indigenous and Black children in the case study districts.

Covarrubias (2011) uses publicly available US Census data to disaggregate educational outcomes by gender, U.S. citizenship classification (e.g., born in the US, naturalized citizen, or noncitizen), and economic class to report educational trajectories for Mexican-ancestry people (Chicana/os). Familial income, equally distributed across four quartiles, is used as a proxy for class given the constraints of the Census data which lacks a more direct measure for economic class. The author uses Crenshaw's (1989) CRT framework of intersectionality and Solórzano et al.'s (2005) discussion of the Chicana/o educational pipeline together with quantitative analysis to address their research questions and identify intersectionality. Covarrubias was able to present nuanced results that showed variance in educational attainment for Chicana/os that differed depending on the individual's set of characteristics (gender, US citizenship classification, and social class).

Garcia, Vélez, and Huber (2022) argue that race and gender matter greatly for Chicanas and these attributes must be strongly integrated into quantitative analyses involving Chicana students. By integrating a critical race feminista quantitative praxis to analyze U.S. Census data, the authors were able to reconceptualize the notion of educational attainment and occupational outcomes from being solely the result of individual merit or hard work to reflect a reality which includes white supremacy and patriarchy. Through telling a more nuanced and whole story, the

authors conclude that colonial processes created patterns that consign Chicanas into systems of labor that take no account of Chicana experience or education status. While noting that these forms of exploitation are stronger for those without college degrees, the authors point out that the feminization of the workforce impacts Chicanas without recognized residency in the United States regardless of their educational achievement. Such critical quantitative research points to the fact that there can be a greater story, particularly with respect to meaningful social labels like race and gender identity, to be told when completing quantitative analyses.

Teranishi (2007) introduces a notion that between-group quantitative approaches have limited what we know about how one's race/ethnicity impacts educational outcomes and opportunities. Teranishi disaggregates Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander populations by ethnic group, wealth, and immigration status while applying a critical framework analyzing quantitative data related to achievement. By doing critical work intentionally designed to examine intragroup differences, Teranishi disrupts an assumption central to quantitative methods, that there is some level of consistency across (broad) racial groups. Teranishi pontificates that:

> Research designs that are commonly applied to the study of Black, Latino, Native American, and Asian American students neither *promote a better understanding* [emphasis added] about any individual racial population nor *provide a perspective* [emphasis added] that allows us to constructively improve their educational experiences or outcomes. (p. 38)

Therefore, Teranishi uses CRT with quantitative methods to critically examine assumptions, often unchallenged and unquestioned, that are made about Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander students. This research shows that using a critical perspective in quantitative approaches significantly implicates how researchers conceptualize the racial

experiences of (sub)groups and extends this point to suggest hidden distinctions within other racial groups as well. Therefore, as my study broadly speaks to Black and Indigenous students, there is reason to believe there are vast intragroup differences and dynamics that LEAs should be attentive to, and that the process of serving children in particular (sub)groups begin with acknowledging the groups and then honoring the full intersectionality of group members. This study seeks to promote a better understanding of Indigenous and Black students by investigating how two districts are attentive to their collective needs.

2.10 Critical Policy Analysis as a Tool to Understand Educational Issues

Scholars maintain a heavy focus on education and school reform related to topics like teacher education programs, curriculum, and in classroom activities, particularly related to race and racism for Students of Color. For example, Case and Joubert (2020) acknowledge a disruptive political climate as a foundation and highlight racial indifference and tacit oppression coming from education leadership. The authors do this by using a narrative which positions their physical bodies to showcase how resistance can look from the teacher perspective when those educators are themselves living in bodies which are like those being subjected to violence in classrooms and communities. Such work highlights the importance of using research to focus on classrooms and teachers. However, it is also important to research education policy and its impact for racialized persons.

Therefore, another theoretical and analytic lens that I bring to this study is Critical Policy Analysis (CPA). Diem and Brooks (2022) point out that more inclusive and equitable education policies and practices could be achieved when space for alternative strategies is established through practices which allow for policy to be understood through critical lenses. In fact, it is *crucial* for an education policy analysis to explore connections between education and

(counter)movements regarding dominance in context of a larger society (Apple, 2019). Together with CRT, and CRT offshoots, this study conducts a policy analysis which centers the importance of race and acknowledges racism as structural and expected. CPA and CRT provide a theoretical foundation which guides the analytical approaches to the data.

Diem, Young, and Sampson (2019) calls for researchers who wish to question the nature of policy, including its creation and impact, to incorporate a critical policy analysis approach. CPA explicitly pushes back on traditional approaches to education policy, exploring the difference between policy rhetoric and practice reality and the development and roots of policies, connecting policy design and implementation to complexities in contexts and systems and, how resources and power are distributed (Diem, Young, & Sampson, 2019). CPA offers greater depth of policy analyses and results in creating better policy by understanding policy differently (Diem, Young, & Sampson, 2019).

Maguire (2019) notes that at times education policy results in untoward consequences, issues of equity, and socially unjust outcomes which are further complicated by how education policy itself tends to be created. Lauder (2020) suggests that education policy which could work for all children requires a change in political culture and its reliance on neoliberalism. Farley, Leonardi, and Donnor (2021) add that political distraction, where true aims are hidden behind rhetoric meant to placate and distract from broader societal issues, is deeply ingrained in political culture and policymaking. These researchers call attention to the policy creation process and those who create policy. A CPA approach allows for explicit attention to how a policy comes to fruition which could provide nuanced insight into a policy may fail to address the needs of Indigenous and Black students.

Gillborn (2020) notes political movements can create public pressure leading to those in power feeling compelled to enact changes in response, yet these responses tend to be short-lived as institutions, and the people, tend to revert to the racist norms. Gillborn (2020) suggests that while there is literature which examines how policy reinforces and extends white interests, that there is a lack of literature which examines "policymaking in terms of individual biographies, perceptions, and actions of the politicians themselves." Whiteness is not simply an element within systems, whiteness exists in the assumptions and actions of people making policy (Gillborn, 2020).

This study uses critical policy analysis to uncover policy development and understand the difference between policy rhetoric and practice reality. This study seeks to highlight that policy itself, irrespective of the enacting institutions and persons, maintains a vital role in impacting education and dictating what education through reform efforts look like for Indigenous and Black children. This study uses a critical policy analysis approach to explore assumptions steeped in whiteness and negative evaluations of Persons of Color broadly through discourse itself. This study also explicitly uses tenets of critical policy analysis, which will be discussed in Chapter 3, to explore the actions of politicians, biographies of persons, and legal actions to better understand the Local Control Funding Formula policy.

2.11 Critical Discourse Analysis and Policy

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a methodological approach which allows for a diverse representation of data, focusing on gaining meaning through texts. Blommaert (2005) notes that a central component of CDA is power, especially power that is institutionally reproduced. Discourse itself is an instrument of power which is socially constitutive and conditioned (Blommaert, 2005). Wodak (2011) notes that CDA's general purpose is to analyze

transparent and hidden structural relationship markers of "dominance, discrimination, power, and control as manifested in language" (p. 53).

When leveraged as an analytic framework, CDA allows for text to be analyzed in ways which honor the series of choices that are made and position the discourse as a product of social meaning. Policy itself is created in and steeped in discourse and therefore, a CPA approach can benefit from a theory of language and tools meant to analyze language choices. In this sense, CDA is useful to realize a CPA approach to textual analysis while also being attentive to context. While how CDA is being used as an analytic framework will be discussed further in Chapter 3, it is important to consider ways that CDA has been successfully applied to education policy analyses. Two prominent literature reviews have traced the use of CDA in education, including policy analysis.

Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, et al. (2005) reviewed 46 educational scholarship studies that used, and explicitly named, CDA between 1983-2003. The authors outline examples of studies analyzing policy documents (e.g., Ailwood & Lingard, 2001 and Davis, 1997) which often failed to note which analytic procedures were used to analyze the texts or reach conclusions (Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, et al., 2005).

In a subsequent review of literature, Rogers, Schaenen, et al. (2016) found 257 published articles between 2004-2012 that used a CDA in education. Notably, the authors noted that 21% of the studies in their sample were on educational policy and 11% with a racism/antiracism sociopolitical focus. Relatedly, the authors found that nearly three-fourths of the educational policy articles in their sample provided *minimal* or zero description of their analytic procedures. There is the opportunity for studies using CDA to shape policy and practice interventions in educational contexts (Rogers, Schaenen, et al., 2016).

Scholars (e.g., Apple, 2019; Fairclough, 2013; Lester & Paulsen, 2018; Liasidou, 2008; Young & Diem, 2018) have called Critical Discourse Analysis a well-accepted approach to complete a Critical Policy Analysis. Young and Diem (2018) note that those engaging in a CPA are more likely to use qualitative research approaches to engage more deeply in the research. And CDA is a popular choice to complete a CPA approach which includes bringing in theoretical frameworks that speak to policy issues. Scholars (e.g., Taylor, 2004; C. Wilson et al., 2019; Woodside-Jiron, 2004) use CPA aims to guide analysis and inquiry of education policy. Some scholars (see Taylor, 2004; Lester, Lochmiller, & Gabriel, 2017), note that approaches in CDA are useful in conducting critical policy research. Though policy scholars have investigated how particular policy issues are identified within the policy process, the policy itself is constituted in language.

CDA is useful for policy analysis given its usefulness to look at micro-analytic and macro-analytic concerns (Lester, Lochmiller, & Gabriel, 2016; Lester, Lochmiller, & Gabriel, 2017). Education policy analysts have used CDA "to examine underlying issues of power, social inequality, (re)production of dominance, as well as the formation of identities within policy 'talk' and/or legislative texts" (Lester, Lochmiller, & Gabriel, 2016, p. 2). Indeed, it has been said that CDA "could perhaps be characterized as the dominant discourse analytic approach used by education policy scholars (Lester, White, & Lochmiller, in press)" (Lester, Lochmiller, & Gabriel, 2017, p. 2). In education policy, scholars have used critical frameworks and perspectives to call attention to (in)equity in addition to specific student subgroups like children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, LGBTQ students, and plural lingual children, all in the name of determining whose interests the policy serves (Lester, Lochmiller, & Gabriel, 2016).

Liasidou (2008: 495) uses CDA as an emancipatory research tool to transcend the boundaries of traditional analytic tools to make "the micro-technologies of power inscribed in the linguistic utterances that create and sustain the inequalities of power" (p. 495) transparent as evidenced in two official policy documents intending to shift towards an inclusive education in Cyprus. The author showed that special education policymaking is intertwined within a system of complicated power relations, most notably one which subjugates "normalization" onto differently abled learners. Notably, Liasidou (2008) analyzes text that presents a focus on learners' presumed deficiencies gauged against a notion of normality. Though the Cyprus policies were meant to advocate for children with special education needs, Liasidou shows how conditional clauses construct a reinforcement of normality that undercuts and contradicts the conveyed policy intention.

Diem, Good, et al. (2022) uses CDA and the notion of interest divergence, to complete a CPA of integration policies which provides an understanding of discourses regarding race and school climate. This approach allows the authors to highlight the importance of rhetoric and its role in construing racial discourses. Analyzing three plans from three different school districts across the United States where Students of Color are the majority and there is a history of desegregation and integration efforts, the authors strongly conclude that "discourse matters" (p. 23). Highlighting specific language choices within each policy allowed for this conclusion, for example, by noting the use of terms like *diversity* juxtaposed against school district actions, which undermine representations of diversity, through implementing race-evasive solutions. Ultimately, the authors show that there is an importance is situated context by looking "within and beyond policy documents to understand creation, implementation, and in some cases, dismantling of district integration initiatives" (Diem, Good, et al., 2022, p. 25).

Nikolaidis (2022) analyzes the US Education Department's Federal Commission on School Safety report to highlight how white supremacist ideologies are entrenched in the language of this education policy document using a framework incorporating critical policy and critical discourse analyses. The author also notes how language in the Supportive School Discipline Initiative of 2011, which intended to project a social justice orientation, contained deficit-ascriptive language, particularly with respect to Black children. This realizes deficit ideologies about why Students of Color and other groups display disadvantaged results. Nikolaidis also discusses evidence of the use of dichotomous thinking between Students of Color and other students which serve to present a mutually exclusive and hierarchal relationship between these groups. The author concludes that, "concerning policy formulation, we must challenge the hegemonic white supremacist discourse that pervades policy, conceals the significance of race, and facilitates the uninterrupted operation of white supremacy" (Nikolaidis, 2022, p. 18).

Woodside-Jiron (2004) uses CDA as a tool to understand the operation of power in public policy by completing a critical analysis of changes in California's third grade reading policy between 1995 and 1997. Through this analysis, Woodside-Jiron (2004) shows that power influences social change by attempting to create consensus using persons and 'research' positioned as experts. Woodside-Jiron shows how CDA can be used to uncover ways that policy incorporates dimensions of power to control a narrative.

Brown et al. (2010) use CRT as a lens (theoretical framework) supporting the CDA analytical approach to uncover biases related to class and race in three different public school settings. The authors noted a larger contextual theme, the federal legislation *No Child Left Behind,* and discourses and practices that were established and popularized with the policy.

Despite claims to be "color-blind," Brown et al. found that the policy works to maintain historical hierarchies (e.g., race, class, gender identity) while concurrently presenting a notion of equal treatment for all.

Snyder (2020) uses CRT, specifically the notion of whiteness itself as property, alongside CDA to portray intersections between plural lingual education and racial oppression in the United States to evaluate impact of three Washington plural lingual education policies which disproportionately impacts People of Color. Synder uncovers how white as property permeates the laws through the right to exclude and determine who counts as a plural lingual learner and when they can shed the label. Further, the failure to address or account for race in the policies allowed for conceptualizing concepts like "marginalized" as neutral or without cause. And the was deficit-oriented discourse which positioned English-speaking as the normative and the use of surveillance through assessments.

My study seizes these opportunities by evaluating the Local Control Funding Formula relying on CDA as a methodological approach. This research will describe analytic procedures which will position how texts are analyzed and which analytic approaches or techniques are used to reach conclusions.

2.12 Systemic Functional Linguistics and Policy

As "power construed as responsibility implies that an individual focuses on social concerns, such as being sensitive to others' feelings and sharing important resources" (Scholl et al., 2015, p. 325). The authors make the case that power is often not direct and is related to the processing of abstract language cues whereby individuals experiencing power process the information through processes that are automatic.

Further, “because law depends so heavily on language, its continuous spoken or written text provides a broad opportunity for discourse analysts” (Shuy, 2003, p. 822). I align with the viewpoint that asserts to complete a CDA approach, and for those results to be impactful, researchers must use theory-based analytic tools targeting language. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) fills this call as it is a theory of language with analytical tools. However, SFL also positions language as a social practice and aligns well with critical social perspectives particularly under a CDA approach (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; O’Grady, 2019).

Schleppegrell (2012b) explores how analyzing discourse used in mathematics allows a deeper understanding of the role language plays in teaching, learning, and doing mathematics processes, thus allowing insight into issues of equity. Schleppegrell (2012b) describes specific linguistics tools for exploring issues of equity of access, achievement, power, and identity in mathematics classrooms and curricula. Some linguistic tools highlighted (e.g., modality and mood of the Appraisal framework) may also prove to be impactful in analyzing district documents for issues of equity, power, and achievement. An analysis of modality and mood can assist uncover how students are positioned (Schleppegrell, 2012b).

Remling (2018) conceptualizes three related documents as a Genre chain when their interconnected text sequence contributes to policy adaptation discourse. Building on Fairclough’s work, Remling positions Genre chains as a significant component of social change. Remling notes that being able to trace analytical meaning across policy iterations can help uncover important text transformations or idiosyncrasies. Through a Genre chain analysis, one can parse through “implicit marginalizing political logics behind the policies” which allows for a reorienting of the meaning within the known context(s) (Remling, 2018, p. 10). As Remling (2018) notes, when texts are of the same Genre, they share Genre specific characteristics. Like

Remling, I seek to interrogate specific moments which may be difficult to identity in an authoritative text like the LCAP.

Social actor categories have been explicitly used to carry out critical analysis of racist discourse (van Leeuwen, 2008) and policy documents (Saarinen, 2008a; Saarinen, 2008b). Theorizing upon the ways which social actors can be represented, van Leeuwen puts forth a Social Actor Network to represent how social actors can be included or excluded, which also noting that choices are not rigidly either or as "boundaries can be blurred deliberately, for the purpose of achieving specific representational effects…" (p. 53).

Hood and Martin (2007) explore the role of SFL Appraisal tools Attitude and Graduation. The authors use the tools to draw attention to the ways that values or attitudes can be expressed and how those expressions can be direct or indirect and how further how the expressions can be adjusted by words choices which grade or tune them up or down.

Rashidi and Hosseini (2019) use SFL, identifying the processes and participants, to investigate policymaker perceptions present in Iran's language policy document in the context of the larger policy the National Document of Education. The authors conclude that political and social factors impact policymaker decisions contributing to a lack of correlation between decisions made and policymaker belief and value systems.

Díaz and Deroo (2020) use discourse analysis with SFL tools to analyze language choices in their examination of the representation of Latin* peoples across three 11th grade U.S. history textbooks used in Florida. Using SFL to examine ideologies and power in textbooks, the authors analyzed verb processes to reveal language choices potential roles in shaping reader perception.

CDA is a useful tool to research change and policy, particularly in a context of social change that is led by policy proliferation and discourse and to gain understanding on language

and power for social democratic ends (Taylor, 2004). Taylor (2004) uses CDA with SFL tools to analyze how language works in three different policy texts associated with the Queensland State Education 2010 strategy to reform education in the state. Taylor (2004) demonstrates, using a Genre chain of analysis, how subtle discursive shifts that could be traced through the three documents in the set marginalized social democratic discourses and how the discourse of public education ultimately was silenced as it disappeared in the implementation process of the policy. This research provides a path for recognizing how, through discursive shifts, policy documents may marginalize (backgrounded presence in implementation) or silence (lack of presence in implementation) in ways that may prove to be harmful and have untoward consequences.

Jimenez-Silva et al. (2016) uses CDA and SFL as methodological approaches to analyzing how three Arizona school districts and the Arizona department of education interpret a voter passed language policy impacting students identified as English language learners over time across texts, discourses, and contexts. The authors use the SFL Appraisal tool *modality* to relate the textual meanings and contrast the texts between the districts. By examining the modality of word choice, the authors show how such choices direct action in schools and reveal levels of obligation that are then enacted by schools and teachers.

The authors' analysis of the ways that districts implemented a restrictive, and racist, educational policy was able to show how local context, notably social and cultural, mattered. Based on law alone, the texts should be very similar if not the same, yet the analysis showed how different they were (Jimenez-Silva et al., 2016). If the authors had used only one district text, they would have been limited in uncovering a range of differences. Education policy impacts students and other stakeholders, but it may be limited in its direct impact as intermediaries like

local districts hold more acute authority in relaying the policy, thus there is great importance in understanding how text is conveyed at the local level (Jimenez-Silva et al., 2016).

This study uses SFL to actualize a textual analysis of the district documents. The analysis is bolstered by using a theory of language which comes with specific analytical approaches and tools for meaning making. The study's analysis relies on the Appraisal framework, Modality, Genre analysis, and the Social Actor Network to make sense of the data.

2.13 Connection to the Research Questions

This study engages in analysis of the historicity of the LCFF policy creation process and the systemic realities which inform K-12 education in California. This information then informs the analysis of the district's LCAP documents and the LEA's choices in completing their respective LCAP. Important to this historical understanding includes analyzing policy, persons, and actions. Together, the theories introduced in this chapter provide a conceptual framework which informs my analysis which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

This review of research has shown that the LCFF is positioned as an important policy with potentially transformative components, however there is little work attending to how or whether LEAs are being attentive to the needs of Indigenous and Black students. A CRT approach in education is useful in understanding education policy and a policy's impact for Black and Indigenous children. A QuantCrit method allows for quantitative data to be positioned to disrupt racism and add nuance to how Indigenous and Black children's existence and performance can be understood. CDA is a foundational CPA approach to understanding education policy and when informed by CRT can be leveraged to decipher the reality of a policy impact for Black and Indigenous children. SFL provides a set of analytic tools which actualize a

CDA analysis of the discourse of the policy documents. This review of research has described how these different theories are interrelated and work together to address the aims of this study.

Chapter 3 Methods

Building on the review of literature and theory in Chapter 2, my study asks the following Research Questions. Research Question 1: *How do two neighboring California school district's education planning and accountability documents reveal the goals, funding allocations, and educational opportunities and outcomes for Indigenous and Black students?* Research Question 1A: *How does the historicity of the Local Control Funding Formula, specifically key moments and social actors, contribute to an understanding of the documents and students' educational opportunities and outcomes?* Research Question 2: *What does a quantitative critical analysis of district accountability data reveal about the (in)equity of funding for Indigenous and Black students?* Research Question 3: *What types of messages regarding Black and Indigenous children are communicated through California state level discourse, as evident in the districts' planning and accountability documents? How are Black and Indigenous children discursively positioned in these messages; and, how may that positioning be relevant to their access to equitable educational opportunities and outcomes?*

This study relies on different strategies to address these Research Questions. To better understand the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) documents, I postulated value in understanding the LCFF itself as the LCAP is a policy text and the product of the LCFF law. Building off my pilot study, I hypothesized that it would be unreasonable to evaluate the LCAPs without a more robust understanding of the contributory context of the LCFF policy. Therefore, to better understand the LCFF law, I used a CRT informed CPA to focus on the historicity,

specifically important moments and persons, to understand the Local Control Funding Formula in a broader context. This focus allows me to understand equity implications within the Local Control Funding Formula, and thus the two district LCAPs, for Indigenous and Black students.

After reading through the LCAPs, I found the material to be largely inaccessible and difficult to readily ascertain information. As understanding the discourse, particularly in relation to Black and Indigenous students is so vital to this research, the ability to dissect the large policy texts and properly situate the existence of Indigenous and Black students was paramount. Therefore, I used CritQuant strategies and CDA with SFL tools. I used CritQuant tools to better understand Black and Indigenous student data within the two districts. CDA with SFL tools helped make the Los Angeles Unified School District and Long Beach Unified School District LCAPs more accessible for analysis. Once the LCAPs were more accessible, I used SFL tools to illuminate the extent of Indigenous and Black students' existence within the district LCAPs.

Lastly, to better understand relationality between the discourse and actions within the LCAP, I posited that it was important to understand funding allocation. Therefore, I also sought to understand the relationship between the district's funding allocation strategies and the respective goals and actions/services. I used SFL tools to understand the discourse presented in the district goals. I also used CDA and SFL tools to understand the actions and services. I compared the meaning gained from the texts to allocated funding amounts to support the goals and actions, to gain a further understanding of the district's expressed commitment.

Ultimately, these inquiries add layers and nuance of understanding to provide a more complete context to better understand the discourse of the LCAPs and whether the districts' actions are reflective of what they communicate in the LCAP.

This chapter presents the methodology I used to analyze my data. It argues that the two districts chosen for this study are appropriate choices for analysis because they both include Indigenous and Black students, share common geographic region, and include sizeable populations relative to other LEAs.

To begin this section, I present relevant contextual information about the districts, including an outline of Black and Indigenous student demographics by county and school district. I then discuss the sources of data: the 2018-19 LCAP of Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD), 2018-19 the LCAP of Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), and 2017-19 School Accountability Report Card (SARC). Next, I provide an overview of the analytical methods used to obtain findings and respond to study's research questions. I continue by expanding on each of the methods used to analyze the data, with some examples to illustrate how the methodologies are actualized in the finding chapters. Ultimately, this chapter situates this study as a Critical Policy Analysis (CPA) guided by Critical Race Theory (CRT) tenets using specific analytical methods and tools to realize the approach to CPA and thus serving as a foundation to the findings chapters.

3.1 Context of the Study

I have chosen a context for inquiry that offers opportunities to address issues for Indigenous children and Black children under the Local Control Funding Formula. These children are a key focus of my work to evaluate and understand the LCFF and companion data the LCAP and SARC. The context for these children includes an acknowledgement that they are more likely to have guardians, parents, etc. who are paid poverty wages and are disproportionately involved in the foster care system. These two characteristics are important in the context of the LCFF as the law provides additional funding to LEAs to educate and support

children identified as unduplicated students (unduplicated students refers to children who are included in one or all of these (sub)groups: children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, youth placed in the foster care system, and plural lingual children). Under the LCFF, these children are promised that districts provide will additional disproportionate services to them when compared to other children who are not identified as unduplicated students.

3.1.1 Indigenous and Black People in Los Angeles County

In this subsection, I navigate some history of Indigenous and Black people in the Los Angeles area. First, I make connections between caretakers being paid poverty wages and Black and Indigenous children's overrepresentation in the foster care system in Los Angeles County. Then, I discuss Indigenous people in Los Angeles County and Los Angeles city. Next, I discuss Black people in Los Angeles. Lastly, I conclude and situate the importance of Los Angeles County today given its total K-12 population, including Indigenous and Black students.

Akins and Bauer Jr. (2021) note that Los Angeles County has one of the largest populations of Indigenous people in the United States, while also contextualizing the population as largely made up of Indigenous people "*from outside the LA basin and California*" (p. 263). Through institutional choices (see Appendix A), Indigenous people navigated living as an often invisibilized racial minority. During the 1950s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs gave $50 to Indigenous people seeking to move west under a federal program and some Indigenous families took advantage of this opportunity to move to Los Angeles with the hope of leaving behind widespread discrimination against Indigenous peoples and gaining a better life for them or their family (Rosenthal, 2012). By 1970, Los Angeles became home to the highest concentration of Indigenous people outside of the Navajo reservation in the United States, establishing the

"Greater Los Angeles area as the "urban Indian capital of the United States" and most diverse urban American Indian population in the country" (Rosenthal, 2012, p. 3).

The concertation of Black people in Los Angeles can be attributed to the Great Migration of 1915-1929 (De Graaf, 1970). Indeed, the roots of many Black people in Los Angeles can be traced to the failures of Reconstruction and the rise of Jim Crow; Los Angeles held the promise as an escape from the continued bondage of the South and "a singularly egalitarian place, where opportunity was open to all citizens, regardless of background, lineage, or wealth" (Flamming, 2005, pp. 36-37) but where "most of the [Black] migrants were city people, by birth and upbringing, and most arrived with some savings (Flamming, 2005, p. 49) (see Appendix B). However, these conditions deteriorated as time went on and as the population of Black people increased so did the number of White southerners and Texans who came to Los Angeles, bringing racist ideologies with them (Flamming, 2005). The Great Depression hit Black Angelenos hard with nearly half of Black people unemployed in 1933, when Roosevelt assumed the presidency, and a larger number of Black southerners continued to come to Los Angeles for work that had disappeared or had been reserved for White people (Flamming, 2005). By the end of the 1930s, Los Angeles had 63,774 Black people, which was more Black people than San Francisco, Oakland, Seattle, and Denver combined and more than Dallas' 50,000 Black residents (Flamming, 2005). However, the *Times* editorialist Steven McGroarty questioned whether Black people would disappear the same way that Indigenous people were vanishing (Flamming, 2005). Through the 1940s, housing availability increasingly became a concern, but the building industry was unconcerned with the plight of Black Angelenos and other Persons of Color in Los Angeles and assumed they would live in inferior housing and that racial segregation would protect white interests (Spaulding, 1942).

Though coming to Los Angeles was in part due to a desire to escape racism and persecution in other parts of the United States, Black and Indigenous persons would ultimately find similar conditions which continue to jeopardize their families and children (see Appendix C). And despite the continued risk of erasure, Indigenous and Black populations in the Greater Los Angeles area remain sizeable. Los Angeles County, home to the Greater Los Angeles area, is considered pivotal in research given the substantial number and percentage of the state's students who attend public schools in the region. And for policymakers, size is often a persuasive characteristic in terms of decision-making and attention. Nearly one-fourth of California's public school students are educated in Los Angeles County (Data Reporting Office, 2019, September 25). Los Angeles County also has the highest percentage of both Indigenous and Black children in California; nearly one-third of all Black children and ten percent of all Indigenous children are in the county (Data Reporting Office, 2019, September 25).

3.1.2 Selecting the Local Education Agencies for this Study

To select the sites for my inquiry, I considered what was familiar to me, as familiarity of context is an important consideration under a Critical Discourse Analysis framework (which I discuss later in this chapter). I was born in the Los Angeles area and lived throughout Southern California, but primarily in Los Angeles County, for most of my life. With this experience, I made the decision to consider LEAs from this area. I began with the district where I spent the most time, Los Angeles Unified School District, and then chose the second largest school district in Los Angeles County: Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD).

LAUSD and LBUSD have a disproportionate number and percentage of all California students, including Indigenous and Black students. Per 2018-19 school year student enrollment data, which is reflective of count day, there were a total of 6,186,278 students in public schools

statewide, with 73,221 of them enrolled in LBUSD and 607,723 enrolled in LAUSD, representing about 11 percent of the state's total student population (Data Reporting Office, 2019, September 25). LAUSD and LBUSD are thus two of the four largest school districts by student enrollment in California (with San Diego Unified School District and Fresno Unified School District ranking second and third in size respectively) (Data Reporting Office, 2019, September 25).[8]

To further explore these as potential data sources, I searched the California Department of Education (CDE) website and the respective district websites (more on this process later). The open availability of LCAP documentation and SARC data, required under state law, further shaped my data selection. The alignment of data by school year for LCAP and SARC was considered. At the time of the project's beginning, though 2019-2020 LCAP data was available, 2019-2020 SARC data was not yet available, therefore 2018-2019 was chosen as the focus year. Thus, the site selection was made in consideration of my knowledge of the districts, size and proximity, and the availability of the data.

3.1.3 LAUSD and LBUSD in Research Presents the Districts as Vastly Different

Both LBUSD and LAUSD have been the targets of education reforms, particularly over the past thirty years. However, though LAUSD and LBUSD are neighboring school districts in the same geographical region, with each at least partially serving the city of Long Beach, with similar racial and other demographics, they tend to be positioned in research as having different educational qualities. In general, the LAUSD is positioned as a failing and struggling school

[8] For the 2018-2019 school year, Fresno Unified School District (73,249 students) surpassed LBUSD (73,221 students) for third place. This size ranking has remained stable since. Per 2021-2022 school year data, LAUSD (548,338 students) has the largest enrollment, followed by San Diego Unified School District (662,805 students), Fresno Unified School District (72,455 students), LBUSD (67,573 students), and Elk Grove Unified School District (63,041 students) (Data Reporting Office, 2022, November 1).

district in comparison to the LBUSD, which is positioned as a model school district, particularly for Students of Color and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. The LAUSD is positioned in research as a space for new reform efforts (e.g., Bush-Mecenas & J. Marsh, 2020) and struggling with budgeting and allocating resources including under the LCFF (e.g., Delahaye, 2016), whereas LBUSD is generally positively situated as a great education environment for Students of Color broadly. For example, studies (e.g., Burns et al., 2019; Podolsky et al., 2019) have positioned LBUSD as one of California's *positive outlier* districts (positive outliers are defined as LEAs where Black and/or Latin* students and White students achieve at higher levels than predicted by their socioeconomic status).While research tends to ignore LBUSD's struggles, other research (e.g., Norman & Hollie, 2013) has been attentive to LBUSD's missteps. Considering this, next I discuss an example of how LAUSD tends to be discussed in research, as a struggling school district.

Bush-Mecenas and J. Marsh (2020) note that LAUSD has been an epicenter of education reform over the past decade with some successes. Conversely, the authors also note that LAUSD is highly divided and politically charged which has made enacting and sustaining reform efforts difficult. The authors report years of NAEP gains in average performance in fourth and eighth grade English language arts and math scores between 2003-2017 but slips in performance in 2019 and overall substantial differences in education outcomes for Black, Latin*, and students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages. The authors also report that LAUSD has struggled with finances and forecast a $500 million deficit by 2020-2021 due to a decline in student enrollment and increased contributions to the state teacher-retirement system required under LCFF. The authors note LAUSD struggles with de facto segregation across its schools, but that

the district has sought to address equity-related concerns. Some researchers have noted issues with LAUSD's funding allocations under the LCFF (e.g., Affeldt, 2015; Delahaye, 2016).

Next, I will discuss an example of research on LBUSD, positioning the district as an exemplary school system. Carver-Thomas and Podolsky (2019) sought to identify factors that contribute to the success of all students, particularly Students of Color using a multi-method case study design. The authors note increased community engagement (e.g., of parents and businesses) to support student learning and an intention for dedicating funding to ensure that all students have great teachers. The authors found that LBUSD is continually conducting research to address the needs of Black students to determine better areas of support.[9] Podolsky et al. (2019), considering school districts with at least 200 Black or Latin* students and 200 White students, identified 48 districts, including LBUSD, where Black and White students achieve higher than levels predicted by socioeconomic status and 167 where Latin* and White students achieve at higher levels than predicted by socioeconomic status. Comparing regression residuals (difference between actual score and predicted score), the authors found that LBUSD had the fifteenth highest residual for Black students (0.119). While statistically significant, it is unclear whether these residuals amount to meaningful differences in scores for Black students, despite suggesting that on average Black and Latin* students in these positive outlier districts perform better than other Black and Latin* students when socioeconomic status is held constant. LBUSD is thus positioned as an LEA where Black students perform better than expected. Given the positioning of such results, LBUSD is a district useful for exploration of what is meant by successful performance and which Black students are being supported, as performing better than expected is not equivalent to saying that Black students perform well.

[9] While the authors note that LBUSD conducted interviews with high-achieving Black students and Black students who are "in need of greater support," they only report findings coming from Black high school graduates.

While academic researchers tend to positively position LBUSD, there have been research efforts by community organizations, students, and local reporting which highlight some of the district's struggles, particularly with Black children. Californians for Justice (n.d., para. 3), for example, reported that although "considered a top-performing school district by many, Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) nonetheless struggles with racial disparities among their Black, Latinx, Pacific Islander, Native American, and Southeast Asian youth." Black, Indigenous, and Pacific Islander children are disproportionately suspended per 2016-2017 California Dashboard data and Students of Color at large are underrepresented in LBUSD college-prep and honors courses (Californians for Justice, n.d.). Norman and Hollie (2013) suggest that Black students exiting LBUSD and attending a University of California or California State University campus complete courses at a lower rate than White students. LBUSD Black students are nearly 14 times more likely to be suspended than White students (e.g., Nittle, 2016; Salazar & Omojola, 2018). In response to continued inequity, LBUSD students formed a group and launched a campaign advocating for changes in school climate practice and equal resources (Salazar & Omojola, 2018). Such data provides a profile of a district where Students of Color, despite data which purports improvement, may still fail to receive equal treatment or access to educational opportunities which allow for successful access to all postsecondary possibilities.

Further, while research as discussed above has noted LAUSD's struggles and failures surrounding appropriately budgeting funds for children labeled as unduplicated students, there has been less attention to similar claims being made against LBUSD. In late 2017, in response to a Uniform Complaint Procedure (UCP) alleging a violation of the LCFF by misallocating funds meant to provide equitable schooling for "high-need students," referring to children identified as

unduplicated students, and failing to faithfully consider community input, the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) ruled that LBUSD had misallocated $24 million in funds meant to be directed toward children identified as unduplicated students. In turn, the district was required to adjust its spending plan for the 2017-2018 school year. The LACOE decision marked the first time that a county office of education had determined that a district it oversees had inappropriately claimed to allocate spending to address children identified as unduplicated students in their accountability plan. Public Advocates Inc and Morgan, Lewis & Bockius eventually settled, on behalf of local parents and the Children's Defense Fund-California, with the LBUSD on May 11, 2018, with an agreement by the district to improve services for children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, plural lingual children, and youth placed in the foster care system and foster greater community engagement (Public Advocates, 2018).

Further, some research (e.g., Education Trust–West, 2012) has suggested that Students of Color attending LAUSD schools are performing better than those attending LBUSD schools. For its 2011 California District Report Cards, which were attentive to how children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, Black children, and Latin* children perform in the state's largest unified school districts, the Education Trust–West (Ed Trust-West) gave LAUSD an overall grade of C and LBUSD a grade of D (2012, March).[10] The report showed that the LAUSD received an F grade for differences in achievement between Black students and White students and received an A grade for having Students of Color UC and CSU ready. In fact, the LAUSD, with 51% of Students of Color completing the A-G course requirement, was one of five to earn an A grade for college readiness (Ed Trust-West, 2012). LAUSD received a grade of B for improvement among Students of Color and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and C grade for both

[10] The Ed Trust–West's grading rubric were based on 2010 Growth Academic Performance Index (API), 2006-2010 API Growth, API Gap, and A-G rate.

groups in performance. LBUSD also received an F grade for differences in achievement between Black students and White students[11] but received a C grade for having Students of Color UC and CSU ready. Additionally, the LBUSD received a grade of D for improvement among Students of Color and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, but a grade of C for both groups in performance. The Ed Trust-West Report cards present a different narrative from most research by suggesting that the LAUSD and LBUSD are comparable districts, and that the LAUSD may be improving more.

Although there is also a lack of attention to or acknowledgement of Indigenous students in the literature, we know that Indigenous children are also not meeting state or national academic standards and further that Indigenous children's needs tend to be poorly addressed. And despite Black students performing better than expected based on state averages in LBUSD, Black students still do not meet expected state benchmarks and perform lower than their peers across both districts.

Despite California being home to the most Indigenous students in the United States, they tend to be missing from discussions surrounding equity, achievement, and opportunity. This study centers Indigenous students and their needs and seeks to ensure that LEAs are attentive to Indigenous children. Given LAUSD's uneven performance in the research I have reviewed overall and with Black and Indigenous students, there is merit in evaluating how this district is making attempts to better serve students who deserve more resource investment. What is missing in the research I have reviewed is any attention on the education of Indigenous students (though, if an LEA like LBUSD is successful with Black and Latin* students, or Students of Color broadly, there could be reason to believe that Indigenous students might also perform better).

[11] The F grades in gaps for LAUSD and LBUSD indicate that both districts had an API gap of over 120 points, suggesting a drastic difference between the performance of Black children and White children in both LEAs.

3.2 Data Materials and Collection

Data produced under California law, the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and the School Accountability Report Card (SARC), serve as primary data to be analyzed. In this section, I briefly discuss the Local Control Funding Formula (I will more fully discuss the LCFF in Chapter 4). Then, I describe the LCAP before outlining the major sections of the document including CDE guidance provided. Next, I discuss the SARC ending with descriptions of the variables of importance to this study. Lastly, I present data collection specifics.

3.2.1 A Brief Introduction to the Local Control Funding Formula

Scholars (e.g., California School Boards Association, 2013; Fuller & Tobben, 2014; Miles & Feinberg, 2014; Wolf & Sands, 2016) have characterized the LCFF as one of the most significant education policies in the United States, enabling California to fundamentally transform how public education is funded and lead the nation in creating systems that work for students. The significance of this policy stems from a focus on a return to local control of school funding and planning, not just at the district/school level, but at the community level, including parents, students, and other community members in the process. Fuller and Tobben (2014) found that early thoughts suggested that "the state's own theory-of-action postulates that local control should encourage wider involvement by parent groups, community organizations, employers and civic leaders in the budget-making process" (p. 10). The LCFF provides base grants, applicable to all students, and supplemental and concentration grants to districts, based on a district's count of children identified as unduplicated students (California School Boards Association, 2013).

The LCFF legislation "calls for school districts to set both district-wide and school-wide goals and spells out the specific action steps needed to achieve those goals for all students, but especially for English learners, young people in foster care, and low-income students" (Lofton et

al., 2018, p. 39). Again, the three (sub)groups identified: plural lingual children, children places in the foster care system, and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, comprise the unduplicated student category subgroup which is positioned at the forefront of the state's equitable framework. The LCFF defines these unduplicated students as "high need" and through its weighted funding structure appears to present a more equitable funding distribution by offering a requirement that LEAs disproportionately target those who are unduplicated students.

3.2.2 Basics of the Local Control and Accountability Plan

The LCFF streamlines local, state, and federal requirements into a main component of their accountability framework, the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) (Lofton et al., 2018, p. 39). The LCAP is a three-year plan, updated yearly, where LEAs describe their goals, actions, services, and allocated expenditures that are designed to support and lead to positive student outcomes (Local Agency Systems Support Office [LASSO], 2020). The LCAP is the primary tool for California LEAs to communicate their story and the details behind their choices for programs and services to meet their local needs (California Department of Education [CDE], 2019, April). The tool is meant to "to support positive student outcomes that address state and local priorities" under LCFF (CDE, 2019, April). LEAs can set local priorities based on needs tied to specific to schools, student sub-groups, or grade spans.

The design and use of the LCAP gives it great policy importance. At its basic level, "the LCAP provides an *opportunity* [emphasis added] for local educational agencies (LEAs) to share their stories of how, what, and why programs and services are selected to meet their local needs" (LASSO, 2020). As school districts create their LCAPs, they are required to engage with their community to create goals and allocate resources. The comprehensive planning tool that is the LCAP is set for three years, with updates in years two and three, in a public process requiring

input from local community members (e.g., Affeldt, 2015; Fuller & Tobben, 2014). This means that while LEAs are responsible for completing the actual writing, submission, and keeping of the LCAP document, they are also required to collaborate and seek input from their respective community including parents, guardians, students, and teachers. Despite the importance of the LCAP, there is not a standard amount of information that LEAs must include nor ways that LEAs must engage with community members.

The LEAs' governing boards (e.g., the entities responsible for the school district or charter organization) are responsible for completing the LCAP, with the LEAs' officials, the superintendent typically, as the main contact persons, and the local county office of education (COE) as responsible for approving the LCAP (CDE, 2018, June). The COE is also responsible for approving LCAP yearly updates and ensuring that LEAs are responsive to their communities, appropriately allocating funding, and attending to children identified as unduplicated students and those who deserve investment of opportunity. For the districts in this study, the Los Angeles County Office of Education is the COE responsible for approving LCAP documents and responding to any stakeholder complaints.

LEAs, within their local contexts, are required to set goals that address eight California priorities: 1) basic services, 2) implementation of state standards, 3) parent involvement, 4) student achievement, 5) student engagement, 6) school climate, 7) course access, 8) student outcomes. Despite some requirements for LEAs to adhere to, as discussed below, the LCAP is a space for them to speak to their respective community needs and plans to address their unique populations. LEAs are encouraged to set goals and to develop actions and services that are attentive to local needs and their community.

The 2018-19 LBUSD LCAP is 168 pages, not including addendum information on completing the LCAP and 2018-19 LAUSD LCAP is 167 pages. For this dissertation, I use the entire LCAP documents for LBUSD and LAUSD, specifically relying on the text entered by the districts. I will go into further detail on how I make use of the documents, particularly given their size and depth, towards the end of this chapter. The outline of each district's 2018-2019 LCAP, per CDE template, contains the five sections: 1) 2017-20 Plan Summary; 2) Annual Update; 3) Stakeholder Engagement; 4) Goals, Actions, & Services; and 5) Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Pupils.

3.2.2.1 Description of the LCAP section: 2017-20 plan summary.

The *2017-20 Plan Summary* section for the 2018-19 school year should be reflective of the year two update where information should replace information from the previous school year with data relevant to the current school year. LEAs are provided prompts to answer in this section which are intended to be guides rather than limits. There are four main subsections to the 2017-20 Plan Summary: *The Story, LCAP Highlights, Review of Performance,* and *Budget Summary*. *The Story* asks for LEAs to describe the students and how the LEA serves them. *LCAP Highlights* asks that LEAs identify and briefly summarize key components from the current year's LCAP. Review of Performance has four further subsections which ask that LEAs, based on state indicators and local performance indicators, discuss *Greatest Progress*, what the LEA is most proud of, *Greatest Needs*, what the LEA has determined needs significant improvement and plans to address the needs, *Performance Gaps*, which again asks LEAs to reflect on state indicators but specifically on student groups who are two or more performance levels below "all student" performance, and lastly, *Increased or Improved Services*, which asks LEAs to identify two or three ways that the LEA will increase or improve services for children identified as

unduplicated students. Additionally, LEAs must provide a budget summary table which outlines the total general fund expenditures for the 2018-19 school year, total budgeted funds for the year's planned actions/services designed to meet the outlined goals in the 2018-19 LCAP, and projected revenues for the LCAP year.

3.2.2.2 Description of the LCAP section: Annual update.

The *Annual Update* section for the 2018-19 LCAP requires that LEAs copy verbatim the 2017-18 planned goals, expected outcomes, actions/services, and budgeted expenditures. Additionally, the LEA must provide an analysis which addresses the actual measurable outcomes in comparison to the expected measurable outcomes identified in the 2017-18 school year. Further, using the actual measurable outcome data, the LEA should discuss whether/how the planned actions/services were effective in relation to the goal. Prompts are also provided as guidance in the analysis process.

3.2.2.3 Description of the LCAP section: Stakeholder engagement.

In the *Stakeholder Engagement* section, LEAs are asked to describe the stakeholder (e.g., parents, students, and community groups) engagement process that was used in the development of the LCAP at large including the *Annual Update* analysis. LEAs are expected to describe how their stakeholder community consultation process impacted the LEAs' development of the 2018-19 LCAP with attention to goals, actions, services, and outlined expenditures.

3.2.2.4 Description of the LCAP section: Goals, actions, and services.

The *Goals, Actions, and Services* section requires LEAs to describe the annual goals for the 2018-19 school year with connections to state priorities. LEAs may also set and describe goals which are attentive to local priorities. For each goal, where any one goal may address

multiple state and/or local priorities, LEAs must note whether it is new, modified, or unchanged from the 2017-18 LCAP. Each goal should be reflective of what an LEA wants to achieve with a description of the need that led to the goal's creation. Further, LEAs shall describe explicit planned actions that the LEA will carry out to meet each annual goal. Lastly, the LEA must provide a description of expenditures that will be used to implement the actions it details. Each action is concluded with a budgeted expenditures description where LEAs must reference all funding sources for a planned action/service using classifications in alignment to the California School Accounting Manual.

When describing actions/services, as with the goals, LEAs must note whether the action is new, modified, or unchanged for the 2018-19 school year. For planned actions/services, LEAs must decide whether the services are designed to contribute to the increased or improved services mandate for children identified as unduplicated students. When services are not intended for this purpose, the services may be targeted at all students, students with disabilities, or any specific student subgroup that the LEAs identifies (e.g., Black students or Indigenous students). For these services, LEAs must note a scope of service that is directed at all schools, specific schools, or specific grade spans where LEAs must identify which specific schools or grades when selecting the latter two options.

When services are intended to increase or improve services, LEAs must identify the unduplicated student group(s) being served by the services. For these actions/services LEAs can define the scope of a planned service to be LEA-wide, schoolwide, or limited to unduplicated student group(s).

3.2.2.5 Description of the LCAP section: Demonstration of increased or improved services for unduplicated pupils.

Lastly, the *Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Pupils* section required that a new section be added for the 2018-19 school year while still preserving the 2017-18 text within the same LCAP. LEAs should estimate all supplemental/concentration funds received for the 2018-19 school year along with the percentage to which the LEA is required to increase or improve services for children identified as unduplicated students as required. LEAs are reminded that *increased* services equate to a growth in service quantity while *improved* services equate to a growth in service quality. In the section, LEAs are asked to describe how the actions/services for the 2018-19 LCAP limited to unduplicated student group(s), along with any LEA-wide or school wide actions/services, result in the mandated proportional percentage increase for children identified as unduplicated students. LEAs are tasked with describing how these actions/services are both effective and principally directed to meet goals for children identified as unduplicated students in relation to state and/or local priorities.

3.2.3 Basics of the School Accountability Report Card

The LCFF also continues a requirement for the collection of standardized test scores and other data which comprises The School Accountability Report Card (SARC). These data are compiled and published by the California State Board of Education with information provided by the CDE. The data includes information on LEAs and schools throughout California relying on the county-district school (CDS) database. The CDE is responsible for the maintenance of the CDS database and for providing departmental contact information. SARC data includes

information from the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), demographic data, and other data from LEAs (e.g., staff information).

The SARC datasets used in this study contain data across the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years. For the 2018-19 reporting year, SARC data includes the number of students enrolled at a particular school on the first Wednesday in October (census day) by grade level.

The CAASPP was established in 2014 in accordance with the LCFF. The CAASPP system includes results from the standardized assessments Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and California Alternative Assessments (CAAs) (e.g., California Science Test, California Spanish Assessment, and English for Language Proficiency Assessments for California[12]). Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments are reportedly designed to measure progress towards college and career readiness by testing mathematics and English language arts/literacy. The CAAs are given to students when they have an individualized education plan which dictates an alternative assessment. Aggregate student scores for grades three-eight and grade eleven are reported in terms of achievement for these assessments (i.e., met or exceeded the set standard).

For this study, I only use CAASPP test results related to scores for English language arts/literacy and mathematics. Additionally, I use variables related to these reported results where they are broken down by student group of interest (i.e., Black students and Indigenous students). The CSBE notes that rules pertaining to the inclusion and exclusion for SARC data are unique. In general, across all variables, school data are not provided when there are less than ten students (e.g., number of students tested, number of students at a school site, etc.) as the California SBE has determined that this protects student privacy, or when the number of students is too small for

[12] The English for Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) became the California English language proficiency assessment in 2018 (English Language Proficiency and Spanish Assessments Office, 2023)

statistical accuracy. As the dissertation will show, this invisibilization decision is consequential for providing services or determining academic performance by school site for student groups who are deemed to need privacy protection. CAASPP standardized test scores report the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the state standard for grades three through grade eight and grade eleven. The variables used in this dissertation are student enrollment by group, pupil achievement, and CAASPP test results in math and ELA.

3.2.3.1 Description of SARC variables of interest: Student enrollment by group.

This data includes the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years. These data report the percentage of students enrolled at a school on the first Wednesday in October (census day) by race, students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages, plural lingual children, youth in the foster care system, and students who are unhoused. For each school year, the percentage by student group is calculated by dividing the number of enrolled students in each student group on census day by the total number of enrolled students on census day.

3.2.3.2 Description of SARC variables of interest: Pupil achievement.

These data include two-year periods (e.g., 2016-17 and 2018-19; 2017-18 and 2018-19). The pupil achievement data is comprised of the percent of students who meet or exceed California standards on the CAASPP tests (i.e., Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and CAAs) for mathematics and English language arts/literacy (ELA) for grades three-eight and grade eleven at the school, LEA, and state levels. This data is provided by the CDE and is sourced from the CAASPP test results for the included tests and grade levels.

3.2.3.3 Description of SARC variables of interest: CAASPP test results in math.

For both the 2017-18 and 2018-19 reporting years, the CAASPP math test result data includes information for total student enrollment, number of students tested, percentage of students (not) tested, and percentage of students who met or exceeded the CAASPP math standards for the included grades and school years. The data is also separated by student groups such as Black students, Indigenous students, plural lingual children, youth in the foster care system, and binary gender identification. The CAASPP math *percent met or exceeded* is calculated adding the total number of students for both math assessments, the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and CAAs, who met or exceeded the standard and dividing that by the total number of participating students in both tests.

3.2.3.4 Description of SARC variables of interest: CAASPP test results in ELA.

For both the 2017-18 and 2018-19 reporting years, the CAASPP ELA test result data includes information for total student enrollment, number of students tested, percentage of students (not) tested, and percentage of students who met or exceeded the CAASPP ELA standards for the included grades and school years. The data is also separated by student groups such as Black students, Indigenous students, plural lingual children, youth in the foster care system, and binary gender identification. The CAASPP ELA *percent met or exceeded* is calculated adding the total number of students for both assessments, the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and CAAs, who met or exceeded the standard and dividing that by the total number of participating students in both tests.

3.2.4 Study Data Collection

The LACOE approved 2018-2019 Local Control and Accountability Plans, given requirements under § 52065 of the California Education Code, were collected via each district's

publicly accessible websites in August 2020. Both Long Beach Unified School District and Los Angeles Unified School District placed the 2018-19 LCAP on the respective district website in a prominent and easy to find manner. As each LCAP was in finalized form, there were no data cleansing techniques needed to prepare the documents for analysis.

The School Accountability Report Cards, which consists of standardized test score information from the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, were collected for all California LEAs for the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years via California's publicly accessible Department of Education website in May of 2020. This data was provided in dozens of excel spreadsheets and therefore required data cleaning to ensure that it was usable for statistical software.

To begin, all excel files were downloaded from the CDE website for the 2017-18 (seventeen files) and 2018-19 (twenty-one files) school years. The first step was to reduce this to school level data related to LBUSD and LAUSD. Data was checked to ensure that all schools for both school districts remained in the dataset and that no additional schools or LEAs were included. The 2017-18 and 2018-19 datasets were merged alongside a CDS variable which identifies an individual school. This process required standardizing the presentation of the California county-district school code in each file to ensure a common point for merging. Data was checked for missing or incomplete data. Due to duplicative choices in variable naming, before merging the two school years together in one file, all variables for one school year had to be renamed as variable names remained the same irrespective of school year. For this study, all variables in the 2018-19 school year dataset were renamed. All variables were checked again for consistency. The datasets for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years were merged. Again, they were checked for missing or incomplete data. Data was exported to STATA where the data was

again verified and checked for consistency and errors. Once in STATA, variables were given descriptive labels with variables of interest getting comments with further explanatory information. The finalized STATA data file was compared against the excel spreadsheets to ensure that all data was accurate.

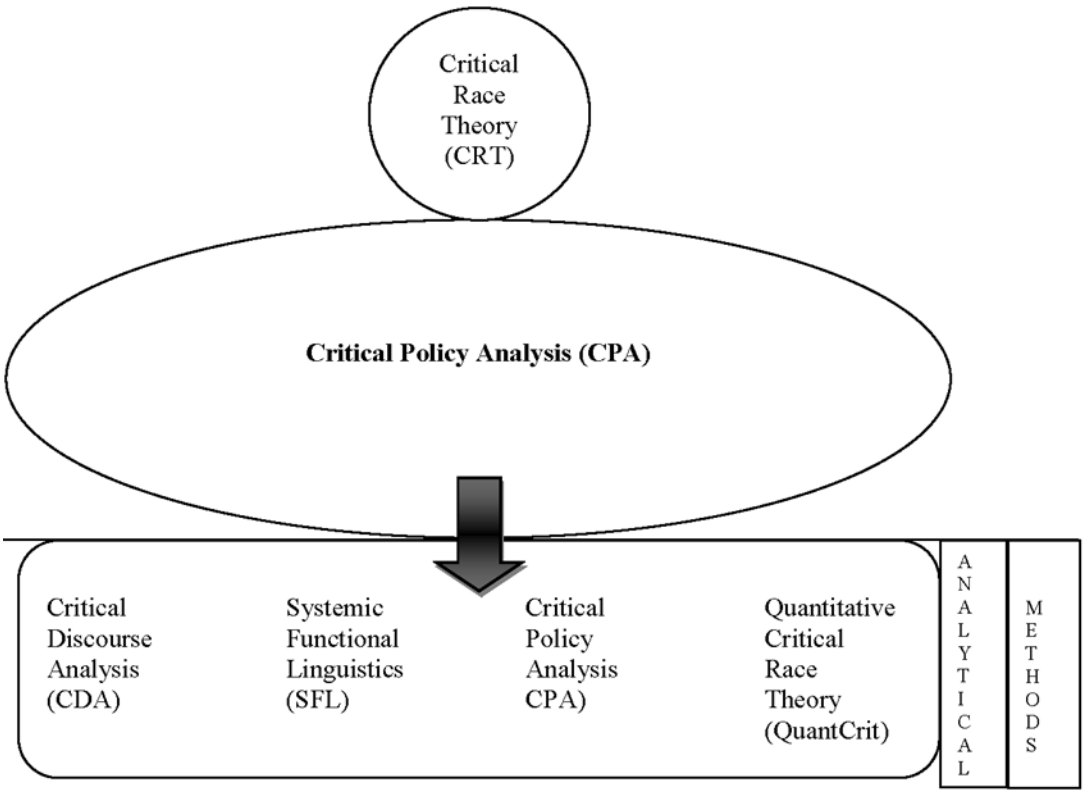
In addition to LCAP and SARC data, I also collected additional data that was used to complete my Critical Policy Analysis of the LCFF law in Chapter IV. The data was collected through an iterative approach consulting online materials where I reached topic saturation when material was overly repetitive. I began by collecting Assembly Bill 97 (2013), the bill which created the Local Control Funding Formula, as signed into law via the publicly accessible California Legislative Information site. After identifying when the policy was introduced and passed into law, I began to search for sources which discussed the law. In this scenario, I read newspaper articles written in the months prior and after the policy's passage, research studies, and data produced by government organizations (e.g., California Legislative Analyst's Office), which discussed the potential impact of the LCFF. This process allowed for an understanding of the political climate and policy process where I identified key politicians and researchers who were influential in advocating for the law's passage (e.g., Jerry Brown) or composing the template of the legislation (e.g., Michael Kirst). Given the focus on funding in the LCFF and the information regarding funding which appeared in the data I came across, I began to search for data on California funding systems which led me to sources like court cases (e.g., *Serrano v. Priest*, 1971) and state ballot measures (e.g., Proposition 111, 1990). I further researched sources (e.g., California Legislative Analyst's Office, state propositions, community organizations, court cases) which allowed for a more robust corpus of information to understand a historical landscape of K-12 education in California. However, this snowball approach did not yield data

which were *intentionally* attentive to race. Therefore, I deliberately also searched for materials related to race and K-12 education which brought me to sources like state ballot measures (e.g., Proposition 209, 1996) and state government texts (e.g., press releases and state legislative bills).

3.3 Data Analysis Techniques and Procedure

This section outlines the data analysis techniques and procedures used in this dissertation including some examples from the data. First, the importance of Critical Race Theory to this study is reiterated and its use as an analytic lens is described. The Research Questions are presented with specific connections to the data and the analytic techniques. Then, Critical Policy Analysis is discussed as both the overarching theoretical framework and a specific analytic approach. After this, I will show how Critical Quantitative will be used in the analysis. Next, Critical Discourse Analysis is presented as a framework for fulfilling a policy analysis approach. Finally, Systemic Functional Linguistics is discussed and positioned as a theory of language with specific analytic tools which are being analyzed through a Critical Race Theory lens to complete the document analysis portion of the discourse analysis and policy analysis.

Figure 3.1 Conceptual Map of Guiding Theoretical Frameworks and Analytical Approach Methods



Note. Connections between the guiding analytical lens' and theoretical framework and analytic methods used to analyze the data are shown here.

3.3.1 Critical Race Theory in this Study

As introduced in Chapter 2, Critical Race Theory (CRT) provides an important overarching framework for this study which uses CRT to position race itself, and specifically for Indigenous students and Black students, as an important lens through which to interpret data. I rely on two CRT tenets: that *racism is ordinary and embedded into our institutions* and that *there is inherent value in experiential knowledge which centers Voices of Color*. CRT influences how the data analysis is conducted and shapes the findings and conclusions which are reached. Specifically, these tenets guide each stage of the study, integrated across the data analysis techniques and procedures, including the development of the Research Questions.

Ladson-Billings (2006) notes that education progress, particularly for Students of Color, of today is impacted by the *Education Debt*, resulting from a historical lack of investment and active disinvestment in the education of Communities of Color. While this study considers the continued prevalence of differences in academic achievement and opportunity for Black and Indigenous students, as other studies have, it has an intentional focus on academic progress, through analysis of the LCFF policy. Specifically, I attend to the policy's intention to create equitable access and opportunities for all students, particularly those that are categorized as children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, youth placed in the foster care system, and plural lingual children, and analyze that intention in relation to goals and outcomes reported.

The approach assumes that if the LCFF is operating as intended, despite its race-evasive nature, Black and Indigenous students should be progressing educationally. Further, students in these school districts should not be falling behind and racial differences should be moving toward minimal or none. CRT offers me a lens for approaching the data, fully attentive to the racialized aspects of these issues and the racialized persons involved, using critical perspectives and methods. I draw on CRT in the context of the analysis of education policy, and thus use Critical Policy Analysis principals to investigate the LCFF policy with attention to the ways race was positioned as the policy was developed and how it operated within the current policy.

3.3.2 Critical Policy Analysis in this Study

Critical Policy Analysis provides a theory to make meaning of policy in ways that critically consider social actors, local context, historical context, and texts as I evaluate the policy documents in this study. As with CRT, specific principles from CPA guide the analysis of the LCFF policy and the data produced by the policy. Further, CPA provides analytic techniques which help to understand the LCFF policy and how it was created.

Prunty (1985) notes that education policy analysis "must attend simultaneously to the workings of the school and the workings of society" (p. 135). A critical policy analysis is overtly political, as the researcher envisions "a moral order in which justice, equality and individual freedom are uncompromised by the avarice of a few" (Prunty, 1985, p. 136). I use CPA to address "simple" questions (e.g., who does the LCFF serve?). Apple (2019) asserts that researchers have an ethical obligation to uncover the effects of policies, challenge policy positions, and put forth an education defense that advocates for "human flourishing" (p. 277). Under Apple's CPA, this involves the researcher thinking and acting *relationally* where institutions, social relations, and identities are intimately connected to structural inequalities and inequities and the researcher engages in *repositioning* with respect to the research role, and that of the researcher, and an ongoing effort to see the world differently to act against oppressive conditions and ideologies.

CPA "provides a realist perspective for analyzing policy in an era of widening inequality and political divisions across lines of race, class, gender, geography, and citizenship" (Horsford et al., 2019, p. 21). To carry out my approach to CPA I draw on a framework to challenge traditional notions of power and center Indigenous and Black perspectives and voices (CRT); examine policy as discourse (CDA/SFL); interrogate the distribution of resources and power (CritQuant, CDA/SFL); and ensure those in power are held accountable for policy outcomes (Horsford et al., 2019).

CPA intentionally studies typical assumptions within dominant political ideologies (Horsford et al., 2019). In my study, Research Question 1 broadly seeks to understand how funding mechanisms as identified in planning documents work for Indigenous and Black students. Those who have historically been, and continue to be, at the margins of policy are

central to this research. CPA allows me to engage with the LCFF more meaningfully by considering the political, social, and economic climate in which this policy was crafted. Such notions are vital to understanding how communities are engaged in the LCAP creation process and the resources that are made available to Black and Indigenous students.

Those engaging in CPA tend to emphasize those actors in power who define and influence problems, solutions, and the policy process itself (Horsford et al., 2019). There are three phases broadly that encompass this: the *problem definition*, and what counts as a problem or issue; the policy process, and *how the problem gets addressed* whether through the legal system or legislatively, and, lastly, the *policy implementation*, where attention is given to the role of powerful interests and how it is (eventually) institutionalized (Horsford et al., 2019). I address these phases across this dissertation and prominently in Chapter 4.

For instance, in Chapter 1, I identify and define the problem that this study is addressing, providing a foundation for addressing the Local Control Funding Formula policy at large and issues which the policy could address. In Chapter 4, I identify and define the problem of the policy and expand what counts as the problem space including issues that may not have been considered in the policy creation process. The policy implementation process, also covered in Chapter 4, tells the story of persons and entities which pushed for the policy's legislative adoption. Throughout Chapter4, I provide instances of power interests and their influence on California policies which impact education and ultimately the LCFF. Toward the end of Chapter 4, I expound on the policy's implementation and refocus on powerful interests and reconnect to the impact for Black and Indigenous students. Further, I return to the notion of policy implementation in Chapter 5 where I highlight the LCFF is being implemented in the LAUSD and LBUSD. It is through these three phases that I use CPA as an analytical approach to my data.

After reading research, like those studies outlined in Chapter 2, which have discussed the LCFF, I had questions regarding how the LCFF came to be and generally found the story of the law was incomplete. Therefore, in addition to the research which has focused on the LCFF, I also collected and considered other types of data related to the LCFF. This was largely a snowball approach to data collection with an attempt to understand history related to the LCFF. Specific data sources include: LCFF law; policy briefs, newspaper articles, court filings, CA government documents (press releases, research from legislative analyst office, governor, state superintendent of education, state board of education), community organization, foundation, and and/or non-profit communication.

Chapter 4 uses CPA to analyze the policy process and policy implementation phases, telling the story of how the LCFF has come to be and what has happened in the decade since its passage. I address problems that existed prior to, and after, the creation of the LCFF, expanding the scope of issues involved to include prior court cases, ballot propositions, and actions (not) taken by individuals and organizations. Attempts to address the problems via court challenges, state ballot measures, and legislatively are identified to better understand California's educational landscape prior to and after the LCFF. I give considerable attention given to those directly responsible for the implementation of the LCFFF, including Jerry Brown, the person most credited for the creation of the LCFF, as well as other persons and entities that impacted and advocated for the legislation.

My CPA approach also recognizes other social actors and powerful interests that shaped and instituted the LCFF as California law, and then goes on to evaluate the LCFF through analysis of the selected LEA LCAPs to tell a story of how the policy is being implemented at the local level. Through a CPA lens informed by CRT, I display examples of institutionalized policy

and embedded structurally racist ideas even as the law itself, on the surface, has more equity-oriented outcomes for all students.

3.3.3 Critical Quantitative Methods in this Study

Quantitative analytic methods that look at nuance are important to addressing the questions posed here. My Research Questions, specifically RQ 2 can benefit from a quantitative analysis component to recognize how Indigenous and Black students can be understood more robustly when considering standardized test score and descriptive statistics in LBUSD and LAUSD. My approach to quantitative analysis is critical as I seek to be attentive to issues of equity for racial groups. Such an approach aims to provide results that assist in understanding how LEA choices in resource allocation and goal development are impacting Indigenous and Black students. In this section I highlight why a critical quantitative analysis or Quantitative Critical Race Theory (QuantCrit) approach has value for researchers and discuss how my analysis will contribute to our knowledge and use of QuantCrit work in education. Next, I discuss my plans to implement QuantCrit in this study. Then I provide some aims of QuantCrit as related to research question development and review research that has incorporated QuantCrit methods to address equity and differences within racial subgroups.

While most QuantCrit work has focused on higher education, this study is distinctive in contributing to our collective understanding about race in K-12 contexts through a QuantCrit approach. I am explicit in the theoretical frames guiding the understanding of my data. This study includes a population that has often been overlooked in Indigenous students and a population that has been studied but often lacking complexity in Black students. As racial groups vary and there is a story behind numbers, it is important to gain and present more nuanced

understanding with respect to numbers so that policy may be more effective, and students will benefit.

The LCFF requires LEAs to focus on (sub)groups that are broad regardless of intersecting identities and ignoring race. Using QuantCrit to analyze standardized test scores allows for understanding how funding allocation impacts educational outcomes for Indigenous and Black students. More narrowly, the study aims to look at these historically relegated groups to understand how LEA funding choices and action services may lead to different educational opportunities. This study will intentionally use race to parse the unduplicated students' category and its subgroups. With these foci, the study will assist in addressing gaps in quantitative work with aims to combat inequity and increase educational outcomes for Indigenous and Black students.

QuantCrit helps me bring together how the districts support their goals, actions, and services for students through funding totals in comparison to how Black and Indigenous students perform on standardized assessments. QuantCrit allows for the evaluation of test score data in ways that are attentive to a history of disinvestment and issues of equity and intragroup difference. This allows for a statistical element to CPA, permitting further evidence to show how these districts are or are not increasing education opportunities and outcomes for Black and Indigenous students. By using QuantCrit, I can ask more of quantitative data, pose critical questions, and contribute to a nuanced understanding of where and how Black and Indigenous students are served in the two districts. To evaluate quantitative data, I ran statistical analysis (e.g., descriptive statistics) where Black and Indigenous children are always centered. A QuantCrit approach to the population and achievement data helps meet an aim to understand how district funding allocation choices may be providing different access to educational opportunities

to students. Table 3.1 presents an example of how QuantCrit is leveraged in this study to ask more of quantitative data including how data is presented to reach conclusions.

Table 3.1 2018-2019 Demographics by Sub-Groups of Interest

	California	**Los Angeles County**	**LAUSD**	**LBUSD**
Total students	6,220,413	1,492,652 (24.0%)	621,414 (10.0%)	74,681 (1.2%)
Indigenous students	32,500	3,433 (10.6%)	1,091 (3.4%)	147 (0.5%)
Black students	340,841	111,240 (32.6%)	50,557 (14.8%)	9,537 (2.8%)
Total students whose caretakers are paid poverty wages	3,766,007 (60.5%)	1,025,283 (27.2%)	490,944 (13.0%)	50,707 (1.3%)
Indigenous Students	20,832 (64%)	2,083 (10.0%)	799 (3.8%)	78 (0.4%)
Black Students	248,191 (72.8%)	84,162 (33.9%)	40,274 (16.2%)	7,122 (2.9%)
Total youth placed in the foster system	33,563 (0.5%)	10,646 (31.7%)	4,117 (12.3%)	458 (1.4%)
Indigenous Students	463 (1.4%)	47 (10.2%)	17 (3.7%)	3 (0.6%)
Black Students	6,203 (1.8%)	2,590 (41.8%)	1,037 (16.7%)	134 (2.2%)

Note. Information was gathered by running data reports in the California Data Reporting Office's DataQuest system. All percentages rounded to nearest tenth.

Using QuantCrit to present data in different ways is one way in which the theory is leveraged in this dissertation. In Table 3.1, I show the percentages of Black and Indigenous students whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and youth placed in the foster care system in comparison to their respective group total. When compared to the percentages of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and youth placed in the foster care system for all children, it is

easy to see that Indigenous and Black children are more likely to be in these (sub)groups than all students. By choosing to present demographic data for Indigenous and Black students in this manner, I can show the importance of the presence of these children in LAUSD and LBUSD, and Los Angeles County broadly. This contextual information allows for greater understanding of where Black and Indigenous children live and their significance in two of the three LCFF unduplicated student categories.

3.3.4 Critical Discourse Analysis in this Study

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), methodologically, presents a diverse picture" (Blommaert, 2005). Here I begin by discussing what CDA is and what this approach does for a CPA informed by CRT. Then, I discuss how I use CDA in this study. I conclude by discussing the importance of linguistic tools to complete the textual analyses which are integral to a CDA and CPA.

Blommaert (2005) notes that everything said displays a wide variety of meanings and features that in isolation are meaningless, and only gain meaning through simultaneous occurrence. "An awareness of layered simultaneity in texts turns discourse into a complex, historically layered, and overdetermined object" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 131). Blommaert's notion allows for an understanding of discourse that is "particular and specific to local conditions" (p. 134). And further, it helps explain the ways in which power operates in societies and provides a tactic for connecting to lived reality. Afterall "we do not observe the deeper layers of our system, we see and experience its surface" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 135). Previous studies have primarily been attentive to the *surface* of the LCFF and LCAP, taking what the documents say at face value, particularly claims of attention to equity for children identified as unduplicated students. Surface analyses which are only attentive to claims, without exploring the actions following from

those claims, ignore a lived reality where Black and Indigenous students by and large fail to get their needs met.

The language of the documents comprises texts. A text is a product and a process of continuous choices, thus making it both an object and an instance of social meaning (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). I approach and analyze the LCAP texts in accordance with Fairclough's (2012) iterative model of CDA, moving between the different stages and steps laid out in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Fairclough's (2012) Theoretical Order of Stages and Steps for CDA

Stage	Step	Action
Stage		Focus upon a social wrong, in its semiotic aspects
	Step	Select a research topic that relates to, or points up, a social wrong and that can productively be approached in a trans-disciplinary way, with a particular focus on dialectical relations between semiotic and other 'moments'
	Step	Construct objects of research for initially identified research topics by theorizing them in a trans-disciplinary way
Stage		Identify obstacles to addressing the social wrong
	Step	Analyze dialectical relations between semiosis and other social elements: between orders of discourse and other elements of social practices, between texts and other elements of events
	Step	Select texts, and points of focus and categories for their analysis, in the light of, appropriately to, the constitution of the object of research
	Step	Carry out analysis of texts - both interdiscursive analysis and linguistic/semiotic analysis
Stage		Consider whether the social order 'needs' the social wrong
Stage		Identify possible ways past the obstacles

Note. My representation of Fairclough's (2012) characterization of CDA. Though presented as sequential, the order of the stages and steps is not fixed, and the analysis moves back and forth across these stages iteratively.

Thus far, I have already introduced both steps of the stage which requires a focus on the notion of a social wrong in its semiotic (meaning-making) aspects. In the problem statement of Chapter I, I put forth a research topic where I identify the social wrong as a form of systemic and institutional racism by which the education system, and school districts, fail to meet the needs and promise of Students of Color, particularly Indigenous and Black students, through

inequitable educational opportunities and funding. I continue to develop this point through the guiding theoretical framework where I discuss obstacles that have led to education disparities for Indigenous students and Black students.

To address the research topic in a transdisciplinary manner, I use quantitative and linguistic tools to expose ways the social wrong is realized in the LCFF. The language of the document data and quantitative data (semiotic 'moments') are in a dialectical relationship with the educational policy (other 'moment') that is implemented by each of the districts. The language instantiates the policy; the policy then 'makes things happen' through the ways it is formulated in language (see the stage focusing on the social wrong in its semiotic aspects). In this Chapter, in the data collection section, I discuss how I selected texts for analysis and what constitutes the research object identifying obstacles to addressing the social wrong.

3.3.5 Systemic Functional Linguistics in this Study

This study then draws on a robust theory of language, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), to analyze policy documents and support the conclusions. The remaining stages and steps primarily unfold in the findings chapters where I use SFL tools to evaluate the discourse of the documents. Systemic Functional Linguistics can assist with the CDA aim to make power more "visible and transparent" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 25). Through CDA and SFL together, I analyze the district LCAPs to show how power is functioning in the LCFF reform effort which promises a redistribution of power to districts and communities.

Halliday and Hasan (1985) introduce Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as a theory of language that posits language itself as a social-semiotic resource that is a product of social systems, where language and social structures emerge from aspects of human experience. Such a

theory of language is important for researchers asking questions in education where learning is a social process.

SFL allows for an exploration of text to examine contextual relationships, systems of language, and ultimately the meanings that are enabled, to address the research questions. Eggins (2004) displays tools that show how grammar, semantics, and text meanings can be understood using SFL. Through SFL, an understanding of the LCAP texts can be actualized by an analysis that is both interdiscursive and linguistic/semiotic.

An analyst's situated perspective guides every analysis. "Analysts need to declare their reading position – since the evaluation one makes of evocations depends on the institutional position one is reading from" (Martin, 1997, p. 25). I have made my reading position clear; I am reading through a CRT lens, with the analysis informed by principles and tenets which explicitly position my interpretation of language.

SFL's theory describes linguistic systems and their functioning to make meaning. It identifies three main metafunctions (meaning making systems) that are always simultaneously construed in every use of language: *ideational*, *interpersonal*, and *textual*. Every clause or sentence has elements of each of the three metafunctions. Ideational meanings construe our experiences, presenting particular views of the world and reality. Interpersonal meanings enact social relations and can be recognized through modality and attitude analysis (Appraisal values). Textual meanings are realized in language choices that create the information flow of discourse and can be recognized using techniques such as Genre analysis.

Kosko and Herbst (2012) remind us that there is often an intention for statements to maintain an aura of negotiation as they are transacted between persons and further that "it is reasonable to use the concept of modality to examine the extent to which collectively or socially

formed stances develop in the discourse of a group" (p. 592). The latter concept presents an argument for modality to be used to be used to uncover social norms.

Schleppegrell (2012a) reminds us that language plays an important role in our lives and that SFL allows the exploration of the hidden and unhidden meanings in texts through comprehensive analysis that is attuned to discourse choices. This notion, and the analytical tools, makes SFL a methodological approach with a strong theoretical grounding to complete the textual analysis in CDA and CPA (see Table 3.3).

I use SFL linguistic tools to display language choices which reveal (un)hidden meanings in the LCAP documents. The most generative tools emerging from my analyses are the Appraisal framework (Martin & White, 2005; Oteíza, 2017), especially modality (Eggins, 2004); Genre analysis and lexical chain analysis (Eggins & Slade, 1997; D. Rose, 2013), and social actor analysis (van Leeuwen, 2008). I use the Appraisal framework with a focus on modality to surface interpersonal meanings in the texts. I use Genre and lexical chain analysis to focus on textual meaning. And I use the social actor analysis to speak to ideational meaning.

After multiple readings of the LBUSD and LAUSD LCAPs, I subjected them to analysis using SFL tools. The analysis phase began by completing a Genre analysis where the document structure was determined and divided into stages. The stages were further compartmentalized into phases where sections of text were broken down into sentences. Ultimately, Genre analysis was most helpful to identify the sections of the LCAP which would be of most value for close analysis. By dividing the LCAPs into stages, I was able to learn the general structure and the types of moves LEAs might make within stages.

After gaining an understanding of the structure of the documents, I then completed a lexical chain analysis where I searched for words or phrases that referred to Indigenous students

and Black students. These chains were tallied and traced across the document while also considering the Genre stage or phase where the mention occurred. Through these efforts, sections of the district's LCAP were identified for further analysis based on *where* mentions of Indigenous or Black students occurred.

After this, social actor analysis was used to interrogate text for potential mentions of Indigenous and Black students which were indirect. This involved searching for related terms and analyzing how Indigenous and Black students were being positioned in the text. Then the Appraisal framework was used to specify the attitudinal meanings presented. The analysis shared in this section focuses particularly on data from the *2018-2019 LCAP Highlights* stage.

Further, the Modality analysis was used to highlight meaning in the *Goals, Actions, and Services* stage, specifically with each district's goals. Modality analysis, part of the Appraisal framework, was used to evaluate the goals of the 2018-19 LCAP. Modality analysis allows for an assessment of the ways that text can be tempered or qualified (Eggins & Slade, 1997; Eggins, 2004). Jimenez-Silva et al. (2016) succinctly state that "modality is the amount of certainty and/or obligation that a text conveys" (p. 7). Some examples of modality include "modal verbs such as may, must, should, or can, and modal adverbs such as sometimes, always, or never" (Kosko & Herbst, 2012, p. 592). I also code for epistemic modality (Jimenez-Silva, et al., 2016) which indicates probability. For instance, a goal stating, 'students might have teachers who are highly qualified' indicates a moderate degree of Certainty versus one stating 'students will have teachers who are highly qualified' which communicates a high degree of Certainty.

For the LBUSD and LAUSD LCAPs, sections describing the landscape of the district and the highlights of the LCAP, were selected as they provide information to understand the context each district and how the district plans to achieve goals and allocate services. These sections are

analyzed using the Appraisal framework to study language and word choice and the interpersonal meanings. Building off the Genre analysis, and the Stages and Phases identified, sections were separated into sentences and coded for elements of the Appraisal Framework (*Engagement*, *Attitude*, and *Graduation*). Below I provide more details on these analyses with connections to the LCAPs.

3.3.5.1 SFL tools at use in this study: Genre analysis.

The LCAP document is a part of a Genre chain[13] (Remling, 2018), a set of interrelated Genres that interact, and thus Genre Analysis was incorporated to gain a sense of the organizational structure and interacting linguistic features of the LCAP sections for both districts. Martin and D. Rose (2003) define a Genre as a "…staged, goal-oriented social process" (p. 7). People create Genres with other people (social) to accomplish social purposes (goal-oriented) through stages that achieve their goals (staged) (Martin & D. Rose, 2003). This process can also be seen and accomplished in written texts like the LCAP. Thus, a Genre is a text's generic identity, and, in this study, Genre refers to a written text that communicates an understanding given consistent patterns which render it recognizable to a reader. A Genre analysis can also be seen as an initial step towards situating language use culturally and socially (Eggins & Slade, 1997). D. Rose (2013) positions Genre as a starting point for a discourse analysis while maintaining a perspective focus on social contexts. Rose suggests that the *report* Genre has evolved with the institutional contexts of science, industry, and administration to classify and describe the features of a particular entity. Therefore, Genre analysis is the approach to understanding the dimensions of a Genre which includes understanding purpose, structure, and

[13] As this study analyzes how the LCAP is impacted by history and previous actions, the notion of a Genre chain is important for this study as it "…helps aid in operationalizing *political logics* further by tracing continuity, as well as identify change in the discursive productions of adaptation across documents (Remling, 2018, Table 2).

language features. The Genre analysis uncovers the consistent patterns within a Genre and allows the analyst to strategically interact with the text and manage new information.

Martin and D. Rose (2003) remind that us "the SFL model language in a social context recognizes three general social functions that we use language for…" with one of those being the textual metafunction which is used to "…organize our enactments and representations as meaningful text" (p. 6). Aspects of ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings are foregrounded in each LCAP section. However, as a policy document with a mandated template, the LCAP is required to be organized in a specific manner with different purposes to be achieved in each step. Given the length of each district's local control and accountability plan, a Genre analysis is useful in situating the language in the texts to gain an understanding of how the language is being laid out. In this study, the LCAP and other district documents constitute a part of a Genre chain (interconnected texts) within the LCFF process. Therefore, a Genre is a term used to refer to a type of text considering its purpose. Genre helps identify the generic identity of a text through describing its purpose considering the cultural context it is created in.

3.3.5.2 SFL tools at use in this study: Social actor network.

There is an immense sociosemantic inventory of the ways that social actors, or participants, can be represented in discourse and social actor network provides a framework to represent these instances (van Leeuwen, 2008). The social actor network "involves a number of distinct lexicogrammatical and discourse-level linguistic systems … involved in the realization of representations of social actors" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 53) and is helpful in bringing attention to the ways their agency is presented in language. van Leeuwen offers a framework for grounding linguistic expressions in sociological categories.

For example, through language, social actors are represented through instances of *inclusion* or *exclusion*. A social actor may be explicitly named in a text or not, and if named, can be positioned in various ways e.g., as agentive, or not. My use of social network theory is guided both by the language choices in the LCAPs and CRT tenets that guide my study. An example from the LBUSD LCAP is from the district's Goal 2 and states:

> Students will make academic progress on the Common Core State Standards so that they can be prepared for both college and careers upon high school graduation.

In this example, the social actors, the students of the LBUSD, are included, but also impersonalized and genericized as they are positioned as agentive, responsible for completing the goal. They are presented as an undifferentiated group who, despite just being children, are tasked with controlling their academic destinies. Other actors (e.g., district officials, administrators, teachers, principals, aides, etc.) are suppressed through the passive *be prepared* where the agents of the 'preparing' are not named. In addition, the roles of funding or academic opportunity, which also impact academic progress, are not mentioned. This goal is thus an example of *overdetermination* (a social actor network category), where there is an inversion of responsibility. Whereas adults should be responsible for ensuring the children are able to make academic progress, the LBUSD Goal 2 text places the onus on students. This type of determination aligns with the value that people, including children apparently, should pull themselves up by their bootstraps and, through a CRT lens, is an example of a racist ideology embedded into our educational institutions.

3.3.5.3 SFL tools at use in this study: Appraisal framework.

The Appraisal framework was developed to map interpersonal meanings of social significance (Coffin, 2002). The three organizational semantic systems of the Appraisal

framework (Engagement, Attitude, and Graduation)[14] are "concerned with how evaluation is expressed both implicitly and explicitly, creating valorative prosodies in the discourse that can be codified at a lexicogrammatical level in a wide range of resources" (Oteíza, 2017, p. 460). Also, Attitude can be subdivided into the categories of *Affect*, *Judgment*, and *Appreciation*.

Attitude is also the linguistic system through which positive and negative values are incorporated into a text. In this study there was little Affect expressed in the LCAP documents, so coding is primarily for Appreciation (attitudes toward things/ideas) or Judgment (attitudes toward people/institutions). I code Attitudes as positive or negative to identify the values that are expressed. I coded the different social actors referred to in the LCAPs as Judgement if the social actor was a person or institution and as appreciation if the social actor was towards things, situations, ideas, etc.

The linguistic system Graduation is defined as 'turning up' or 'turning down' Attitudes (force) or bringing them into sharper or weaker focus (focus). Engagement is the linguistic system through which other voices (heterogloss) can be brought into a text. An example of heterogloss is '***Researchers*** *suggest* that parents should be **HEAVILY** involved.' In this example, the other voice is the researchers. The researchers present positive Appreciation of the *involvement* of parents and intensify or 'turn up' the force of the expression through the word *heavily*.

The Appraisal framework provides systems and tools to evaluate language choices and therefore also provides an analyst distinct language to use in discussing their interpretations. An Appraisal analysis thus allows for the values that underlie word choice to be recognized and grounded in a theory of language that sees meaning as a social construction. My study uses this

[14] Linguistic constructs are capitalized to distinguish them from their ordinary meanings.

approach to recognize the attitudes that districts express, using a CRT lens to focus on the ways systemic racism is infused into references to Black and Indigenous students who continue to be denied equitable access to educational opportunity.

The coding framework for the Appraisal analysis draws on Hood's (2010) expanded system of graduation; Martin and D. Rose's (2003) coding framework to establish positive and negative attitude categories; and Martin and White's (2005) expanded system of Engagement values to analyze heterogloss. Next is an example showcasing Appraisal analysis [coding glossary: Positive Judgement underlined; Negative Judgement double underlined; Positive Appreciation wave underline; **FORCE** bold capitals; *FOCUS* italics capitals; ***heterogloss*** bold italics; *moderate certainty* italics and underlined; ***high certainty*** bold italics and underlined] from LAUSD's LCAP is from Goal 2, Action 9 where the district outlines services for "English Learner Supports" and states:

> Standard English Learner support program (AEMP) - Academic English Mastery Program ***is*** a **COMPREHENSIVE**, ***research-based*** program designed to address the language and literacy needs of African American, Mexican American, Hawaiian American, and American Indian students for whom Standard English ***is not*** native. The program *INCORPORATES* into the curriculum instructional strategies that *FACILITATE* the **ACQUISITION** of standard and academic English in classroom environments that **VALIDATE**, **VALUE**, and *BUILD UPON* the language and culture of the students. (LAUSD LCAP, 2018, pp. 121-122)

In this coded example, a normative reading of the text reveals that the LAUSD invokes an outside authority upon stating "research-based," thus positively Appreciating the AEMP program and turning up the Attitude through the highly focused **COMPREHENSIVE** and further sharpens the focus of the program through *INCORPORATES*, *FACILITATE*, and *BUILD UPON*. Though whoever is responsible for the research is not shared, by communicating this

information the LAUSD is using the prestige and power associated with research to offer a proclamation of AEMP through implicit endorsement from research. The LAUSD communicates high certainty regarding AEMP's characteristics when stating "Academic English Mastery Program ***is*** a **COMPREHENSIVE**, ***research-based*** program." This level of certainty dismisses potential viewpoints which may question the comprehensiveness, or the research used. While a normative reading of the text would suggest that the LAUSD is positively appreciating the Academic English Mastery Program, the CRT-informed Appraisal analysis shows instances that this and other seemingly positive statements are laden with negative Judgement, particularly of the students.

The CRT analysis questions this normative coding with the Appraisal framework to bring an interpretation from a race-oriented perspective that suggests alternative values for tokens of Judgment and Appreciation, for example. What might be viewed as 'positive' from a normative perspective can be interpreted with a CRT perspective as 'negative.' It is in this sense that the CRT lens offers alternative interpretations of the tokens of Attitudes in the LCAP documents. Using the CRT lens, the analysis uncovers that the district communicates high certainty regarding a lack of nativeness of standard English for "African American, Mexican American, Hawaiian American, and American Indian students." This wide-sweeping assertion not only states that all Black children, Indigenous children (both native to the continental United States and Hawaii), and children of Mexican descent do not speak standard English but there is also an implicit negative Judgment regarding this asserted fact. The notion that "Standard English ***is not*** native" for these children is embedded with the ideology that not speaking standard English is a bad thing that must be fixed. These deficit ideologies unfortunately align with historical notions of native languages being stripped from Black children, Indigenous children, Native Hawaiian

children, and Mexican children in the United States. This negative Judgement continues when the LCAP communicates that the strategies in the program "*FACILITATE* the **ACQUISITION** of standard and academic English." Though AEMP itself refers to academic English, the services outline also refers to and incorporates standard English. In this sense, while tacitly acknowledging a difference, the document positions academic and standard English as equals based on whiteness and Eurocentric values. And further, the LAUSD insinuates that without Standard English students will not be able to use Academic English, which we know is false. And though the LAUSD appears to positively position these children by stating that classrooms will "**VALIDATE**, **VALUE**, and *BUILD UPON* the language and culture of the students," this is not possible while concurrently stating that these children lack the lack the desired skills and need to learn them.

3.4 Conclusions to the Chapter

In this concluding section of this chapter, I pull together the theories and approaches that I have outlined to reiterate the chapter's foundation for the two findings chapters. I situate this study as a Critical Policy Analysis of the Local Control Funding Formula guided by Critical Race Theory. Together, the theories and approaches help uncover ways that institutional racism permeates through different facets of education. I conclude the chapter by reviewing the Research Questions and firmly situating how the specific data sources and analytic approach(es) help to provide a robust answer to the inquiries posed through the Research Questions.

3.4.1 Concluding Thoughts to the Methods at use

Robust data is produced under state law including the LCFF policy. Of these many potential data sources, this study used the SARC and LCAP data. To appropriately approach

these data, I put forth an analytical lens which permeates throughout this entire study. This study leans on two tenets from CRT, the permanence and normality of racism embedded into our systems and the value of experiential knowledge. It is through this CRT lens that I approach the CPA that this study is based in and focus on the education of Black and Indigenous children.

CPA serves as the overarching theoretical framework guiding this dissertation as it provides a manner to understand and evaluate the LCAP policy documents produced under the LCFF. CRT informs the CPA by providing a lens to not simply be critical of the policy process, but to view the policy in terms of racial equity for Indigenous and Black children.

To analyze the data outlined in this chapter under this CPA informed by CRT, I used CPA, CritQuant, CDA and SFL to analyze the data and specific inquiries. Therefore, CPA serves as both a theoretical framework and approach to this study and a specific analytical approach. I use CPA to understand the historicity of the LCFF, considering the political, social, and economic climate in which contribute to how this policy was established and operates today. I use QuantCrit to understand the schools which Black and Indigenous students attend and how standardized test results contribute to our understanding of academic success for these students to compare against LCAP services. I use CDA to complete a CPA approach analyzing text and considering other sources to understand and contextualize discourse. I use SFL to guide my analysis of specific language and organizational choices as SFL provides sufficient tools to approach the data in different ways and SFL is often used to complete textual analysis portions of CDA.

3.4.2 Connecting the Methods to the Research Questions

It is by using these different analytical methods that I am better situated to answer my Research Questions. The CRT-informed CPA serves as the analytical lens and theoretical

framework which guides my study. To analyze my data under my CPA approach, I use CDA with SFL, CPA, and QuantCrit as these approaches each hold me accountable to fulfill the perspectives and aims of the theoretical perspectives and analytical tools represented. Through using them in distinct ways together, I answer my Research Questions more robustly.

CRT guides me to consider the influence and shaping that racism contributes to the policy process and prompts me to evaluate how policy works for Black and Indigenous students. CRT reminds me to decipher discourse about and center Indigenous and Black children. CRT also guides me to consider that there are ways to honor the needs of Black and Indigenous children in meaningful and direct ways, if there is the desire and willpower to.

CPA provides a manner to approach and evaluate policy and policy impact for racialized persons like Indigenous and Black children. Further, the framework requires that I make connections between education and larger societal issues and concerns like white supremacy. Further, there is an intentional interrogation of power and influence in the policy process.

CDA prompts me to approach and understand policy written discourse, particularly when evaluating written texts which could be used for social justice or equity aims. A CDA framework and perspectives allows for understanding how social actors are positioned within texts. The approach to evaluating texts is grounded in having intimate knowledge of the context in which the texts are created to reach conclusions which are reflective of said context.

SFL allows for the understanding of how discourse can be used to protect whiteness, negatively positioning People of Color, etc. and uncover their existence in texts. As these perspectives tend to be covert, it is necessary to use tools which guide a theoretically grounded analysis to reach conclusions. Laws and language are inextricably intertwined and thus SFL's

theory of language and analytical tools enable the analyst to connect social practices and context to language choices.

QuantCrit requires that I use quantitative data in ways that are reflective of nuance and context and ask robust questions, thus allowing for greater understanding of what the data could be communicating. QuantCrit intentionally asks that I reorient numbers as not neutral by making clear the lens that I use to analyze the data and reach conclusions.

Chapter 4 Getting to the Local Control Funding Formula: How a Failure to Collect Taxes and an Inability to Directly Address Race Reinforce a White Supremacist System Doomed to Inadequacy

Thus far within the literature, there is a lack of attention to how the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) came into existence. Using a Critical Policy Analysis (CPA) framework routed with tenets from Critical Race Theory (CRT), this chapter traces key moments and figures over time which are positioned as contributors to the creation of the LCFF. Through the analysis of different data sources, I go through the three phases of CPA as outlined by Horsford et al. (2019). Through reviewing pertinent institutional and historical information, I set myself up to define some problems that the LCFF attempts to address, examine the policy process itself, and discuss the policy implementation. To effectively address these three CPA phases, I do this through a history-based approach. Through this journey across time, I am attentive to issues related to funding and race broadly, with specific references to Indigenous people and Black people.

4.1 Chapter Overview

Using these methods, this chapter addresses the Research Questions:

Research Question 1: How does the historicity of California public school funding, specifically key moments, social actors, and laws like the Local Control Funding Formula, contribute to an understanding of the documents and students' educational opportunities and outcomes?

Research Question 3: What types of messages regarding Black and Indigenous children are communicated through California state level discourse, as evident in the districts' planning and accountability documents?

Research Question 3A: How are Black and Indigenous children discursively positioned in these messages and how may that positioning be relevant to their access to equitable educational opportunities and outcomes?

This chapter describes California's approach to education funding and the reform efforts that led to an updated education finance and accountability system under the LCFF. The CPA-guided findings show that, historically, California can be characterized as being resistant to equity. The results also show that there is a demonstrated failure to distribute funding in a manner that positively impacts all student populations, particularly Students of Color. And the results highlight how issues related to race are not directly addressed through actualizing efforts. Though Black and Indigenous people are often not directly mentioned, my analysis directly reintegrates Indigenous and Black people back into the narrative by highlighting how events have impacted these children especially. Through this, Chapter 4 highlights California's issues surrounding educating Black and Indigenous children as systemic issues, supporting tenets of white supremacy, which continues through the Local Control Funding Formula. The findings in this chapter will ultimately provide a foundational understanding, informing the analysis carried out in the following chapter.

4.2 State of California Context

This section begins with a discussion of two sections of Article IX of the California constitution which covers public education. Next, there is a brief discussion of the roles of the state treasurer, department of education, state superintendent of public instruction, state

legislature, and state governor. Lastly, I will discuss the membership, responsibility, and function of the California State Board of Education.

4.2.1 The California Constitution Provides a Constitutional Right to Public Education and Outlines the Offices and Office Holders Responsible for Cultivating this Right

California Constitution Article IX addresses the notion of K-12 education in the state and Sections 1 and 5, which have never been amended, have key components which provide some apparent guarantees for public education. The generally accepted interpretation of the original 1879 text is that there is a clear indication of a right to a free and public education for all in the state. Article IX, § 1 states that "a general diffusion of knowledge and intelligence being essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people, the legislature shall encourage by all suitable means the promotion of intellectual, scientific, moral, and agricultural improvement." In this first section, the California legislature is tasked with the responsibility of encouraging the promotion of intellectual endeavors, thus positioning the state as uniquely responsible for all education. Article IX, § 5 goes on to say that "the legislature shall provide for a system of common schools by which a free school shall be kept up and supported in each district at least six months in every year after the first year in which a school has been established." This fifth section states that the California legislature is constitutionally responsible for school systems and ensuring that schools will be routinely kept up and supported no matter the school district. Together, Sections 1 and 5 provide a guarantee of public schooling where the state is responsible for ensuring quality education and that all public schools be supported.

Outside of the state broadly and the California legislature, other entities and officeholders have authority over aspects of education. For instance, the California Treasurer is tasked with providing financing for public schools with a primary duty to provide transparency and oversight

for the state's finances (Ma, 2023). The California Department of Education (CDE) is tasked with overseeing the entire public school system and expresses that "California will provide a world-class education for all students (sic), from early childhood to adulthood" (Executive Office, 2022, September). Whereas "the CDE and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction are responsible for enforcing education law and regulations; and for continuing to reform and improve public elementary school programs, secondary school programs, adult education, some preschool programs, and child care programs" (Executive Office, 2022, April).

Many different agencies and persons have some authority to impact public education in California. Constitutionally, the Superintendent of Public Education appears to have important oversight and enforcement authority to impact public education. However, Policy Analysis of California Education faculty director and education scholar Julie A Marsh suggests that the State Superintendent of Public Instruction does not have true power or influence and, while the office holder can take positions on bills and be a spokesperson for issues, there is a lack of a legislative authority (Mays, 2022). Therefore, in actual practice, the governor, the state legislature, and the state board of education have actual authority over schools and education in California (Mays, 2022) and it is these persons and entities which hold greater importance to understand education funding and attention to issues related to race over time.

4.2.2 The California State Board of Education: Powers, Board Composition, and Governor Influence

Considering public education in California, the California State Board of Education [CSBE] is given substantial control and authority under the state constitution, including some areas which are important to this study like education funding and assessments, but that power is heavily influenced by the governor. For example, the CSBE has the constitutional duty to adopt

textbooks for grades one through eight and has approved academic standards, curriculum frameworks, and instructional materials (CSBE, 2022, September 1). The CSBE approves how certain state and federal funding sources are allocated (CSBE, 2022, September 1). The CSBE also oversees statewide assessment policies and tests, and along with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, has approval authority for charter district petitions (CSBE, 2022, September 1). On paper, the CSBE has the sole authority to determine how some education funding is allocated and statewide assessments which determine how children are perceived to be performing.

However, the CSBE power, authority, and board composition is subject to great political influence which often usurps constitutional and CSBE bylaws requirements. Though some state boards of education in the United States prohibit those with education backgrounds from serving or do not allow educators to have votes (VanGronigen et al., 2022), thankfully California does not have such restrictions against educators. The California Governor appoints all eleven members, with the advice and consent of the California Senate, to the State Board of Education under the California Constitution, including a public high school student who serves a one year term, rather than four years, and has voting rights (CSBE, 2022, September 1)[15]. While CSBE members are appointed to four year terms which are intended to be staggered across potential changes in gubernatorial administrations, CSBE members tend to resign when their appointing governor leaves office. And although the CSBE has such immense control over public education, these political appointees are not required to have any minimum qualifications nor any

[15] As of August 31, 2023, the CSBE has nine female-presenting and two male-presenting members. Five of the members have or will soon have a PhD or EdD related to education, one is an education attorney. One member has openly identified as LGBTQ+ member, one openly identifies as being an Indigenous tribal member; two members appear to Black people, two members appear to be Asian people, two members appear to be White people, and four members appear to be Latin* people.

experience in or knowledge of public education. Further, the California State Senate is tasked with approving nominees, but does not typically reject governor appointees. While according to CSBE bylaws the eleven board members are tasked with electing its president[16] and vice president yearly (CSBE, 2013, January 16), in practice the governor determines who will serve as the CSBE president (see Appendix D for State Superintendent of Education's CSBE). Such structural realities leave California public education largely at the whim of political influence, primarily that of the governor. Therefore, while the CSBE has immense control over public education, the governor has enormous influence over the CSBE itself.

We now know that the California Constitution provides some important guarantees to an education for children. Though many different entities have some important roles when it comes to carrying out public education in California, it is the state governor, state legislature, and CSBE who arguably have the most authority to shape K-12 education. However, the state governor has disproportionate power and authority to influence K-12 education and often tends to usurp constitutional or bylaws requirements by directly appointing the CSBE president and often having a complete board turnover during the first few months of taking office.

4.3 Education Funding Disparities and Racism Get (Un)Addressed through the Judicial System and Ballot Measures

Through this section, there is a particular emphasis on overviewing education funding disparities, focusing on implications for Black students and Indigenous students. This section begins with a national focus by situating *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), a Supreme Court of the United States case, and its impact and legacy on education regarding race and funding

[16] The President of the CSBE serves as its official spokesperson, represents its positions to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and presides over meetings (CSBE, 2013, January 16).

including a shift from the original case issue of education funding to what was thought to a more viable argument about the value of education and the harm of segregation whilst competing in a globalized economy. After this, I shift to a California context with the introduction of Jerry Brown, who will be an important figure in this story. Then there's a discussion of California's school finance system in effect in 1970, highlighting the inequitable structure which benefited districts with more money. After that, the California Supreme Court cases *Serrano v. Priest* (1971, 1975) and their impact on education funding inequity are situated. Next comes the election of Jerry Brown as governor in 1975 and Brown's appointment of economist and education scholar Michael Kirst as the CSBE president. Following this, there I present the voter approved Proposition 13 (1978) and its lasting negative impact on K-12 education funding and *Serrano v. Priest*. Then, I engage with some scholarly ideas, including Michael Kirst's during the 1970s and 1980s and education funding broadly, including Proposition 13 implications. Next, I discuss the voter-passed measures Proposition 98 (1988) and Proposition 111 (1990) given their general attempt to address a decrease in education funding following Proposition 13. Lastly, I present the importance of Proposition 209 (1996), which amended the state constitution making it illegal for the state to instigate action based on race or gender for public education, public employment, or public contracting and Governor Pete Wilson and the court system's roles in upholding Proposition 209 and thus restricting Persons of Color, and women, of the right to use the legal process to achieve power.

4.3.1 Brown v. Board of Education's Connections to Education Funding, Race and Racism, and the Case's Legacy for the Education of Students of Color

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954) is generally considered a landmark Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) case as it ended legal segregation in K-12

schools, however, the ruling has failed to meet its potential due to acquiescing to local rights which sought to resist desegregation efforts. While the initial request from Black parents was for equal funding for schools their children attended, asking for integration was eventually seen as a more viable request to SCOTUS.[17] As such, the consolidated *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* SCOTUS case argued that Black children had been denied access to certain public schools because local laws allowed schools to be segregated by race and asked that *de jure* (in law; legally recognized) segregation be declared illegal under the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment. *Brown* declared that separate but equal education facilities are inherently unequal and ordered that schools be desegregated. This decision led to a focus on *de jure* segregation, primarily in the United States South. And due to limitations stemming from *Brown* and other civil rights era cases and laws, CRT, and critical legal studies, scholars (e.g., Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995 & Ladson-Billings, 1999) have engaged in critiques of *Brown v. Board*, given its intent to provide incremental change rather than sweeping changes.

Specifically, G. López & Burciaga (2014) remind that *Brown* happened in two decisions where SCOTUS chose to delegate their judicial oversight to local court systems and allow local control to dictate what desegregation looks like. This highlights some limitations of using the judicial system to enact social change. The first decision, *Brown I* (1954), essentially declared racial discrimination in public education to be unconstitutional, thus recognizing a constitutional principle in alignment with the promise of the United States. Irrespective of equality, *Brown I* declared separate but equal schools are unconstitutional and that racially segregated schools could never be equal in the eyes of the U.S. Constitution (G. López & Burciaga, 2014). The

[17] This strategy failed to address funding inequities and *de facto* segregation in regions like the United States North.

second decision, *Brown II* (1955), was a reconvening of the Court and provided some directives to implement this constitutional principle. Notably, *Brown II* declared that *Brown I* should be implemented *with all deliberate speed*. However, *Brown II* left it to the local school districts to determine the structure and pace of desegregation efforts and tasked lower courts with determining whether the school districts were compliant (G. López & Burciaga, 2014). So, while the *Brown II* Supreme Court ordered the local education systems to fully comply with and implement the principles outlined in *Brown I*, it also eliminated its judicial responsibility by deferring to the courts which originally heard the cases and the local school districts which were being sued for refusing to provide equitable education. In this sense, local school districts were provided a judiciary pass to resist desegregation efforts, particularly when state and federal government officials did not fully embrace the *Brown I* decision.[18] As such, the teeth of *Brown I* were upended by *Brown II*'s acquiescence to local control and desires when deciding the speed of racial desegregation in schools, impacting the education of generations of Black children, Indigenous children, and other Children of Color. For instance, given the deference to local control, some desegregation efforts continued for decades thus nullifying the *with all deliberate speed* decree.[19] And further, the racist and classist fabric of the United States, embedded into its laws and its citizens' beliefs, was never addressed by the *Brown* decisions.

Goodwin Liu, who we will hear more about later in relation to influencing education funding policy in California, analyzed the impact of *Brown* and its limitations in addressing racial segregation while highlighting the sociocultural importance of race and how whiteness

[18] "We have also come to understand that the very same courts that gave it life, also limited Brown's promise and potential at every turn and with each subsequent decision (López & Burciaga, 2014, p. 807).
[19] In May 2016, over 60 years after *Brown*, a federal judge finally declared that a school district in Cleveland, Mississippi had not been making good faith efforts to desegregate its high schools and ordered that its two schools be combined, after the school district protested for decades.

using race-evasive strategies fought to uphold tenets of racial segregation in schools. Liu (2004) consciously includes the sociocultural backdrop including government sanctioned systems of oppression (e.g., Federal Housing Administration housing racial segregation policies) which socially, politically, and economically subjugated Black people, Indigenous people, and other People of Color. In considering the ruling of *Brown* itself, Liu suggests that SCOTUS did not address segregation at large, but rather solely in education, "a domain of special, contemporary concern" (p. 710) given the singular importance of education for each individual child and education's importance to society at large. Therefore, SCOTUS made the argument that segregation in schools hurt the United States.

However, post-*Brown*, many school districts implemented free choice, transfer programs, or outright manipulated school attendance zones which led to a guarantee of continued racial segregation (Liu, 2004). These efforts no longer directly mentioned race, in contrast to *de jure* efforts like Jim Crow laws. Yet these had racial implications by effectively establishing legal shielding for White people from Indigenous and Black people by allowing the creation of White suburbs to (re)establish schooling for White children which implicitly excluded those like Black and Indigenous children. This highlights the shift to a prevalence of *de facto* (in fact; describes reality regardless of legal recognition) laws upheld through the judicial system (see Appendix E), which, despite being race-evasive, maintains tenets of racial segregation and limits education opportunity for Black and Indigenous children.

Aside from SCOTUS failing to target *de facto* racial segregation, and then ultimately deciding against efforts to address all forms of racial segregation more wholly and upholding *de facto* situations, the Court, through *Brown*, also did not address racial discrimination at large nor offer protections for Black children who would be thrust into environments where adults, some

tasked with their care, failed to provide opportunities and actively sought to prevent Black children from accessing equitable schools. While *Brown* ordered desegregation in schools and offered some measures of racial balance, there was no elimination of racial discrimination nor any plans to protect Black children from discriminatory policies within schools (Bell Jr., 1980).

What followed was a whitelash, where hostile and often violent reactions are enacted by, largely, White people when there is a suggested change in social structure that serves to benefit or advance the rights of groups like Black people and Indigenous People. This notably included school choice (the right of caregivers to choose the education for their children) which began to proliferate after *Brown* and expanded though the 1950s and 1960s, primarily as a tool to resist racial integration and equity efforts. For example, as noted in *Griffin v. School Board of Prince Edward County* (1964), policymakers in Price Edward County, one of the respondents in *Brown*, created county and state funded grant programs for White families to attend private schools and closed its public schools rather than provide education to Black children. While SCOTUS decided that Prince Edward County's efforts were illegal because they denied education to Black children which was available to their peers, the Court also declared that closing public schools and establishing private schools was not unilaterally unconstitutional. Thus, the Court unwittingly provided the blueprint for encouraging legislatures to adopt race-evasive approaches where race was not explicitly mentioned as a catalyst for actions.

During the 1950s and 1960s, school choice options primarily included private schools, religious schools, and home schooling which were often supported or directed by policymakers and used public funding. And despite the setback in *Griffin*, private schools became a popular tool to bypass integration and establish secluded, and legally protected, educational spaces especially for White children of those with more financial means. While this tool was initially

deployed in the South, it was also notably used in the northern states, the Midwest, and the West as White people, particularly those with financial means, sought to establish enclaves for them and their children. And, though the concept of local control can be used for equitable purposes and to empower educators and institutions which are most knowledgeable and closest to students and schools, it has also been used to deny education. In these instances, local control was weaponized to provide publicly supported private schools which were allowed to deny education to Black and Indigenous children as the court system as decided not to strike down laws which protect the autonomy of private educational institutions.

In the years following *Brown*, "demographic patterns, white flight[20], and the inability of the courts to effect the necessary degree of social reform render further progress implementing *Brown* impossible" (Bell Jr., 1980, p. 518). These three factors contributed to Black children attending racially isolated and inferior public schools, and more importantly, relegated *Brown* to some level of irrelevance given the millions of Black children who have been denied the promise of educational opportunity under the decision (Bell Jr., 1980). Such issues led some civil rights attorneys to broaden racial desegregation efforts in schools to include large urban metropolitan areas, with an intent to target white suburbs where White parents often sought *sanctuary* for their children, in legal battles to effectuate broader educational opportunities (Bell Jr., 1980).

Indeed, post-*Brown* Hanushek et al. (2002) remind that racial segregation in schools was primarily the result of residential segregation. These housing patterns are predominated by largely White families moving away from areas where Persons of Color live and taking job opportunities and financial resources with them. These actions were coupled with establishing

[20] White flight is a defiance strategy of White people moving, often from urban areas to suburban areas, to resist living alongside Black people and other People of Color and sending their children to schools alongside non-white children.

local education agency boundaries to exclude those who did not reside within their newly established sanctuary. Here, local schools were permitted to establish boundaries around their school sites, only allowing children who lived within their arbitrary boundaries to attend, which effectively excluded Black and Indigenous people And, in these situations (e.g., Milliken v. Bradley, 1974), SCOTUS rejects attempts to address the racial implications of schooling more wholly, particularly under *de facto* circumstances and race-evasive policies. So, despite the promise of *Brown*, the absence of broader supporting social policies[21], in the context of the virulent racist white backlash and white flight that followed, Black children continued to attend racially isolated and poorly funded public schools.

While *Brown* is pivotal in terms of the notion of integration and education equity, these fights notably can be traced back to California where the fight surrounding educational equity was often led by people of Mexican descent. For example, in the 1940s, California state laws gave local control powers to school systems to create schools for Indigenous and Asian children, and while students with Mexican heritage are often considered to be White under Census standards, many local school boards, like those in Los Angeles, decided to create separate schools for them as well (Kelly, 2016). This led to *Mendez v. Westminster School District* (1946)[22], which some (e.g., Orfield et al., 2011) position as an important precursor to *Brown*. After *Mendez*, in 1947, California Governor Earl Warren, future SCOTUS Chief Justice for *Brown*, signed a repeal of the remaining segregationist statues against Indigenous and Asian

[21] For example, housing policies and education policies fund formerly racially segregated, particularly all-Black, schools and ensure that these schools continue operating.

[22] This case notably argued that since Mexican Americans are often considered White people under the United States Census, they were being discriminated against by being forced to attend separate schools because they are White. The district court found that social equality in public education is paramount and should be open to all children regardless of lineage, but the Appellate Court narrowed the ruling to only apply to children of Mexican ancestry.

children in the California Education Code. Warren's response constituted a policy response to correct an issue which the courts had failed to address.

As such, through the 1960s, California generally treated school segregation as unequal, however, many cities like Los Angeles still had racially segregated neighborhoods. As such, some people sought to end *de facto* racial residential segregation. However, they were met with mounting resistance in the late 1960s and 1970s leading to California shifting toward a refusal to address racial segregation. For example, in 1963 a case was filed against the Los Angeles Board of Education asking for schools to be desegregated (Orfield et al., 2011).[23] School racial segregation in the Los Angeles area remained a major issue as White people established schools within white suburbs leaving Los Angeles Unified School District schools without resources. And school busing was Los Angeles Unified School District's chosen method to address desegregation efforts and reduce the impact of white flight (Divinity, 2020). Rather than addressing inequitable school funding practices and ensuring that children's local schools were well-funded, the district's response upended children from their neighborhoods. While this attempt did not require white communities to share their financial resources more fairly, it still required the sharing of educational spaces and sought to address the disparate impacts of *de facto* racial segregation across communities. Orfield et al. (2011) asserts that "more than any other state outside the South, California has acted to prohibit or reverse civil rights policies, leaving itself with few tools to deal with sweeping changes and profound inequalities" (p. 11). A further contribution to these inequalities came with the election of Ronald Reagan as California Governor in 1966. This election amounted to an escalation against addressing racial issues as Reagan was an adversary of Civil Rights and opposed the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Orfield et al.,

[23] However, due to legal delay tactics and an electoral defeat of a judge, this case was not finalized until 1976 in *Crawford v. Los Angeles Board of Education*, 17 Cal 3d 280 (l976) (Orfield et al., 2011).

2011). It is in this social context, post-*Brown*'s attempt at incremental social progress and thriving legally protected whitelash, where there remains a pressing need to address the entrenched inequities that California's reform efforts beginning in the 1970s can be understood.

4.3.2 The Political Entry of Jerry Brown, someone who will have a Disproportionate Role in Impacting Education in California

Jerry Brown first entered politics, like so many politicians, began by serving on an education related board but would go on to have a political career spanning seven decades across numerous positions with dipropionate authority. Jerry Brown is the child of Bernice Layne Brown and Pat Brown, a former California Governor, who began a political career after finishing a Bachelor of Laws at Yale Law School in 1964. In 1969, without any specific training or experience related to the profession of education, Brown ran for and won a seat for the newly established Los Angeles Community Board of Trustees, being responsible for the oversight of the city's community college education (Van Niekerken, 2019, January 4). Jerry would only serve in this role until 1971 as Brown ran for and was elected as California Secretary of State in 1970, assuming office in 1971. Jerry Brown will continue to be highlighted throughout this chapter with attention to Brown's political roles and influence which came with authority and overt attempts to impact education.

4.3.3 Education Funding in 1970s California: A System Designed to Benefit the Wealthy with a Reliance on Local Property Taxes Meant to Remain Local

Heading into the 1970s, California's school finance system was inequitable and purposely benefitted school districts with more financial means, which came with increased racial implications considering white flight and the protection of white suburbs following *Brown*

v Board. In 1972, the California finance scheme included a combination of local property taxes and state contributions, which were supplied under the "foundation program." This program included a combination plan which set up two types of aid, using state and local revenue, with a general goal to ensure that all LEAs received a minimum funding. The foundation program provided a guarantee that each LEA would receive a minimum of $355 per elementary school student and $488 per high school student. First, basic *state aid* provided a flat per pupil grant of $125 to all districts regardless of need. Then, a hypothetical foundation program figure,[24] called *district aid*, would be generated, which considered the amount raised if a district were to assess a theoretical tax amount of either one dollar (for elementary schools) or eighty cents (for high schools) for each one hundred dollars of assessed property valuation in the respective school zone.[25][26] The basic state aid and the hypothetical figure would be computed. And lastly, after computing this figure, if an LEA was below the per pupil threshold for their district, they were provided an *equalization aid*, which provided funds, as determined by the state superintendent of public instruction, to ensure an LEA received minimum aid levels under the foundation program for their district. This type of funding distribution strategy, where there is a notion of a base funding amount applicable to all LEAs and additional funding intended to supplement, is like what we will see in the LCFF which will be discussed later in this chapter.

[24] The Foundation Program figure (note: this is different for each school district) is an important determining factor for what the state would set as a fair budget for the school year for each district. This is a problem for school districts in areas where the assessed property values are low as the district aid figure will also be low. The computation system asserts that those properties in those school districts have less value and thus the school system itself will have a lower district aid computation.

[25] Note: this computed figure for district aid did not consider how much local taxes or aid that an LEA received. And thus, allowed wealthier school districts to keep funds when they exceeded what the state determined to be the basic financial level as the amount was only intended to be a minimum.

[26] Perkins (1972) reminds that there is an expectation under the California Constitution for "the levying of taxes by local governing bodies at a rate necessary to meet their annual education budget" (p. 365).

In this funding system, LEAs were deemed to have sufficient aid if they did not qualify for equalization aid. In these circumstances, LEAs received funding through local property taxes which were greater than the minimum funding total guaranteed by the state. Most of these LEAs would not have qualified for equalization aid even if they did not receive basic aid. Therefore, under the foundation program, basic state aid was given to school districts that were deemed to have sufficient aid solely through local tax revenue. "Thus, the basic aid has the perverse effect of benefiting the richer districts and being of little or no significance to the poorer districts" (Perkins, 1972, p. 368). The basic aid gave an unneeded financial benefit to school districts with individuals paid high wages, while those districts populated with individuals paid poverty wages needed state funds to reach the foundation program figure. And these districts with more poverty, due to also having disvalued land and property, often had computed hypothetical district aid figures which were lower than that of districts in wealthier areas; this effectively led to poverty districts receiving less state aid per pupil.

This systemic issue is compounded by the reliance on local property taxes that produces greater systemic inequities in education funding (Perkins, 1972). California's school finance system of the early 1970s should be seen as inherently inequitable as a whole and situated as one designed for the benefit of wealthier districts (Perkins, 1972). This finance system, particularly the reliance on local property taxes, that keeps funds in the districts where they originated, along with the inequitable calculation of the state's district aid figure, became the catalyst for a case coming from Los Angeles County public school students alleging inequity.

4.3.4 Serrano v. Priest (1971 and 1976) Declares California's Local Property Tax Reliant School Funding Structure to be Unconstitutional and the State Scrambles to Respond

Serrano v. Priest (1971, 1976, 1977) is a class action lawsuit, separated into three decisions, brought by Los Angeles County public school families on behalf of most public school students in California. The lead plaintiff, John Serrano Jr and the other students and families were counseled by Western Center on Law and Poverty and Public Advocates Inc. This lawsuit was brought against those charged with providing finances to schools including the State Treasurer, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and State Controller (see Appendix F regarding parties involved with this case).

The suit alleged two main causes of action. First, that, given the education financing system, severe disparities in education opportunities for children exist and are perpetrated by the state of California (Goldstein, 1972). Further, this finance system offers many children markedly inferior education opportunities given restricted access to school districts (Goldstein, 1972). The second cause declared that due to the school financing scheme the parents, as dutiful taxpayers, were required to pay higher taxes when compared to people in other school districts, but that their children received lesser educational opportunities (Goldstein, 1972).

With this, the complaint requested that the state education finance system be declared unconstitutional, second, that state officials reallocate school funds to provide remedy, and third, a call for judicial action if the California legislature failed to restructure the finance system in a timely manner. In short, the suit asked for the California legislature and Governor Ronald Reagan to create a new school funding system where all funds, including local property tax dollars, be distributed equitably and for the judicial system to hold them accountable.

With this lawsuit, subsequently called *Serrano I* (1971), the California Supreme Court became the first state judicial system to declare their state's school funding mechanism to be unconstitutional (Yinger, 2004). The court decided that the overreliance on local property taxes

to fund local schools was unequal under both the state constitution and the 14th Amendment of the United States constitution.[27] The California Supreme Court stated:

> We have determined that this funding scheme invidiously discriminates against the poor because it makes the quality of a child's education a function of the wealth of their [*sic*] parents and neighbors. Recognizing as we must that the right to an education in our public schools is a fundamental interest which cannot be conditioned on wealth, we can discern no compelling state purpose necessitating the present method of financing. We have concluded, therefore, that such a system cannot withstand constitutional challenge and must fall before the equal protection clause. [*Serrano I*, 1971]

However, the *Serrano I* decision focused on differences in wealth among school districts rather than differences in expenditures, setting forth an unfortunate precedent for education funding. As school district wealth is strongly correlated with taxable wealth per child, Goldstein questions why the court focused on situating a *constitutional vice* on wealth differences rather than, regardless of cause, disparities in expenditures.

While this ruling set its sights on the role of local property taxes, it did not address the inequitable calculation of minimum per pupil funding.[28] The legal teams produced the argument that state grants were inadequate to address the apparent inequities based on a school finance system which depended on varying local taxes (*Serrano v. Priest*, 1971). This decision recognized that where someone lives should not dictate the quality of schooling that they receive but did not consider that maintaining relatively equivalent expenditures could more centrally

[27] Another major finding from the Serrano cases, *Serrano v. Priest* (1977), is that public interest attorneys are entitled to compensation when they are successful in suits against government officials and agencies. Thus, Western Center on Law & Poverty and Public Advocates Inc. received $400,000 each in attorney's fees.

[28] The finding offered a key example highlighting three different school districts in Los Angeles County during the 1968-69 school year where Baldwin Park Unified School District spent nearly $580 per pupil (with an assessed per child valuation of $3,706), Pasadena Unified School District spent approximately $840 per pupil (against an assessed per child valuation of $13,706), and Beverly Hills Unified School District spent about $1,230 per student (with an assessed valuation of $50,885).

address differences in educational opportunities. However, the California Supreme Court's response focused on taxes, leaving inequities in place, and contributing to a devasting fight over property taxes.

In response to *Serrano I*, Governor Ronald Reagan and the California legislature tried to address inequitable education funding in the state, passing two bills, Senate Bill 90 (1972) and Assembly Bill 1267 (1973), that addressed public school finance through mechanisms designed to alleviate disparities between differing tax/wealth districts. The basic state finance structure remained the same, where all districts would receive $125 per child regardless of need, with changes coming to the foundation level with increases to per pupil funding and the computational tax rate for elementary schools and high schools.[29] The *Serrano* Court would evaluate this response to determine its adherence to *Serrano I*.

While the California Supreme Court was evaluating the legislative response, Governor Reagan chose not to run for a third term and Jerry Brown won a contested election to become California governor for the first time in 1975. In 1976, the California Supreme Court released its evaluation of Senate Bill 90 and Assembly Bill 1267 in *Serrano v. Priest* (1976), hereinafter *Serrano II*, and deemed the attempt to be insufficient and urged the new legislature and Governor Jerry Brown to reduce actual differences in school district revenue. The Court postulated that under the Reagan administration's dual school finance system bills, in general, districts with lower resources could move towards higher foundation levels and districts with higher resources could increase their revenue bases at a slower rate in comparison (*Serrano II*, 1976). However, the Court determined that this legislative response would be insufficient and ordered that district

[29] Foundation level funding was increased to $765 per pupil (from $355) for elementary schools and $950 per pupil (from $488) for high schools (*Serrano II*, 1976). The computational tax rate was increased to $2.23, from $1, for elementary schools and from $0.80 to $1.64 for high schools (*Serrano II*, 1976).

disparities be reduced to less than $100 per child between LEAs by 1980. This determination highlights a focus on actual differences in expenditures between school districts but asserting that there should be a limit to actual differences in per pupil funding expenditures.

Additionally, in *Serrano II*, the Court needed to reaffirm or dismiss the *Serrano I* decision, considering the *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* SCOTUS decision. In that 5-4 decision, SCOTUS found that there is no fundamental right to education in the United States Constitution and thus a failure to distribute funding equally cannot be protected under the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause (see Appendix G for more information). As *Serrano I* had also invoked the California Constitution, the *Serrano II* majority decision reaffirmed its reliance on the *equal protection of the laws* provisions in the state constitution.

The *Serrano II* decision led to a settlement of the case where a per-pupil amount was set, and funding dollars would be redistributed from the state level, however still relying on local property taxes as a major contributor for school funding. In the years following this decision, the state began working to institute a finance system that would largely remain in place for the next forty years. The system California created was some touted as increasingly complex given small requirements that LEAs spend certain monies to serve specific populations or interests.

4.3.5 Proposition 13 (1978) Reduces the Amount of Local Property Taxes Which can be Collected, Harming Education Funding in the Process

Against a backdrop of the redistributive requirements in the rulings of *Serrano I and II* and a growing sentiment that white tax dollars should benefit white desires and that government spending should be limited, in June of 1978, Howard Jarvis' fifth attempt to get an anti-tax measure passed in California, Proposition 13, was up for a vote. While Proposition 13 did not

directly take an aim on education funding, there was a general understanding, given the *Serrano II* settlement, that if it did not pass, local tax dollars would be used for educational funding outside of the districts that generated them, having a more distributed effect.

Kirst (1979, February) positions the battle surrounding Proposition 13 as one between a public finance movement supporting equity-focused reform and another seeking to limit tax collection and spending limitations (see Appendix H for more information regarding the forces behind Proposition 13). Proposition 13 came with direct implications for California education funding and dire consequences for education funding in other states; for example, the ballot measure inspired similar efforts to cut property taxes and negatively impact education funding in other states like Michigan (Kirst 1979, February). With the passage of Proposition 13, most voting Californians chose to limit taxes and spending rather than support equitable reform efforts; directly impacting the state's financial infrastructure and education funding.

While Proposition 13 limited property taxes (see Appendix I), Proposition 13's alteration of property taxes collection directly impacted the amount of funding that was allocated to schools and directly led to a decrease in education funding. Prior to the passage of Prop 13, the average property tax rate was 2.67%; therefore, on average, property tax dollars collected decreased about 60% (Chu & Uhler, 2016, September). This constituted an ongoing decrease in revenue for the state of California and a conflicting action to the spirit of the *Serrano* decisions. Pedro Noguera notes that California transitioned to having some of the lowest per-pupil funding in the United States after the passage of Proposition 13 (Chiotakis, 2020, September 28).

School funding was so impacted by Proposition 13, because nearly two-thirds of school funding emanated from local property taxes, but those with more financial means were able to circumvent many of the pitfalls from the ballot measure. After the proposition passed, there was

a proliferation of private school foundations with aims to financially support a public school district or identified schools beyond the funding received through traditional means. These foundations serve as a way for people in wealthier districts to usurp the equalization efforts of *Serrano* by allowing wealthy and mostly white communities to keep "their money" supporting their community schools and children. This system is completely legal and further allows money and location to serve as determining factors for a child's education quality, and further hiding whiteness behind notions of wealth and choice.

4.3.6 Reframing Dialog Regarding Education and Prevailing Issues in Education in Wake of Serrano and Proposition 13

Due to financial restraints created by Proposition 13, schools, scholars, and politicians were thrust into an environment where school funding was decreased, but schools were being asked to do more with less funding and increased accountability measures. In response to what school systems were experiencing, politicians proposed and passed different measures. Additionally, scholars were active during this time, including Stanford professor and education finance scholar Michael Kirst, who first entered the California political sector when Jerry Brown appointed Kirst to serve on the CSBE in 1975 (see Appendix J for more information on Kirst). Kirst would go on to have a disproportionate impact on California education today.

For example, as covered in Appendix J, some narratives discursively blame desegregation efforts for the growth of private schools and the uncertainty which followed in the destabilization of public schools. In these instances, the discourse suggests that racist efforts and ideologies are not to blame and those seeking relief are at fault. And predictably, as occurred in the South following *Brown*, a refusal to allow Black and Indigenous children equitable educational opportunities followed. Fueled by racial animus, some White people worked to

establish private schools for their children whilst simultaneously blocking racial desegregation efforts. In fact, a majority of Californian voters supported Proposition 1 (1979) which amended the state constitution to only allow busing for racial desegregation efforts when federally mandated. Under federal guidelines, this would only apply to *de jure* racial segregation and not *de facto* racial desegregation. Thus, the passage of Proposition 1 ended all efforts to address *de facto* racial desegregation in places like Los Angeles.

Despite the problematic framing of some of the many issues facing schools, there was work to do in the 1980s to support schools, especially financially. Jerry Brown tended to other issues rather than K-12 education policy as governor (Kirst, 2019, March). However, the succeeding Republican governor, George Deukmejian, signed the 1983 Hughes-Hart Educational Act into law soon after taking office and scholars associated with Kirst's new think tank, Policy Alternatives for California Education (see Appendix K for more information regarding the founding), evaluated its impact on education for low-performing schools. An immediate policy of interest[30] for some working with the think tank was the Hughes-Hart Educational Act of 1983 (SB 813), authored by two Democrats Teresa Patterson Hughes and Gary Hart. This act brought tougher school standards at a time when schools were struggling with less school funding, and as such, though the bill did provide $800 million to decrease the impact of Proposition 13. The Hughes-Hart Educational Act, which was signed into law by Governor George Deukmejian, mandated school districts to adopt specific curriculum, instructional practices, and student assessment techniques, effectively tethering education funding of schools to outcomes deemed measurable such as student achievement (see Appendix L for more information on the Hughes-

[30] In addition to analyzing policy, PACE also produced reports like 1983's "The Conditions of Education in California" which considered different aspects impacting children and children's lives includes changing demographics, foster care system, poverty, and teacher certification programs (PACE, n.d.).

Hart Educational Act). However, by 1987, Governor Deukmejian began lamenting increases in education funding, questioning whether the "substantial increases" had paid off. Such narratives align with conservative politicians who frequently question whether investments in the education of children are worthwhile. Implicitly, this is often a direct questioning of whether it is worthwhile to spend money on the education of Children of Color, particularly Black and Indigenous children.

4.3.7 Proposition 98 (1988) Alters School Funding and Establishes an Accountability System

The ramifications of Proposition 13 included reduced funding totals for all school districts, but especially those serving Black and Indigenous children, due to their parents tending to be paid poverty wages. Considering this reality, policymakers made attempts aimed at filling the financial void caused by Proposition 13 and to meet the equitable promise of *Serrano*. The obfuscation of education funding continued through the 1980s with more measures meant to indirectly address education funding through adding some funding to the system while also increasing notions of school accountability and later empowering the legislature and governor authority to alter guaranteed education funding. After Proposition 37 (1984) was passed into law, creating a state lottery system (which disproportionately depends on those with less financial means, as those in the lowest fifth socioeconomic status group have the highest rate of gambling and highest mean number of days gambled (Barnes et al., 2011)[31]) to help increase funds for education, another measure, Proposition 98, was introduced by future California Secretary of Education John Mockler. The proposal "intended to increase state funding for schools," was passed by California voters in November 1988 (Kapphahn, 2017, January 18). Under Proposition

[31] Further, Barnes et al. (2011) find that increased levels of lottery play are linked to males, Black people, Indigenous people, and those who live in neighborhoods which are economically taken advantage of.

98, LEAs are guaranteed a minimum per-pupil allotment, called the revenue limit, to be set by the state legislature varying by grade level (i.e., high school, middle school, and elementary school) (see Appendix M for more information regarding the revenue limit process). Proposition 98 also added School Accountability Report Cards to the California Constitution, where schools are required to document school enrollment, learning conditions (e.g., teacher quality and facility conditions), and academic performance (Public Advocates, 2022b). These two introductions, the revenue limit and School Accountability Report Cards, would be lasting contributions to education policy in the state.

"Proposition 98 dollars are state funds raised primarily through income, sales, corporate, and capital gains taxes, combined with local property tax revenues" (EdSource, 2009, March). Today, Proposition 98 accounts for approximately 72% of funding for K-12 schools and is greatly impacted by annual changes in K-12 student attendance, personal income taxes, and California's General Fund revenues (EdSource, 2009, March). Fensterwald (2012, August) claims that revenue-limit dollars, or the minimum per-pupil allotment by the state, constitutes the *bread and butter of district spending*, which can be determinative of an LEA's solvency. The state revenue limit makes up over 70% of all unrestricted funding received during this time with the remainder coming from sources like local parcel taxes, mandated cost reimbursements, and the state lottery (Fensterwald, 2012, August). Under this system, unrestricted funds represented about 73% of district's total allotment, with the remaining 27% being restricted funds for programs like state categorical programs, Title I through the federal government, or special education (Fensterwald, 2012, August).

In general, there were and continue to be positive feelings as Proposition 98 establishes the notion of a minimum guarantee for all school districts, and guaranteed reserve of funds in

California's General Fund, and, due to its formulas, constitutes most of the General Fund revenue allocated for schools. However, the notion of a minimum guarantee in California was not new at the time and was reminiscent of the foundation program as the minimum guarantee is much lower than the maximum funding received by some districts due to a continued reliance on a combination of money from the General Fund and local property tax revenue. Given this, Proposition 98 maintains an important role in funding K-12 schools today, but it relies on a very flawed system of funding which has proven to be inequitable, particularly for Black and Indigenous children.

4.3.8 Proposition 111 (1990) Disrupts the Funding Guarantees of Proposition 98

As California entered a recession in 1990, the legislature sought changes to Proposition 98 and proposed another constitutional amendment with Proposition 111 (1990). Though widely marketed as a gasoline tax, which provided different funding formulas to be considered, this measure was passed by the people of California and allowed lower guaranteed funding for schools (Kapphahn, 2017, January 18). This set forth nearly yearly efforts to adjust how the minimum guarantee could be calculated and chosen (Kapphahn, 2017, January 18). These efforts ended in lowered education funding with frequent threats that the minimum guarantee would be suspended if the state's actions and funding amounts were challenged (Kapphahn, 2017, January 18). (See Appendix N for more information on Proposition 111 formulas and excess revenue.)

In general, Proposition 111 adds additional funding into the General Fund which can be used to support education funding, which is a positive aspect of the constitutional amendment. However, Proposition 111 alters Proposition 98 by tying adjustments to the volatile per capita personal income tax and, by empowering the governor and legislature to make arbitrary adjustments to the Proposition 98 education formulas, more closely tied education funding to

legislative whims. Given this, it appears that Proposition 111 primarily serves to promote the authority of the state to cut school funding when there are General Fund deficits.

4.3.9 Proposition 209 (1996) Makes it Illegal for California State Institutions to Rectify Issues of Systemic Racism in Schools

While the findings in this section thus far highlight the racial impact of decisions, particularly when analyzing the consequences of *Brown*, *Serrano*, and California funding policies, race was often invisibilized and not directly highlighted. This shifts slightly with the introduction of another ballot measure, Proposition 209, given its intention to codify the notion of race-blindness in the California Constitution and end nearly all attempts to address structural racism by California and its agents by barring the consideration of race.

The text of Proposition 209 mimicked language used throughout the civil rights movement and the *Brown* decision to target affirmative action and suggest that any type of "preferential treatment" which considered race, gender identity, etc. would be damaging for everyone [see Appendix O for more information regarding Propositions 209's roots and political rhetoric]. And for the 1996 election year, California voters were the first in the United States to be tasked with deciding on the concept of affirmative action when the mendaciously named *California Civil Rights Initiative* was introduced as Proposition 209 as an amendment to the California Constitution to prohibit any state institutions, but specifically naming public schools, including universities, employment, and contracting, from considering race or gender in decision-making processes.

Just prior to the election, California Legislative Analyst's Office (CA LAO) released information regarding Proposition 209 (see Appendix P for non-K-12 impacts). Notably, it reported that there would be an impact to about $60 million in K-12 public school funding meant

to facilitate voluntary district-run desegregation programs for racially isolated schools (i.e., those with high proportions of Students of Color) (CA LAO, 1996). While public schools were not a part of the general rhetoric surrounding the ballot measure, the CA LAO is highlighting that Proposition 209 will not only impact public institutions of higher education, but also primary and secondary school systems and thus children. However, though at the time voting was primarily a one day activity, the CA LAO released its evaluation only days ahead of the November 5th election day, denying voters more concrete information regarding actual consequences to the legislation. Further, the CA LAO does not delve into the impact, particularly for Indigenous and Black children, when discussing racial desegregation spending efforts.

The statute does carve out some exceptions for directly addressing race or gender under "preferential treatment" ideology. However, those instances are limited to retaining eligibility to receive money from the federal government, compliance with previous court orders, compliance with federal law or the US Constitution, or to reaffirm reasonably necessary operations based on gender (California LAO, 1996). Therefore, Proposition 209 serves one purpose – to prevent the state from addressing the legacy of state and federal sanctioned racism which often targeted Black people, Indigenous people, and other People of Color.

Despite the negative impact on children, and strong themes of white supremacy, voters would go on to pass Proposition 209 with 5,268,462 votes for the proposed amendment and 4,388,733 against (Jones, 1996). Therefore, under Proposition 209, § 31 was added to Article 1 of the state constitution to declare that the state:

> shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting.

Further, the amended portion of the constitution goes on to clarify "state" as not necessarily limited to but including California and any city, county, public university system (including University of California), community college district, or school district within the state. This clarification specifically labels school districts as a state actor and this coupled with the inclusion of public education in Section 1 § 31, Proposition 209's restrictions apply to K-12 public schools and thus have immense implications for aiding Indigenous and Black children. Outside of the millions intended to address ongoing desegregation efforts, school districts are ostensibly barred from addressing racialized differences in achievement.

4.3.10 Challenges to Overturn Proposition 209 are Opposed by Governor Pete Wilson and Rejected by Higher Courts

The key issue at stake is the inclusion of the "preferential treatment" wording which causes Proposition 209 to not simply mimic the equal protection guarantees of the Fourteenth Amendment. By adopting such a resolution, California voters didn't simply reaffirm existing law, they went further by creating *racial classification itself* by making it more difficult for Persons of Color to prove discriminatory intent or purpose when they approved this measure which removed the state's authority to address racial and problems (Poueymirou, 2017, p. 177) and as such proponents of the law saw Proposition 209 as a step backwards for racial justice and sought judicial protection to invalidate the measure. Before the new amendment went into effect, a lawsuit was filed by Coalition for Economic Equity against California Governor Pete Wilson, the State Department of Education and others alleging that Proposition 209 violated the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution [see Appendix Q for a legal challenge to enforce

Proposition 209].[32] U. S. District Court Judge Thelton Henderson agreed with the plaintiffs and blocked Proposition 209 from being enacted relying in part on the Hunter doctrine.[33]

By prohibiting state government entities from adopting race-conscious policies designed to address past and present discrimination—policies that had already passed the most exacting form of judicial review—Judge Henderson interpreted the Proposition as a cunning attempt to strip minorities and women of political leverage (Poueymirou, 2017, p. 177).[34]

This was a short-lived victory as the ruling was appealed by Governor Wilson.[35] On April 8, 1997, a three judge panel of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals would overturn Judge Henderson's ruling, allowing Proposition 209 to be adopted (Poueymirou, 2017). The court further ruled that race-based and gender-based affirmative action programs could be legally prohibited. Such a ruling acknowledges that *preferential treatment* used to address systemic issues is a recognized concept with legal standing. Ignoring the Hunter Doctrine, the 9th Circuit Appeals Court suggests that things legal, like race or gender -based affirmative action programs, can be deemed illegal by states or cities.[36]

[32] This legal strategy ignored previous attempts to gain equity in public education through a reliance on the 14th Amendment, but the strategy did align with previous policies which had been upheld by judicial review.
[33] "The doctrine, only used twice by the Supreme Court to invalidate a law since its creation, purports to protect the political-process rights of minorities by letting courts invalidate laws that work nonneutrally to make it more difficult for them to "achieve legislation that is in their interest."" (Murray, 2014)
[34] Judge Henderson uses previous case law (e.g., SCOTUS cases *Hunter v. Erickson*, 1969 and *Washington v. Seattle School District No. 1*, 1982) to show how Proposition 209 "restructured the political process along impermissible racial lines" after evaluating the Proposition considering "the removal of authority to address a racial problem created a racial classification in itself"(Poueymirou, 2017, p. 177).
[35] Wilson leveraged the California government through California Attorney General Daniel Lungren and senior assistant attorney general Linda Cabatic to appeal the ruling; other groups like the Pacific Legal Foundation also argued in the case (Coalition for Economic Equity v. Pete Wilson, 1997).
[36] It should not be ignored that by 1997, California's population had become majority Persons of Color. Therefore, efforts to end programs aimed at addressing systemic issues only served to protect white male interests from fears of being replaced in positions of power and influence. Proposition 209 helps ensure that those in position of power are not required to considered women or People of Color, thus ensuring a continuance of white patriarchal supremacy.

4.4 Oakland as a Battleground for Education and an Example of California's continued Struggle to Educate Children of Color

With some foundation regarding key laws and court cases impacting the historicity of California funding, the chapter now more intentionally moves towards the analysis of key social actors and how their histories and actions have impacted education funding to further answer Research Question 1. This begins with Jerry Brown's time in Oakland, a city in northern California, where Brown maintained a focus on impacting education, which would disproportionately impact Black children, given the cities demographics. And, given Brown's role in impacting public school funding and education statewide, this pitstop in Oakland appears to have served as a pivotal educational experience for Brown before a return to the governorship.

In the late 1990s, Oakland was still a majority black city, and an example of a city which struggled mightily because of continued economic disinvestment, given Oakland's demographic makeup and concentration of people being paid poverty wages. Despite the over 350 miles (nearly 600 km) separating Los Angeles and Oakland, the cities have similar population demographics and face similar issues, particularly with respect to racial geographic segregation. And Oakland Unified School District, much like Los Angeles Unified School District and Long Beach Unified School District, is considered a desirable LEA for education reform efforts. During this time, Oakland was a hotbed of educational disparities, with some of the highest ranked schools in California, which were overwhelmingly attended by White children, and some of the lowest ranked schools, which were predominantly attended by Black and Latin* children (Jenkins, 2015). Urban education reform has intrinsic connections to persistent socioeconomic issues and racial tensions, and, in Oakland, *de facto* segregation impacts the quality of education that Black children receive (Jenkins, 2015).

Jerry Brown had relocated to Oakland and would run to be its next mayor in 1998. Brown came with a history of sentiments which resonated with the Black community so much that most Black people in the city voted for Brown, the only White candidate in the race, over other Black candidates in the race. Once Brown was declared the victor, before taking office, Brown began to centralize and accumulate power for the mayoral office notably by asking the Oakland citizens to increase the mayor's decision making powers through a "strong mayor" initiative. Once Brown took over as mayor, Brown waged political battles with a distinct racial element. Brown set sights on education reform, which included an attempt to take over Oakland Unified School District and to establish more charter schools, while not addressing issues of racial segregation or attempting to meaningfully engage with colleagues to serve the best interests of Oakland citizens. Therefore, Brown's time in Oakland served as a learning tool for using the political process to unilaterality implement education reform efforts while simultaneously (successfully) appealing to Black people and other People of Color, despite dismissing collaborative efforts with those communities.

In this next section, I begin with discussing Oakland School District Superintendent Chaconas and Jerry Brown's attempt to seize control of the district. Following this, I discuss the impact that Brown was able to make in Oakland education despite attempts to pushback. Then I will discuss discourse which blamed schools, finance system, and children for decreasing academic results while ignoring systemic barriers and racism. Next, I will cover *Williams v. California* (2005) and discuss this case's importance. I will end the section with Jerry Brown completing two terms as Oakland Mayor and winning a statewide election to become California Attorney General.

4.4.1 Jerry Brown Becomes Oakland Mayor in 1999 and Set Sights on Overtaking Education

After three failed presidential campaigns in the 1980s and 1990s, Brown was elected as Mayor of Oakland as an independent candidate in 1998 largely due to the support of the Black community; [37] this stint in Oakland would serve as a precursor to statewide offices. Measure X was added to the November 1998 ballot, *after* Brown was elected in June,[38] that would give the Oakland Mayor more power and authority for six years[39] (Walsh, 1999). Brown lobbied for these increases in mayoral power with rhetoric suggesting that Oakland residents needed a leader with the legal cache to make the changes that the people needed; Oakland residents passed that strong mayor initiative (Adams, 1999). However, after being elected Brown engaged in governing behaviors which ignored community desires and reinforced racist systems by engaging in political activities which betrayed interests important to the Black community (see Appendix R for more information). Brown was also focused on education as mayor, foreshadowing an interest which would surface as Brown reintegrated into greater California politics, notably through an attempt to unilaterally control Oakland schools.

For example, Brown also proposed that the state take over the Oakland Unified School district, which would have allowed Brown to gain more control over the schools (Adams, 1999). And while the community advocated for local solutions to achieve school reform, Brown remained steadfast citing Chicago's takeover as a benefit of having a mayoral trust (Adams, 1999). The mayor focused on unilateral control over schools rather than considering what the Oakland community wanted for their schools. And charter schools are connected to other notions of school choice which have post-*Brown v. Board* anti-desegregation roots. While Brown's other

[37] According to the 2000 US Census, Oakland's total population was 399,484 which was 35.7% Black people, the majority in the city, and 0.7% Indigenous people (Bay Area Census, n.d.).
[38] As Brown won a majority, 58.9% of votes, in the first round of the election, there was no runoff election between the top two candidates in November 2008.
[39] Oakland residents would eventually make the strong mayor measure permanent in 2004.

battles went seamlessly, Brown did not completely achieve the complete takeover of Oakland schools due to community and bureaucratic pushback.

4.4.2 Mayor Jerry Brown Continues to Interfere with Oakland Schools with Reform in Mind

Mayor Brown was the catalyst for two Oakland Unified School District superintendents being exiled and, while failing to achieve a complete takeover of the district, Brown was able to eliminate opposition by securing a restructuring of the Oakland school board. After Carole Quan was ousted as superintendent, the Oakland school board appointed Dennis K. Chaconas, who would serve from 2000-2003, as Oakland Unified School District superintendent over the objections of Mayor Brown.[40] As superintendent, academics were a noted priority for Chaconas, and as such, remaining in budget, at the risk of continuing to deprive Black and Brown children of education, was not a top focus.[41] And unfortunately, the decision not to remain in budget proved to be the opening that Mayor Brown would use to force Chaconas out by advocating for a state takeover of Oakland Unified School District. Governor Gray Davis approved a $100 million emergency loan to the school district to cover the $82 million debt that the district accumulated, in its attempt to continue to provide its students a quality education, and appointed Randolph E. Ward as the district administrator (Murphy, 2003, June 8). As part of the restructuring, the school board was transformed into an *unpaid advisory body* (Murphy, 2003, June 8).[42] An unpaid advisory body has serious equity implications impacting who can serve.

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[40] Murphy (2003, June 8) outlines that Chaconas expressed spending ample time attempting to save the district from corrupt practices, noting requests from elected officials requesting favors for things like district contracts. During three years as superintendent, Chaconas was credited with improving academic performance in the district and increasing teacher retention (Murphy, 2003, June 8).

[41] Due to declining school enrollment and state allocations given a weak California economy, Oakland schools were receiving less funding.

[42] After this takeover and the altering of the school board, in August 2007 Public Advocates Inc and Oakland Parents, sued the Oakland Unified School District "for failing to disclose to the public legally required data, including per-pupil spending figures, for each school through the School Accountability Report Card (SARC)"

Further, the state takeover continued the trend of shutting out community voices which were largely Persons of Color. These actions were unaligned with the community's desires and lacked basic principles of community engagement [see Appendix S for additional details).

4.4.3 Consistent Messaging that California's School Finance System and Bad Schools are Primary Reasons why California Students do not Perform as well as Others

While some politicians sought to use education as a pawn in their agenda, school districts were also struggling with continued disinvestment; however, narratives focused solely on notions of student achievement. After Proposition 13, California schools struggled to recoup the funding losses from decreased property taxes and naturally California students began to show the ill effects of a reduced financial investment in their education. Even Proposition 98 did not fix the lack of opportunity flowing to schools serving Black and Indigenous students. However, some scholars and politicians continued to ignore the contextual reality contributing to the drastic change in California.

One example is the 2004 PBS documentary, *Learning Matters: From First to Worst*, produced with funding from William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and The Annenberg Foundation, which positions California schools as in crisis through an argument that California schools were some of the nation's best in the 1950s but were the worst by the mid-1990s. *Learning Matters* includes discussion of the effects of Proposition 13's cuts to public school funding and the rise of private school foundations in the 1980s in raising private money for certain public schools and districts [see Appendix T for more on *Learning Matters*].

(Public Advocates, 2022b). In the settlement the Oakland Unified School District admitted failing to provide the information for the prior two years and to ensure that information was available in multiple languages.

During a discussion post-screening of the film, Kirst made further claims about California's public education finance system including labeling it as "incredibly complex," "centralized," and a "nonsensical historical accretion" (Trei, 2004, January). Kirst also advocated for adequate levels of funding with adjustments for local living costs and special needs but based on state academic standards; through such a system, Kirst argued that every Californian would be guaranteed a high-quality education but that there would be differences in per-pupil funding (Trei, 2004, January). This marks an early public statement by Kirst (also see Kirst, 2007), building off Kirst's earlier work in Florida, noting a belief that funding could be solved by weighting funding levels based on characteristics of a student population other than race. Such statements display a prerogative which establishes an approach to education reform focusing on tinkering with funding levels while largely continuing to ignore the continued importance of race and racism. Further, there is a blame on the state's structural attempts to create an equitable system while being handcuffed by white supremacy.

In *Learning Matters*, Catherine Lhamon recognized the racialized and social economic impact of the influence of private school foundations, pointing out that most Black children, Latin* children, Asian children, Pacific Islander children, and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages do not benefit from a legal system which allows private school foundations because most do not attend schools supported by community money. Lhamon distinctly recognizes education as a civil rights issue. These realizations led Lhamon and the American Civil Liberties Union to launch a lawsuit against the state asking that California cease absolving itself of legal responsibility to ensure all children have a basic education.

4.4.4 Williams vs. State of California (2004) Brings some Protections for Children

That lawsuit, *Williams v. State of California*, saw the American Civil Liberties Union allege that California neglects to provide *basic necessities* to thousands of public school students, especially those in Communities of Color and communities where families are paid poverty wages. As noted earlier, the California constitution guarantees that all students will have basic necessities, and this lawsuit sought to ensure that the state lived up to this constitutional right. *Williams* included approximately one hundred San Francisco County students and was filed in the San Francisco County Superior Court against the state and state education agencies including the CDE (Government Affairs Division, 2021, December 8). Though filed in San Francisco, the case implicitly included students from areas like Los Angeles and Oakland who were not receiving access to basic materials.

The *Williams* case was eventually settled out of court in 2004 without ever being adjudicated [see Appendix U for more information on the settlement]. The settlement from this case was wide reaching and defined some metrics to constitute "basic necessities" for K-12 public education in California. In particular, the settlement required that all students have basic necessities like qualified teachers, clean schools, and books. Therefore, the concept of basic necessities was given a legal definition to which school districts and schools could be held accountable to. Predictably *Williams* did not take aim at funding itself. However, the case provided another attempt to force California to ensure that all students receive an equitable education through establishing some basics of what all students deserve. This case also saw the implementation of the Uniform Complaint Procedure (UCP) for stakeholders to allege complaints when LEAs fail to support all students. The UCP allows community members to make formal complaints against school districts and schools, requiring a legal response to address issues of equity. This system would be important for holding systems responsible for

failing to provide appropriate educational opportunities or funding for Students of Color [see Appendix V for a notable example of a UCP being filed against LBUSD].

4.4.5 Conclusions to Brown's Tenure in Oakland, Dedication to Charter Schools, and Moving back to Statewide Office

Back in Oakland, Jerry Brown was concluding a second term as mayor, reflecting on attempts to enact education reform, and moving on to a new statewide elected position. During the final State of the City address, Brown expressed some disappointment in not making enough progress toward improving and reforming Oakland's schools (Van Niekerken, 2019, January 4). While Brown lamented attempts to institute a distinct brand of education reform, there were notable things that occurred that still impact education in Oakland including ousting two superintendents, dismantling the Oakland school board, and raising millions of dollars to establish of two charter schools [see Appendix W for more information regarding Brown's schools].

After Brown's tenure in Oakland, according to the 2010 Census, Oakland had become a majority white city with Oakland's Black population plummeting by over 30,000 people to comprise 28% of the population (Bay Area Census, n.d.).[43] Brown's policies, particularly those involving "revitalizing" downtown Oakland, served a purpose to further price out the Black community which never abandoned Oakland. Such policies helped the fear that many Black residents exposed – that there was a concerted desire to take Oakland back from Black people. In 2007, after being termed out in Oakland, Brown ran for and was elected as California Attorney

[43] Oakland's overall population only fell about 9,000 people and all other racial groups increased in percentage and total number. This marks a continuing trend in the decline of Black people in Oakland as gentrification has intensified and housing costs have increased.

General in 2007, serving for one term, positioning Brown as the state's top attorney and in charge of enforcing the state's laws.[44]

4.5 Understanding what Would Become the Influential Issue Brief Which Would Change California's Education Finance Structure

This next section covers a 2008 issue brief titled *Getting beyond the facts: Reforming California school finance* authored by Alan Bersin, Michael Kirst, and Goodwin Liu. This brief is covered in full, including its guiding principles and suggestions for targeted funding towards certain student groups. Lastly, there is a deeper CPA analysis of the brief, leaning on CRT, to the shortcomings of the brief with respect to race and equity and thus spotlights places where the brief falls short or falls to address issues.

4.5.1 Origins and Principles of the 2008 Getting Beyond the Facts Issue Brief

Two lawyer-scholars and a trained economist-education scholar joined forces to author an issue brief aimed at solving California's issues with funding schools. The issue brief was led by Alan Bersin, a White man lawyer who was serving on the CSBE under Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and a former state Secretary of Education[45], though without any formal training or experience in education. The second author, Michael Kirst, former CSBE President under Jerry Brown, a White man who was a Professor Emeritus of education at Stanford University at the time. And lastly, Goodwin Liu, an Asian man attorney who served as Co-Director of the Earl Warren institute at University of California, Berkely. These three men are the credited authors an

[44] Or refusing to support as was the case with Proposition 8 (2008), which outlawed marriage equality, where Brown refused to allow the attorney general office to support the legal challenges to enforce the law.
[45] Alan Bersin first entered education upon being appointed to serve as the Superintendent of San Diego Unified School District in 1998 before being appointed as California's Education Secretary by Governor Schwarzenegger in 2005. Prior to 1998, Bersin served as an attorney, most notably serving as the Southwest border representative for the US Attorney General. Bersin would later be serve under the Obama administration for border affairs.

issue brief that would go on to serve as the foundation for Californian K-12 education finance reform.

Getting beyond the facts: Reforming California school finance is an issue brief with a proposal to reform the K-12 public school finance system for California that was distributed through the Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on race, ethnicity, & diversity at the University of California, Berkeley Law School with specific support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Building off a foundation that suggested that categorical funding programs [see Appendix X for more information on categorical programs] were at the center of problems facing schools and failing students, the authors set forth a system built on systems and components which the authors assert would allow children to thrive.

The brief set forth four principles for reform: student need should dictate revenue allocation; adjustments of the revenue allocations should be made for cost differences across regions; the entire system should be easily coherent and transparent for legislators, school officials, and the public; and any reform effort should not reduce any LEA's current allocation and should only apply to *new* money going forward (Bersin, et al., 2008, pp. 5-6). Building on these principles, the authors noted that the Great Recession and budget downfalls of the time did not preclude the proposal implementation (p. 9).

The proposed finance system had five components and was designed to be responsive to *concentration of disadvantage* based on a notion that when there is concentrated poverty in schools that achievement is negatively impacted (p. 8).[46] The brief proposes restructuring the California finance system with five components: a base funding amount intended to cover the

[46] "Until 2002, federal law allowed Title I funds to support "schoolwide" programs in schools where 50% or more students were low-income out of recognition that high poverty concentration has effects throughout a school, not just on low-income children." (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2008, April, pp. 8-9)

costs associated with a basic education including instructional materials and salaries for teachers and other personnel; special education for students with disabilities in accordance with federal law; targeted funding for other students (low-income and/or English language learners) who could benefit from additional resources to succeed at an education system which decenters them; cost adjustments for regions across each component of the proposal to reflect regional costs like wages; and, a hold harmless provision[47] which proposes every LEA receives as much money as they do at the time of implementation for total revenue. As a result of this proposal being adopted, the contention is that there would be a "simpler, fairer, and more coherent system of school finance, one that is responsive to student needs and regional costs" (Bersin, et al., 2008, p. 16).

4.5.2 Understanding the Targeting Education Funds Component of the Brief

When considering who is worthy of targeted funding, the authors suggest focusing on children whose caregivers are paid poverty wages and plural lingual learners. The brief notes that *unduplicated sum*, meaning children should only be counted once even if they exist in both groups, of these two groups constitutes a fair count of students most deserving of an additional financial investment to ensure an equitable education. For finance purposes children whose caregivers are paid poverty wages and plural lingual learners are proposed as an unduplicated sum. However, the authors note that the two groups have differing needs, and that LEAs may *need* to use funds differently to effectively target the children. [See Appendix Y for more information regarding impacts for plural lingual learners.]

[47] In general, a *hold harmless provision* seeks to provide some legal protection to a party. In this situation, a hold harmless provision seeks to provide protections by starting that any LEA will not receive a reduction in revenue even if the proposed formula would dictate the LEA should receive less money. As applied this provision seeks to protect LEAs with more revenue prior to enactment of the proposal and allowing them to continue to receive more money than what is deemed equitable under the proposed formula.

The authors suggest that the overall LEA targeted funding should be adjusted for regional cost differences and the overall wealth of other students in the LEA. This proposed type of equitable funding distribution in its entirety centers on the importance of location and saturation when considering funding. This type funding structure honors the differences in costs that tend to exist between different communities. These differences are often due to expenditures related to disinvestment but could be used to funnel more funds to wealthier areas which have higher property costs.

The authors were firm in their expectation that LEAs "allocate their revenue to schools based on student needs and target resources to improve the achievement of the most disadvantaged students" (Bersin, et al., 2008, p. 16), though they admitted to not examining the types of support or accountability measures that might help ensure that dollars are equitably allocated by LEAs to support learning goals for targeted students and schools. While the categorical based funding structure had accountability measures which sought to ensure that school districts and schools allocated and spent funds for their intended purpose, the authors were keen to dismiss this notion of accountability. However, without such an accountability measure, there would be a concern that LEAs will not ensure that those funds make it to the *most disadvantaged students*. Furthermore, lack of accountability measures is also a major concern for school districts with large populations of students targeted for additional expenditures, such as LAUSD and LBUSD.

The issue brief left policymakers to decide funding parameters but supported a system built on deregulation and local control. Bersin, Kirst, and Liu suggest a belief that a new *simplified* system where schools and districts have more control over resource allocations will lead to more effective state accountability measures. Though, again, they note they had not

explored local control, rather suggesting that California funding needed to try something new, opposite from what they call an *unwieldy and irrational* "centralized, compliance-oriented control of local resource allocation" (p. 16). This argument ignores the fact that most categorical programs did not require specific funding and fails to offer any evidence that a categorical funding program model prevented children who need investment of opportunity from receiving needed services. The suggestion for a blanket return to local control ignores that local control has historically been harmful for Black children, Indigenous children, and other Children of Color and was a central factor in lawsuits like *Serrano* and *Williams*.

4.5.3 Contextualizing Racial Issues Within the Getting Beyond the Facts Brief

Despite coming out of The Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Race, Ethnicity, & Diversity, the Bersin, Kirst, and Liu issue brief does not directly address the impact of race or ethnicity on education funding or how the proposed system would tackle issues of systemic racism. The only mention of race comes in a footnote where non-Persons of Color are centered. Here the brief notes that *some commenters* have suggested that California per-pupil funding has fallen, comparatively to other states, due to a *reluctance* of White voters to want to fund schools that have increasingly become more comprised of Latin*, Asian, Pacific Islander, Indigenous and Black students (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2008, footnote 4, p. 2).[48]

However, these *commentators* should have been taken more seriously. When considering a new school finance structure, it is prudent to explicitly acknowledge the whitelash that occurs when the needs of PoC in or out of education are considered, let alone centered. California and the country, including the Supreme Court, have failed to protect the need for considering the role

[48] The shifting of school-age demographics in public schools throughout most of California has resulted in most K-12 children being Students of Color with Latin* students making up the largest percentage. This K-12 shift contrasts with the adult population, particularly the adults who are 65 and older, which remains mostly non-PoC.

of race and racism in denying opportunities to Indigenous people and Black people. Further, given this country's ongoing issues with race, racism, and white supremacy, there is ample cause for an explicit attention to race and the ways that race *still* matters in this country. [See Appendix Z which focuses on the importance of race and the inclusion of deficit ideologies in the brief.]

Long-standing systemic racism and segregated neighborhood systems created schools and school systems which predominantly serve students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages and there is a tremendous equity problem here as these very same schools and LEAs primarily serve Black and Latin* students (Hahnel, 2020). After Proposition 13, California became increasingly dependent on the state's General Fund, which is highly reliant on income tax revenue, which in turn is volatile and reliant on the economy, to finance K-12 education (Hahnel, 2020). This system has led to rises in school funding during good years and decreases during economic contractions (Hahnel, 2020). Further, school district costs increase faster than revenues and, after Proposition 13, the overall percentage of K-12 education spending has decreased[49] when looking at the overall California budget.

When policymakers and researchers assert that certain students are harder to teach or face hurdles,[50] this is an example of a deficit ideology regarding the worth and/or capabilities of those students. Word choices asserting these ideologies can also attempt to habitualize children and communities to accept these deficit mindsets as fact. Labeling some students as *high needs* suggests that even well-meaning researchers and policymakers may maintain indoctrinated negative valuations which arise in thoughts which then impact word choices and actions.

[49] Comparatively, spending on police and corrections, health and hospitals, and public welfare substantially increased (Hahnel, 2020)

[50] e.g., Hall & Ushomirsky assert that "everyone knows that low-income and minority students often face steep hurdles" (2010, p. 1).

Education policy and reform efforts in education maintain a foundation which depends on deficit ideologies that disproportionately suggest that Black and Indigenous students, and their parents or guardians, are less than non-Students of Color. Reform efforts tend to be framed as helping students, and parents and communities because they are unable or unwilling to help themselves. However, when there is appropriate acknowledgement and attention to context, it becomes clear that specific actions and choices cause the inequities that are observed and that reform efforts seek to change people rather than help.

4.6 Contextualizing State Level Approaches to Racial Issues in Education, Funding, and Opportunity

The issue brief noted that California was entering into a precarious financial situation which would necessitate changes to the state's financial structure given the expected lean budget years ahead. This next section begins with an overview of a committee designed to support the education of Indigenous students in California. Then, the Great Recession and its impact on education funding is discussed, including the legislature's decision to remove most categorical funding programs given the ongoing cuts to education. Following this, data from researchers note the declining numbers of Indigenous students and Black students at University of California campuses since the passage of Proposition 209. Then, there is discussion of a CSBE committee created to explore Black student achievement in California. Next, there is a discussion of the California Supreme Court case *Coral Construction, Inc. v. City and County of San Francisco* (2010) which again upheld the legality of Proposition 209 (1996), while noting the potential for a future argument for race conscious efforts.

4.6.1 A Committee Focused on Indigenous Students is Established, but does not Offer any Substantial Change

Despite the restraints of Proposition 209, the state has engaged in behaviors which are attentive to the needs of Indigenous students; however, the attempts tend to be superficial and fail to actuate any real change. For example, in 2007, California Education Code § 33370 established an "American Indian Education Unit" which came be known as the American Indian Education Oversight Committee (AIEOC). While the committee should be leaned on for advice and consultation, it once went four years without holding one meeting.[51] Despite the intention to work with and for Indigenous people to ensure that Indigenous children are being honored in classrooms, the effort has been lacking and the AIEOC has yet to achieve actual changes to support Indigenous children thus allowing inequitable access to educational opportunities and outcomes to continue. Therefore, the AIEOC effort comes off as performative. This sort of discourse communicates that Indigenous children's education should be discussed, but actions are not needed. [See Appendix AA for more information regarding the AIEOC.]

4.6.2 California Education Funding Bottoms out with The Great Recession (2008)

Another era of decreased funding came with The Great Recession which marked the beginning of five years of budget cuts for education (Najarro, 2013, January);[52] though, expectedly, the Great Recession did not impact all school districts equally. Due to a reliance on income taxes, school funding is frequently in a repeating boom-bust cycle, where finances go up when the economy is good and are depleted when the economy slows, which hurts students and promotes school operations' instability (Lafortune et al., 2020). And the Great Recession led to decreased income taxes which California could collect for schools. While there were federal and

[51] In July 2021, State Superintendent Tony Thurmond hosted the AIEOC for the first time since 2017 (Thurmond, 2021).
[52] Though 2008-2009 were the worst years of the Great Recession, California per-pupil expenditures did not bottom out until the 2012-2013 school year as offsets continued to diminish (Lafortune et al., 2020).

state policies[53] meant to lessen the Great Recession's effect, most LEAs lost significant revenue as these sources were relatively small in relation to the changes in state revenue (Lafortune et al., 2020). Those LEAs with reserves or foundations experienced less or momentary disruptions.

Other school districts had big declines and would never recover (Lafortune, et al., 2020). These school districts tended to have more Children of Color and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. While Indigenous students were not considered, the authors noted that Black and Latin* children experienced greater per-pupil cuts than White and Asian students and students whose caretakers are paid poverty wages experienced greater funding cuts compared to those students whose caregivers are paid living wages (Lafortune et al., 2020). These differences were largely because of significant cuts to categorical funding programs (e.g., targeted instructional improvement block grants) (Lafortune et al., 2020). As with education funding generally, the Great Recession disproportionately impacted Students of Color and children who caretakers are paid poverty wages.

Considering the stressors to education funding from the Great Recession, and the relative inflexibility of categorical funding programs, the California legislature and Governor Schwarzenegger relaxed mandates related to categorical funding to allow LEAs and schools more flexibility to meet their financial needs. However, these relaxed measures were set to end after the 2014-2015 school year and the legislature would be faced with a decision to revert to the previous system, attempt something new, or some combination of the two. As children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, and Students of Color broadly, benefitted from categorical funding block grants, and were negatively impacted by state cuts to these programs because of the Great Recession, any changes to the categorical system would impact these students.

[53] After the 2007-2008 school year the California legislature issued IOUs to districts for funds meant to cover cost-of-living increases and/or direct cuts to funding (Fensterwald, 2012, August).

4.6.3 A Committee to Study Black Student Achievement is Established (2009)

Since Proposition 209, the state has also made attempts to be attentive to the education of Black students, though, similarly, to attempts for Indigenous students, there is no true follow-through to ensure actual changes. For example, in 2009, CSBE unanimously voted to create the African American Advisory Committee (AAAC) which is tasked with better understanding the difference in achievement that exists between Black students and other groups and advising on ways to increase scores and retention rates for the Black students (R. Wilson, 2019). Through the creation of AAAC, the CSBE offers an explicit acknowledgment that achievement issues exist throughout the state for Black students and commit to a state-level focus to understanding an observed differences in academic outcomes between Black students and other students as the differences are an "undeniable disparity" as noted by CSBE member Greg Jones (R. Wilson, 2019). Unfortunately, this committee is not empowered to enact any actual changes for Black children nor is there any effort to ensure Black children are provided with equitable educational opportunities. When it comes to Black students, as noticed in this example, California tends to resort to studying or observing academic outcomes deemed measurable and/or putting together measures to alter how Black students are performing.

4.6.4 Attorney General Brown Argues that Proposition 209 Should be Invalid; The California Supreme Court Validates Proposition 209

As Attorney General, Jerry Brown was asked to contribute to the legal discussion regarding Proposition 209 (1996) as more White people had sued to uphold Proposition 209 and prohibit the considerations of gender identity or race. This case, *Coral Construction, Inc. v. City and County of San Francisco* [see Appendix BB], made its way to the California Supreme Court. Brown "argued that Prop. 209 is invalid because it prohibits all race- and gender-conscious

programs - even those that the U.S. Constitution allows - and fosters the discrimination it was supposed to eliminate" (Egelko, 2010). The response was a strong one which appropriately noted that Proposition 209 nurtures discrimination.

Despite Brown's dissention, in a 6-1 decision, the Court upheld Proposition 209. In the *Coral Construction, Inc. v. City and County of San Francisco* (2010) majority opinion, written by Justice Kathryn Mickle Werdegar, the Court does suggest there is a possibility that race-conscious laws could be enacted if it could be *proven* that such a law was the only way to counteract entrenched discrimination (Mintz, 2010). So, while Proposition 209 was upheld, the Court provided some potential wiggle room for future challenges to the law (Mintz, 2010).

4.7 Familiar Faces and Power Moves Toward Addressing School Finances

This next section begins with Jerry Brown returning to the gubernatorial office, after one term as attorney general with an intention to impact education policy, and immediately appointing familiar faces like Michael Kirst to the CSBE. There is a discussion of Brown and Kirst's approach to consolidating power and ensuring that they can secure support for what appears to be a shared vision of education reform. Next, there is a discussion of state assemblyperson Julia Brownley's A.B. 18 which presented a vision to overhaul education funding in the state. Further, there is an outline of Governor Brown's attempt to bypass the legislature and institute a weighted formula for education funding into the governor's budget rather than going through a more traditional legislative route. Then, Brownley's attempts to change A.B. 18 are covered, including Brown's upheld vow to veto any education funding bill which is not a weighted formula option. In 2012, the 9th Circuit of Appeals rejects another attempt to overturn Proposition 209 (*Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action v. Brown*, 2012). This section ends with the efforts to address major systemic issues which would negatively affect

any new funding system, including the legislature's attempt to address the teacher's retirement fund (A.B. 97) and a proposal to increase sales tax and income tax for those making over a quarter of a million dollars per year (Proposition 30, 2012).

4.7.1 Jerry Brown Becomes California Governor (Again) (2011) and Consolidates Power to More Effectively Transform Education

Similarly, as when serving as Oakland Mayor, Jerry Brown came into the governor's office with a laser focus on making an impact on public education through reform efforts;[54] this time Jerry appointed familiar faces into positions of power to assist. As California implemented term limits after Jerry's initial two terms as governor, Brown was not constitutionally barred from running again. So, Brown ran again and was elected as California Governor for a third term in 2011. Brown's "Jobs Plan," introduced while in 2010 running for this third term, touted education's importance, and Brown's intention to play a major role in education policy (Lagos , 2011, January 7).[55], including working directly with the CSBE and not having a separate education staff.

To forge a working relationship with the CSBE, Brown nominated familiar people to the board. Some of Brown's CSBE appointments included Bruce Holaday[56], who previously served as the superintendent of Brown's military school from 2004-2009, (Fensterwald, 2012, July 26) and Michael Kirst. As Brown wished, Kirst was again confirmed as the CSBE President.[57]

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[54] Michael Kirst expressed that Brown was much more interested in education, particularly after failed attempts to take over Oakland schools (Kirst, 2019, March 29).

[55] While running for governor, Jerry Brown introduced a *Job's Plan* which included a focus on education, consistent with the ideology where education is tied to the job market in a capitalistic globalized economy, and an intention to impact education policy.

[56] Holaday is a former English teacher who earned a bachelor's and master's in education from midwestern universities (Fensterwald, 2012, July 26).

[57] Kirst stepped down from the role as President of CSBE after Brown's last term ended, even though Kirst's appointment was not over, and close collaborator, and fellow Stanford emeritus faculty member, Linda Darling-

To begin to achieve education reform Brown also made several structural moves including moving the CSBE offices, which proved to be an important political scheme. After abolishing what Jerry Brown categorized as, the *ineffectual* secretary of education cabinet post,[58] Kirst notes that Brown moved the CSBE into the governor's office and used the board as Brown's *instrument of change*.[59] Using the CSBE in this manner proved to be an effective strategy as Kirst reminds us that "unlike in most states, the California state board, not the state education department, is the federally designated state education agency to make decisions concerning federal aid implementation" (Kirst, 2019, March 29). Further, during Brown's administration, the California legislature deferred to the CSBE to craft education regulations or guidance and testified at *their* board meetings to propose regulations (Kirst, 2019, March 29). This demonstrates an example of how the CSBE was often consulted by the California legislature before proposing legislation which impacts education, particularly during Brown's second stint as governor. Thus, Jerry Brown's intentions and actions show an effective power grab to consolidate control over the CSBE with a seeming intention to remove any potential roadblocks to restructuring education. Any changes to California education policy or school finance would inevitably involve the CSBE given their constitutional authority. And, as Brown appointed the entire CSB, handpicked the president, and established rapport with the California

Hammond was appointed to the board by incoming Governor Gavin Newsom to take over the President's role (Freedberg, 2019, February 12).

[58] At the time, the position was the administrative secretary post without a department to oversee and generally positioned as an advisor to the governor tasked with advocating for education policies (Lagos, 2011, January 7). It was not a surprise as Brown made this move upon taking office as Brown did not appoint anyone to serve as secretary of education during Brown's initial 1975-1983 service as Governor of California (Lagos, 2011, January 7). John Mockler chronicled Brown as the only governor as far back as Culbert Olson who did not appoint some incarnation of the secretary of education (Lagos, 2011, January 7).

[59] To further the reform agenda, Kirst and Brown forged close relationships with the Department of Finance, which is also located in the governor's office. The Department of Finance notes that its "mission is to serve as the Governor's chief fiscal policy advisor and to promote long-term economic sustainability and responsible resource allocation. The Governor also appoints the Director of the California Department of Finance (State of California Department of Finance, 2023).

Department of Finance, the governor was well positioned to push for the education reform which was not realized in Oakland.

4.7.2 Disagreements over the Weighted Student Formula

Though Jerry Brown was situating the governor's office to make an entry into public education policy, another elected official, Assemblyperson Julia Brownley, was also seeking to impact California K-12 education funding policy with Assembly Bill (A.B.) 18. In 2011, shortly after Jerry Brown assumed office, Brownley, a future United States Congressperson who was chair of the California Assembly Education Committee, introduced A.B. 18 as a comprehensive plan to change how K-12 schools are financed with the goal of achieving a fairer and simpler system (Fensterwald, 2012, September 18) [see Appendix CC for more details on this version of A.B. 18]. Though the bill was passed in the Assembly, it was never brought up to a vote in the California Senate. Fensterwald (2012, September 18) reported that Brownley agreed to take an extra year to refine the proposed new system in A.B. 18.[60]

After Brownley agreed to table A.B. 18, Governor Brown entered the fray with an attempt to reform education funding in January of 2012 with a weighted student formula comprised of a seven-year phase-in strategy dependent on a return to pre-Great Recession funding levels (Fensterwald, 2012, July 26). This attempt was attached to the governor's budget, as opposed to a standalone bill, as the governor has more direct control over the budget, and Brown sought to bypass the legislative process (Fensterwald, 2012, July 26). When Brown introduced the weighted student formula idea, with extra funding allocated to districts based on their proportion of enrolled plural lingual children and children whose caregivers are paid

[60] It is unclear if anyone requested that Brownley refine or if there were concerns expressed regarding A.B. 18., but Brownley pulled the bill, and it was never referred to committee in the Senate.

poverty wages, as part of the budget, all attention focused on the governor's proposal (Fensterwald, 2012, September 18). Brown's governor's budget proposal attempted to bypass the traditional policy making process by unilaterally offering a change to K-12 funding. Any change to the state finance structure would have direct implications for all LEA's, especially LAUSD and LBUSD. As two of the largest LEAs in California, any potential equity measures could have consequences for thousands of Indigenous children and Black children because. as outlined earlier in this chapter, since *Brown v. Board of Education* we have seen attempts to achieve equity in education fall short of their promise particularly for Black and Indigenous children. [See Appendix DD for responses to Brown's attempt to bypass the legislature.]

4.7.3 Courts Rely on Judicial Precedent to Continue to Uphold Proposition 209 Despite Evidence Which Shows Harm to Indigenous and Black People (2012)

In 2012, there was a conclusion to a legal challenge, *Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action v. Brown*, to Proposition 209 which considered the constitutional amendment's negative, racialized impact on postsecondary educational opportunities for Students of Color. Specially, it was alleged that Article 1, § 31 (Proposition 209) denied equal protection under the 14th Amendment as it causes the unfair exclusion of Black students, Indigenous students, and Latin* students from higher education, but the lawsuit was dismissed with prejudice citing *binding legal precedent* (*Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action v. Brown*, 2012). While Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action appealed, the United States Circuit of Appeals again dismissed the complaints, citing being bound by the judicial precedent. In these decisions, the judicial system claims to be handcuffed by prior legal decisions, outright refusing to hear the case. Such a decision ignored fifteen years of data which showed there have been racialized impacts which have harmed Indigenous peoples and Black people's access to higher education in California

[see Appendix EE for data since Proposition 209]. Further, the courts refused to consider wider judicial precedent which has confirmed that race-conscious laws are permissible under the federal government. [See Appendix FF for more case law and legal arguments.]

4.7.4 Brownley's Bill is Rejected While Brown Rallies Others to Support a Weighted Student Formula Funding Option, Despite Shortcomings Regarding Accountability for Serving Appropriate Children

As agreed, Julia Brownley continued to work on A.B. 18 with an intent to address education funding with vocal opposition from Governor Brown. Brownley altered AB 18 to create a task force designed to make recommendations to the legislature regarding potential funding options including a weighted formula (Fensterwald, 2012, July 26). As passed, the Brownley sponsored bill "would have created a 21-person task force to study ideas for finance reform, not just a weighted student formula, and make recommendations to the Legislature by April 1" of 2013 (Fensterwald, 2012, September 20). With this new bill, Brownley sought to include other voices to provide the legislature with timely information and insights as to what type of funding system would be appropriate for California children.

Despite Brownley's bill being open to a weighted student formula and California's legislature having time to make a more information decision, Michael Kirst and Sue Burr, State Board executive director, were in vocal opposition to Brownley's bill, and Governor Brown reiterated that the weighted formula would be the only option, the California legislature would go on to pass AB 18 in August 2012. And as promised, Jerry Brown vetoed AB 18. In a letter to the legislature, Brown agreed that education finance deserves urgent attention but stated that a task force *may* delay action on achieving needed reform and suggested that the legislature work with the governor to put together a weighted student formula (Fensterwald, 2012, September 20).

A.B. 18 was an appropriate bill to be passed in the legislature and signed by Governor Brown. However, Brown showed an uncanny desire to be the only voice with respect to education funding in California. This move by Brown, and the rhetoric coming from Brown's appointees, were a blatant attempt to strongarm the legislature to bend to the governor's will.

Though A.B.18 initially passed with overwhelming support, the legislature did not attempt to override Brown's veto and instead moved to support an alternative bill which had the governor's blessing. Around the same time as the veto, Assembly Bill 97 was introduced with strong support from Governor Brown. This bill was almost entirely lifted from the 2008 Bersin, Kirst, and Liu issue brief.[61] With this move, the California Assembly displayed a willingness to get on board with Brown's desire for a weighted student formula, regardless of whether this was the best option for all California children, especially Indigenous and Black children. [See Appendix GG for reactions to and coalition behind A.B. 97.]

While there was considerable coalition aligning behind A.B. 97, there were some disagreements regarding some details in the bill. For instance, the Lobaco et al. (2012, August 28) signees were looking for transparency and accountability because of the proposed finance system, however these details were not included in the bill and there were concerns over the lack of oversight in the proposal. CSBE President Kirst was a vocal opponent of oversight measures suggesting that the State should be willing to give up regulations as charter schools have such flexibilities (Fensterwald, 2012, July 26). Catherine Lhamon,[62] now with the pro bono law firm Public Counsel in Los Angeles, was a proponent of accountability measures that required LEAs

[61] The only measure proposed not adopted was the regional costs measure which was intended to account for higher wages and cost of living in places like Los Angeles (Bersin, Kirst, and Liu, p. 9).
[62] Lhamon would later serve as the Assistant Secretary for civil rights at the Department of Education between 2013-2017, under Barack Obama, and 2021-present under Joe Biden and Chair of the United States Commission on Civil Rights 2016-2021 under President Obama and the 45th President of the United States.

to immediately show they were directing the funds to the children "entitled to receive it" while noting that it is a core issue that allotted dollars must go to the children at their school sites (Fensterwald, 2012, July 26). This disagreement over whether or how much accountability would prove to be a key divergence, yet it did not prevent the bill from moving forward and was never directly addressed. This lack of attention given to these sorts of accountability measures would make it impossible to truly track how LEAs spent money and to determine whether the intended children were being helped. When laws have gray areas, those who have been historically maligned, like Black people and Indigenous people, tend to suffer the "unintended" negative consequences.

4.7.5 An Attempt to Address the Teachers Retirement System and Dueling School Funding Propositions

Lurking in the background of the efforts to alter education funding through A.B. 97 were teacher pension costs as these expenses constituted large portions of school budgets and the governor and legislature sought to address the retirement system through a bill. Administrators and teachers, their LEA, and the state contribute a percentage of the employee's pay to California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS) which funds educator pensions. In June of 2012, Governor Brown and the legislature quickly passed a bill that reduced taxpayer obligations, by lowering benefits and increasing employee contributions for new hires, to the CalSTRS which had a $65 billion underfunded liability at the time (Fensterwald, 2012, September 25). These moves shifted more retirement responsibility to teachers and other school employees, thus further making the public education a less desirable post, particularly in schools which serve higher concentrations of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, Black

children, and Indigenous children as their schools tend to be lower funded, staff, and resourced. After teacher pensions were addressed, the fight moved to funding for California schools.

California's finances and its (in)ability to increase funding to schools were true stumbling blocks to getting A.B. 97 passed and to address these concerns the legislature and Governor Brown worked to address the teacher's retirement system and backed a proposition to increase school funding. While the Great Recession was winding down, school funding continued to be cut. For the 2012-2013 school year nearly 30% of school funding was cut with about half of the funds due to *actual* spending cuts and the other half due to funds promised under Proposition 98 (Fensterwald, 2012, August).[63] Therefore, California needed an increase in revenue to support the implementation of the any new finance system, particularly with respect to the funding categories of the weighted formula to supply additional funding based on student characteristics, which would be highly dependent on the state's resources. California schools were in dire need of an increase in funding, with or without a new funding structure. However, without a new money pool, the Brown backed Assembly Bill 97 would not be viable. Ahead of the vote on Assembly Bill 97, there were attempts to add to education funding through state propositions.

For the 2012 election cycle two competing propositions, Proposition 30 and Proposition 38, were placed on the ballot and only one was supported by Governor Brown. California voters were tasked with deciding on how, and whether, to generate money which would help get education funding back to its pre-Great Recession levels [see Appendix HH for information regarding Propositions 30 and 38].

[63] Fensterwald (2012, August) outlines research from School Services of California which produced a graphic displaying how much school funding had been cut from the 2007-2008 school year through the 2012-2013 school year including proposed mid-year cuts if more funding for school was not found.

Ultimately, voters passed the Brown backed Proposition 30 (2012) which would serve as the financial teeth for A.B. 97 and ensure that there was more funding to funnel to LEAs and thus fulfill the promise to increase funding to pre-Great Recession levels. However, the Proposition did have a sunset date and voters would be tasked with deciding whether to extend the changes fully/partially or allow them to sunset them as planned. As passed, Proposition 30 helped get California funding back to pre-Great Recession levels considering inflation but did not increase funding beyond that. This means that California school funding would continue to fall behind other states and Proposition 30 only provided a slight relief beyond its time limit. Further, as there was little to no movement in addressing property taxes or taxing multi-millionaire and billionaire corporations nor capital gains, there continue to be concerns regarding school funding and whether California will truly try increase funding to modern levels.

4.8 The Local Control Funding Formula (2013)

In this section, I will discuss the A.B. 97, hereinafter referred to as the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) as the legislative policy with a notable school funding reform component. The LCFF constitutes an attempt to radically alter LEA funding by explicitly funneling additional funding to assist and educate students who have traditionally been denied access to quality educational assistance given systemic failures and roadblocks to reach academic goals geared toward those who are non-PoC and parents who were afforded better educational opportunities. The latter strategic attempt accounts for a necessity to make amends through an investment in educating this population of students and holds LEAs accountable for their education outcomes (e.g., Affeldt, 2015; Fuller, & Tobben, 2014; Koppich, et al., 2015; Menefee-Libey & Kerchner, 2015).

In the following subsections I will begin and explain what the LCFF does and what changes it makes to California K-12 public school funding. After this, there is a discussion of the steps taken to develop accountability measures. This section ends with a discussion into the policy theory behind the LCFF and what the LCFF means in practice.

4.8.1 Basics of the LCFF

When Jerry Brown signed Chapter 47, Statutes of 2013 (A.B. 97[64]) in 2013, the Local Control Funding Formula was entered into the California Constitution (Taylor, 2013).[65] The LCFF eliminates, what some position as the old and complex, category-based funding structure for one which permits LEAs, and their schools, more budgetary autonomy to address their unique needs to hopefully more efficiently and transparently with its community (Public Advocates, n. d.). The LCFF changed how funding is allocated to LEAs and provides more local autonomy to decide how general funds are spent, though there are some elements of accountability for LEAs to adhere to [see Appendix II for more basic information implications of the LCFF]. As expected, given Proposition 209, there are no direct mentions about racial groups despite the state continually noting that Black and Indigenous children are struggling with meeting the state academic standards. The LCFF is race-evasive and comes with the hope that all children who need help will benefit through this strategy.

4.8.2 Theory and Purpose of the LCFF

In alignment with some of the critiques coming out of the 2004 documentary *Learning Matters: From First to Worst*, the LCFF amounts to an effort to decentralize education by

[64] This bill was introduced jointly by fifteen democratic assemblypersons serving on the budget committee on January 10, 2013, and signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown on July 1, 2013.
[65] There were two further legislative agendas passed that tweaked the formula Chapter 70, Statutes of 2013 (Senate Bill 91) and Chapter 357, Statutes of 2013 (Senate Bill 97).

increasing local control and flexibility to make spending decisions with a central promise that those children who are struggling will receive better assistance without bureaucratic dictatorship interference coming from the state regarding how funds should be spent. The LCFF honors a systemic reform effort over incremental changes (Vasquez Heilig et al., 2014). California's "...theory-of-action postulates that local control should encourage wider involvement by parent groups, community organizations, employers and civic leaders in the budget-making process" (Fuller & Tobben, 2014). LCFF requires that stakeholders be engaged in the goal-setting process[66] and gives COEs authority to oversee the completed goals (Koppich et al., 2015). A promise of the LCFF is to bring about education funding equity by getting funding to the schools and LEAs that require more support, particularly children impacted by systemic inequity and lack of access to educational resources.

LEAs are asked to define the scope of their developed actions and services with additional options for services meant to impact children identified as unduplicated students. LEAs are permitted to deploy actions/services on a districtwide, schoolwide, or on a limited to student group basis. LEAs are required to justify their deployment choice and how it plans to meet requirements to increase or improve services for children identified as unduplicated students for supplemental/concentration funding (California Department of Education, 2018, June). The unduplicated[67] category consists of students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages ("low-income"), students placed in the foster care system ("foster youth"), and plural lingual learners ("English language learners"). There is no proportional representation mandate for goals, actions, or services to be directed toward children identified as unduplicated students.

[66] Specifically, the LCFF requires LEAs to engage their stakeholders in the creation process of their LCAP and its yearly revisions.

[67] The unduplicated terminology refers to the fact that students will only be counted once even if they belong to more than one of the three subgroups.

LEAs receive base funding and supplemental and concentration funds where the latter are solely intended to increase or improve services for unduplicated students. Though, LEAs may use their base funds to target specific subgroups thus establishing some opportunity for LEAs to use their resources to target Black and Indigenous students. While the LCFF established a general idea and system, the California State Board of Education was tasked with deciding final regulations.

4.8.3 Kirst and the CSBE Establish the LCAP as an Accountability Measures for the LCFF

After the LCFF was passed, the CSBE was tasked with developing an accountability system to ensure that LEAs are using the local control measures for the benefit of their community. Though an opponent of accountability in the initial stages, CSBE President Kirst would play a key role in shaping the state's new accountability system under the LCFF.[68] Kirst is credited with being "a leading architect of California's new accountability system based on multiple measures and the California School Dashboard that represents visually how schools are doing on numerous indicators" (Freedberg, 2019, September 6). The CSBE appeared to elicit feedback in developing regulations to create an accountability system for schools, particularly surrounding how supplemental and concentration funding should be spent and documented. This process resulted in an unprecedented turnout of hundreds of students, parents, and education-related professionals to the CSBE hearings being held to solidify LCFF regulations (Affeldt, 2015, p. 4). These meetings resulted in a final set of regulations adopted in November 2014 that had *largely* won a consensus of support from the Brown administration, teachers' unions, school boards, and the equity community (Affeldt, 2015, p. 4). The CSBE established regulations requiring LEAs to "determine and report the precise amount of supplemental and concentration

[68] The prior system, Academic Performance Index, is credited to Edward Haertel, another Stanford professor.

funding [they are] expending each year…and identify how it is using those funds to increase or improve services" for children identified as unduplicated students (Affeldt, 2004, p. 4).

These requirements are to be reported in the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), which is the key component of the mandated local planning process for each LEA and is positioned as a notion of accountability to ensure the LEAs are communicating with their community, setting goals, and allocating and spending funds appropriately. The LCAP represents the primary tool for California LEAs to communicate their district's story and the details behind their choices for programs and services to meet their local needs (California Department of Education, 2019, April). The LCAP is meant "to support positive student outcomes that address state and local priorities" under LCFF (California Department of Education, 2019, April). LEAs can set local priorities based on needs tied to specific to schools, student sub-groups, or grade spans. With this, the LCFF provided decision-making powers so that "school districts will have flexibility to design student support programs based on student needs" (Laguna Beach Unified School District, 2014, p. 9). Further, the purpose of flexibility is for LEAs to focus on specific student group needs to lead to increased student achievement outcomes and eliminate gaps in achievement between student subgroups (Laguna Beach Unified School District, 2014).

Therefore, schools are only asked to report in the LCAP the amount of supplemental and concentration funding received, allocated, and spent. And while LEAs are asked to identify how the funds contribute to the increased or improved services mandate for children identified as unduplicated students, LEAs are not required to be specific with respect to ensuring that those the funds are only for the benefit of intended children. Therefore, the accountability measures created by the CSBE are inadequate to truly ensure that those children who are deemed to be struggling under current academic conditions and are children identified as unduplicated students

are the sole targets of supplemental and concentration funds. These inadequate measures ultimately deprive Indigenous and Black students of equitable educational opportunities by allowing these children to continue to be overlooked or dismissed, particularly in the case of Indigenous children.

4.8.4 Analysis and Conclusions to the Establishment of the Local Control Funding Formula

As the Bersin, Kirst, and Liu issue brief serves as the foundation for the Local Control Funding Formula law, though only four of the five suggested components made it into the law.[69] The regional cost adjustments component did not make it into the LCFF. This provision would have centered on the fact that dollars have varying purchasing power in California given the different economic conditions throughout the state which then impacts district costs like teacher salaries, school personnel wages, building costs, etc. Such a system would have acknowledged it is more expensive to operate a school in Los Angeles or San Francisco counties than in Modoc or Inyo counties. Therefore, without this provision, Jerry Brown and the legislature chose to continue inequity by refusing to address a vital funding condition that disproportionately impacts where most Black students go to school. Treating all locations as equal disproportionately privileges rural areas and less populated school districts which tend to have more non-Persons of Color, thus continuing systemic racist and anti-black, anti-Indigenous practices.[70]

There was one component in the issue brief, the hold harmless provision, which should not have been included in the LCFF as the provision is a contributor to inequitable funding and

[69] There were five components to the brief: a base funding amount per pupil; special education under existing federal statutes and laws; funding targeted for English learners and students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages with attention to the concentration of such students; regional cost adjustments using a labor market wage index; and a hold harmless provision.

[70] Though, there are large numbers and percentages of Indigenous children who live and attend schools in small or rural districts.

goes against the basic notion of a base funding total which any student can receive a quality education. The inclusion of a hold harmless provision is another contributor to a continuance of inequity in funding and opportunity, particularly for those like Indigenous and Black students. This type of provision guarantees that LEAs do not receive less funding than they previously received prior to a change in the funding structure. This ensures that often wealthy districts, which tend to be primarily non-Students of Color, continue to receive as much funding as they previously received, thus eliminating whatever equity principles that are asserted with the base funding per pupil as these districts continue to receive more base funding.[71] Further, this type of provision ignores the ways certain districts and schools can secure additional funding and resources through their foundations, nonprofits, not for profits, parental/guardian associations, etc. Brown and the legislature's intent to create an equity-based formula which funnels more funding to districts with populations which have often been disenfranchised by previous funding structures, and society at large, is usurped by the hold harmless provision and a failure to address private funding to public schools. The hold harmless provision explicitly allows LEAs with higher funding totals to have more funds than they are entitled to under the LCFF funding system formulas.

Given the limitations of the issue brief, it is unsurprising that there are some notable concerns with the LCFF with respect to funding equity and attention to race. The LCFF reworks the school finance system to a model that looks a lot like the system which led to the *Serrano* decision as a base funding grant is provided to all LEAs regardless of need or other sources of funding. The LCFF has three funding components a base grant, which is provided to all LEAs, a supplemental grant, which is provided to all LEAs which have any number of children identified

[71] Instead of a hold harmless provision which keeps inequity in place, a more positive solution could involve setting a standard funding amount that is equivalent to the highest funding district or school.

as unduplicated students, and a concentration grant, which is provided to all LEAs with over 55% of their total population consisting of children identified as unduplicated students.

While the LCFF brings in this new funding structure, previous propositions are still valid and impact funding dollars as they were not repealed or rewritten. As previously noted, Proposition 98 (1988) and its guarantees guides how much funding K-12 education receives and thus most of the school funding which is distributed under the LCFF. After the LCFF was passed, there was a need to develop an accountability system to provide some guarantee that LEAs would spend supplemental and concentration funds for the enrichment of unduplicated students as intended, that there would be transparency, and that LEAs would collaborate with their communities to meet local needs. The Local Control Accountability Plan was determined to be the primary accountability measure for LEAs to complete to receive funds.

While the LCFF constituted a major event for education and education funding in California, it was not the last. In the ten years after the LCFF, while the state continues to communicate through state level discourse that there are concerns regarding Indigenous and Black students' education without action to support different outcomes, the state made some positive moves (e.g., adding protections for the general fund through Proposition 2 (2014) and extending the tax increases under Proposition 30 (2012) for an additional twelve years through 2016's Proposition 55). However, voting citizens also failed to make needed equitable changes (e.g., not overturning Proposition 209 (1996) through Proposition 16 (2020) and not altering Proposition 13 (1978) through Proposition 15 (2020). The governor and state legislature failed to make changes to the LCFF to better address inequity (e.g., 2022's Assembly Bill 2774 which would have added to definition of unduplicated students to explicitly require LEAs to focus on students who are not meeting state standards through). Lastly, the judicial system has weakened

the state's commitment to public education (e.g., *Campaign for Quality Education v. California* (2016)) [see Appendix JJ for more detailed analysis and information regarding California after the LCFF's implementation]. These sorts of continued happenings showcase California's struggle with achieving true equity and access to education for Indigenous and Black children which is directly attributed to the state's politicians, the judicial system, and the citizens themselves who continue to support racist systems and ways of thinking.

4.9 Discussion of Chapter 4 Findings

This chapter answers the Research Questions by using Critical Policy Analysis with Critical Race Theory. This chapter formulates a response to the questions using CPA steps by centering the importance of previous actions (e.g., court cases, state legislation, state ballot measures, etc.), central persons and entities with constitutional authority over education policy (e.g., state governor, state board of education, state legislature, etc.), and the behaviors of private citizens (e.g., community foundations, persons creating ballot measures, white flight, etc.) which are frequently recentered in terms of impact for Indigenous and Black learners.

In this chapter, we see how the historicity of the LCFF matters in terms of the law itself. Through tracing key moments and social actors, it is apparent how these elements build to create a system which continuously fails to ensure Black and Indigenous children's educational needs are met. Politicians and judicial bodies continually make decisions which aim to create a race-blind enforcement where all can succeed, but instead reinforce white supremacy through race-evasive tactics and ultimately continue to fail all Students of Color, especially Black and Indigenous children. History showcases how race and social class tend to overlap, but that race remains a common and important theme. In the next chapter, I will demonstrate how these elements are present in the LCAPs and are thus applicable to an understanding of the documents.

Also, the analysis shows the state communicates concern for the education of Indigenous and Black children, particularly related to academic outcomes. However, the analysis also shows that these tend to be empty actions without genuine action to support the purported concern. Instead, the state resorted to reporting outcomes and expressing concern or establishing committees to study the phenomenon. These discourses provide a façade of commitment, but no real action.

Further, while the LCFF is a freestanding law that manages to establish a funding system and, later, accountability measures, in answering the Research Questions, what this chapter shows is that the LCFF does not exist within a vacuum. The LCFF is a direct product of past actions which constrain or liberate the potential of the law. Additionally, there are many important people, likely many more not mentioned in this chapter, who have had an impact on education funding and/or upholding or impacting white supremacy which frequently limit possibilities for Black and Indigenous people. Again, the LCFF is also impacted by previous laws, court cases, and state propositions as the LCFF legislation did not attempt to legally invalidate these measures. The LCFF does intentionally eliminate categorical funding programs not protected by federal law. Therefore, the LCFF exists alongside other education or education-related doctrines. Such a reality pushes strongly against the repeated idea that the LCFF simplified education funding. Given this, it is expected that issues will exist at the district level when reviewing LBUSD and LAUSD LCAPs.

4.9.1 There is an Importance of the Behaviors of Private Citizens

Ballot measures passed (e.g., Proposition 13, 1978, Proposition 98, 1988, Proposition 30, 2012) and rejected (e.g., Proposition 15, 2020, Proposition 16, 2020) by California voters have shaped the possibilities of what education in California can look like. It goes without saying that the citizens of California have made decisions via ballot measures which have negatively

impacted school funding and access to quality education for Black and Indigenous students. Further, private citizens, and those with private organizations and foundations, are the authors of many of these ballot measures which are put to a vote in the state. Only two of the measures covered in this chapter, Proposition 111 (1990) and Proposition 16 (2020) were submitted to California voters by the state legislature. Therefore, in California there is ample opportunity for private citizens and groups, with financial resources, to get ballot measures in front of the people. Unfortunately, this opportunity does not appear to be equal as advocacy by caretakers and community members on behalf of Indigenous and Black children in LAUSD, LBUSD, and other districts tend to need the assistance of other citizens and organizations with political cache to be taken seriously. This inequity exists at the local level, as despite LCFF collaboration requirements, Indigenous and Black people struggle to gain LEA attention during the LCAP process without organizations like Public Counsel supporting their claims.

4.9.2 Central Persons and Entities with Constitutional Authority over Education Policy are Influential

The California Constitution and other laws give different roles and boards input over public education including the state treasurer, state superintendent of public instruction, state department of education, state board of education, state legislature, and state governor. And the CSBE is given ample authority over public education in California, including requirements for the state legislature to request input from the body. However, this board is directly appointed by the governor, with California state senate approval, which means that there is constant changeover and the CSBE's composition is heavily dependent on *who* is the governor. Therefore, the office of the governor has proven to be an influential position in California for education policy and policies which impact education. This chapter outlines frequent

appearances by persons holding the governor role (e.g., Pete Wilson defending Proposition 209, Gray Davis facilitating the takeover of Oakland Unified School District, etc.). Actions by the California governor overtime have had a unique role in shaping the current landscape in public education and ultimately the LCFF.

A central figure in this chapter was Jerry Brown given Brown's two separate stints as California governor and other political positions like Oakland Mayor where Brown first showed an interest in enacting education reform through unilateral moves. Jerry Brown's central role in *requesting* that the legislature pass a weighted student formula was very influential, leading to the passage of the LCFF. Brown rejected attempts from Julia Brownley, and the legislature, to develop or study an alternative funding structure and attempted to circumvent legislative prerogative by attaching a weighted student formula to the governor's budget. Brown's very aggressive actions and words, communicated to the legislature to fall in line and support the governor's weighted formula initiative. The California legislature would get behind a bill modeled as the policy issue brief which was, in part, authored by CSBE member and board president, and long-time Brown ally, Michael Kirst.

4.9.3 The Importance of Previous Actions Including Legal Decisions and Laws

Rather than asking for equitable funding for all students, particularly for Black children, the attorneys in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) asked for an end to laws which permitted schools to be segregated by race and deny entry to Black children based on their race. *Brown* effectively goes after *de facto* segregation laws and thus aims to target schooling systems predominantly the U.S. South while ignoring *de facto* segregation occurring in the U.S. North and West. This ask targets instances of overt racism rather than instances of racism which just so

happen to occur when race is not directly mentioned. However, coded language, referring to race or caregiver income status, is often included.

In the case of *Serrano v. Priest* (1971), there is an attempt to address a school finance system, with *de facto* racial implications for Students of Color, without mentioning race and instead relying on apparent inequities in funding under the arbitrary school boundary system. Therefore, when the California Supreme Court declares the state's funding system inequitable under the state's constitution, it is a true shockwave to whiteness itself and *de facto* education funding policies which enrich whiteness while punishing being a Black child or Indigenous child. While the court makes this determination and doubles down on the state's funding system being unconstitutional in *Serrano II* (1975), there was no attempt by the court to ensure that schooling systems would have access to sufficient revenue. And further, to ensure that *de facto* inequitable education funding strategies (e.g., foundations or hold harmless provisions) would not proliferate to protect white interests thus continuing inequitable funding of schools.

Soon after *Serrano*, which led to the state (re)distributing all funding for schools, came Proposition 13 (1978) which reduced the amount of revenue that could be collected and instituted mandates that property tax measures be taken to a public vote. Proposition 13 has been devasting for the funding of school systems, particularly those which educate children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and Students of Color as the measure decreases the amount of revenue California collects and thus is able to redistribute to schools. In the over forty years since this ballot measure's adaptation, California has struggled to collect adequate revenue to distribute to schools, let alone fund schools equally or equitably. Unfortunately, the state attempts to increase revenue have aligned to broadly with a *share the burden* ideology rather than include solutions that directly confront tax loopholes which allows multi-billion dollar

entities to pay little or no tax and thus deprive Indigenous and Black children of educational opportunity.

A true limitation of the LCFF is that it does not create or establish any new funding structures. The LCFF relies on previous, current, and future initiatives which might impact the education finance system and the state's general fund broadly. Therefore, the LCFF remains in a precarious position where it must depend upon income taxes as the major contributor to education funding. The LCFF also heavily depends on previous state ballot measures (e.g., Proposition 98, 1988 and Proposition 111, 1990) which have impacted education funding. As repeatedly stated, Proposition 98 established formulas for education funding which were intended to serve as minimums but have functioned as a ceiling for education funding. Further, most of the funding that school districts receive comes from the thirty-five year old measure.

The consistently court upheld Proposition 209 directly impacts all attempts to combat racial inequities resulting from systemic racism for Indigenous and Black children. Assembly Bill 2774, which would have amended the definition of unduplicated pupils to include the lowest performing student groups, was headed to the governor's desk in summer 2022, but was unexpectedly pulled. Governor Gavin Newsom allegedly expressed concerns that A.B. 2774 would run afoul of Proposition 209. This is a valid concern, but, in the past, Gavin has shown a willingness to risk being sued for standing up for what is right (e.g., for marriage equality). However, it seems that for racial equality and equitable educational achievement for children, Newsom has not yet shown a willingness to stand up for what is just and fight for the education of Black and Indigenous children. The same goes for court justices who have expressed that previous legal decisions upholding the legality of Proposition 209 were incorrect yet felt compelled to acquiesce to judicial precedence.

4.9.4 Transition to Chapter 5

Ultimately, the narrative in Chapter 4 focused on the LCFF and how these instances shaped the possibilities of the LCFF and thus the LCAP which LEAs are required to complete. The next chapter will build on themes which were uncovered using the CRT informed approach to a critical policy analysis that identified persons and events in education policy that mattered for the education of Indigenous children and Black children.

These themes include the performative actions that have been instituted to address observed or actual concerns related to Black and Indigenous students, coupled with ignoring the inclusion of Indigenous and Black voices in the process. In this chapter, I highlighted how the state of California created taskforces or groups with purported aims to address education inequity for Black and Indigenous students, but the through the analysis I was able to show that the state did not truly empower these groups (e.g., failing to hold meeting or limiting the groups to making recommendations). Further, in Appendix JJ.5, I discuss how Jim McQuillen, A Yurok tribal citizen and CSBE member, connects small percentages of Indigenous students in schools and LEAs to a failure to assume responsibility for the education of Indigenous children. Given the state's reliance on quantitative data and institutional statistics in making educational decisions, the proportionality reality for Indigenous children, who are now treated as statistically insignificant, is an important consideration when analyzing district and school data.

Another theme involves the potential illegality of addressing the needs of Indigenous and Black students, unless federally mandated, due to Proposition 209 (1996). In the analysis, I showed that there have been legal challenges to the law by contractors and university students, which have all upheld Proposition 209, but there have been no challenges to the law on behalf of K-12 children who are also impacted by the constitutional amendment enacted under the

proposition. Despite this, I showed how state officials, like Governor Newsom, have been hesitant to directly challenge Proposition 209 or make efforts to directly help the children who need additional investment given our current educational system. Further some officials, like Governor Wilson, actively worked to uphold Proposition 209. The failure to address the needs of racialized bodies in K-12 schools may stem from the proposition.

The other theme that will be addressed in Chapter 5 surrounds the tendency to address racialized issues with broad race-evasive strategies which tend to be positioned, in verbal rhetoric, as beneficial for children like Indigenous and Black students despite no specific written discourse supporting the claims. For example, I showed that when Jerry Brown was Mayor of Oakland, Brown asserted that Oakland schools were failing Black children and thus needed a change. Yet, Brown refused to implement any actual measure to address the noticed racialized issues surrounding educational success. In short, policymakers have lacked the willpower to set policies aimed at solving racialized issues despite acknowledging them. Further, the analysis showed how the court system has been uneven in addressing racialized issues with a tendency to ignore the impact or importance of race.

Chapter 5 Approaching the SARC and LCAPs for Comprehension and Understanding District Attitudes and Support for Indigenous Students and Black Students

With a sense of the pervasiveness of California's inability to establish an equitable, or adequate, funding system or target the needs of Black and Indigenous students, this findings chapter uses data from LAUSD and LBUSD, two of the five largest LEAs in the state, to show that structural issues from the state level show up in these local school systems. This chapter continues to be guided by a Critical Race Theory (CRT) informed Critical Policy Analysis (CPA) using critical quantitative and systemic functional linguistics (SFL) as analytical tools.

In this chapter, the CRT-informed CPA provides a valuable framework to guide the analysis of the LCAP documents and SARC data. Applying the CRT tenet that racism is an ordinary occurrence and embedded into institutions like school districts to analysis does not demonize the districts, or the state, for the presence of policies, actions, and discourse which negatively impacts the education of Indigenous and Black children. Instead, this tenet allows me to uncover instances steeped in racist values and presuppositions and pinpoint where shifts can be made to move past the normalcy of embedded racism to be actively antiracist not only in intent or discourse but in action. The CRT lens helps uncover where there may be intent to serve Black and Indigenous children but shows that the effort may be undermined by negative ideologies which demean or dismiss the capabilities of Black and Indigenous children or by lack of clear intention to actually benefit Indigenous and Black children.

The second CRT tenet of this study is that there is a fundamental value in actively leveraging the experiential knowledge coming from Communities of Color which includes

actively centering those voices. The policy process would benefit from involving those Communities (finally) as equal partners and disrupt processes which marginalize them. Applying this tenet also helps support a move from a focus on a social wrong toward recommendations for how to effectively move past systemic barriers by incorporating the perspectives of Indigenous and Black communities to improve educational systems and funding allocations.

CRT also informs the CritQuant approaches data that I use to interrogate the data to consider issues of equity for Indigenous and Black students. For example, I use language like *outcomes deemed measurable* to disrupt norms surrounding student achievement and highlight the notion that there are many outcome measures related to measures of student achievement that could be a focus in policy documents such as the LCAP, but only particular measures are used. Further, the term *outcomes deemed measurable* actively calls into question whether the assessments measure what they claim to measure. Outcome data coming from high stakes standardized English language arts and Mathematics tests, for example, are often reported as outcomes deemed measurable and serve to reduce a student's knowledge to these types of assessments and elevate these tests as barriers that students must cross to be deemed to be meeting standards.

Drawing on these frameworks, this chapter answers the following questions:

Research Question 1A: How do two neighboring California school districts' education planning and accountability documents reveal the goals, funding allocations, and educational opportunities and outcomes for Indigenous and Black students considering the historicity of California public school funding?

Research Question 2: What does a quantitative critical analysis of district accountability data reveal about the (in)equity of funding for Indigenous and Black students?

Research Question 3: What types of messages regarding Black and Indigenous children are communicated through California state level discourse, as evident in the districts' planning and accountability documents?

Research Question 3A: How are Black and Indigenous children discursively positioned in these messages and how may that positioning be relevant to their access to equitable educational opportunities and outcomes?

I take three distinct steps to address Research Questions 1A, 2, 3, and 3A. First, I determine and situate Black and Indigenous children's presence in the districts through lexical chain analysis and descriptive statistics of demographics and test score data. Second, I determine how to approach the district's LCAPs for analysis through a Genre analysis. And third, I analyze the text of the LCAP to understand how Indigenous and Black children are (not) attended to using SFL, including Appraisal analysis.

There are some important threads from Chapter 4 which remain relevant through this chapter, for instance, the tendency to talk about Black and Indigenous children's academic performance or outcomes deemed measurable coupled with performative actions to address observed or actual concerns and a failure to consider Indigenous and Black people's input when implementing policy. Also, given Proposition 209 (1996), it is potentially illegal to for school districts and schools as state agents to address the need of Indigenous and Black students, unless federally mandated to. As state officials have been hesitant to challenge the moral illegality of Proposition 209, there has been a tendency to fail to authentic establish systems of support for children who need it given our current educational system which devalues Black and Indigenous children. And, in a context where there is failure by lawmakers to implement policies addressing racialized issues and combat structural racism and the judicial system which has been uneven in

providing intervention which could support the education of racialized children, there is a tendency to address racialized issues (e.g., the disproportionate suspension rates of Indigenous children) with broad race-evasive strategies. These efforts come with the hope, and sometimes assertion, that the interventions will be beneficial for Indigenous and Black students. Further, those in power tout the success of the race-evasive intervention when there is any improvement, even if marginal.

5.1 Descriptive Statistics Show that Most Schools have low Population Percentages of Indigenous and Black Children

To begin this inquiry, there is an importance to think about the distribution of racial groups like Indigenous students and Black students more acutely, including their differing concentration across schools. A goal is to identify where Black and Indigenous students are in the district because, to better serve students with these identities it is important to have some idea of what schools they are in, where they are concentrated, etc. Therefore, I explore the SARC to understand where Indigenous and Black students are within each district.

Table 5.1 Descriptive Statistics on Groups of Interest Across LBUSD and LAUSD

	N (schools)	*M*	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*
Long Beach Unified School District					
Black children	85	12.27%	6.02%	0.4%	36.3%
Indigenous children	60	0.27%	0.16%	0.0%	0.7%
Children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages	85	68.47%	24.77%	17.5%	96.6%
Children in the foster care system	74	0.76%	0.50%	0.1%	2.4%
Plural lingual learners	85	17.31%	12.96%	0.6%	49.6%
All children	85	858.2	719.71	55	4,026
Los Angeles Unified School District					
Black children	960	10.18%	15.29%	0.1%	95.2%
Indigenous children	465	0.38%	0.33%	0.1%	3.3%

Children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages	1,008	82.28%	20.12%	5.3%	100%
Children in the foster care system	824	1.09%	3.41%	0	94.3%
Plural lingual learners	1,007	22.79%	14.95%	0.2%	84.6%
All children	1,008	600.51	485.22	2	4,698

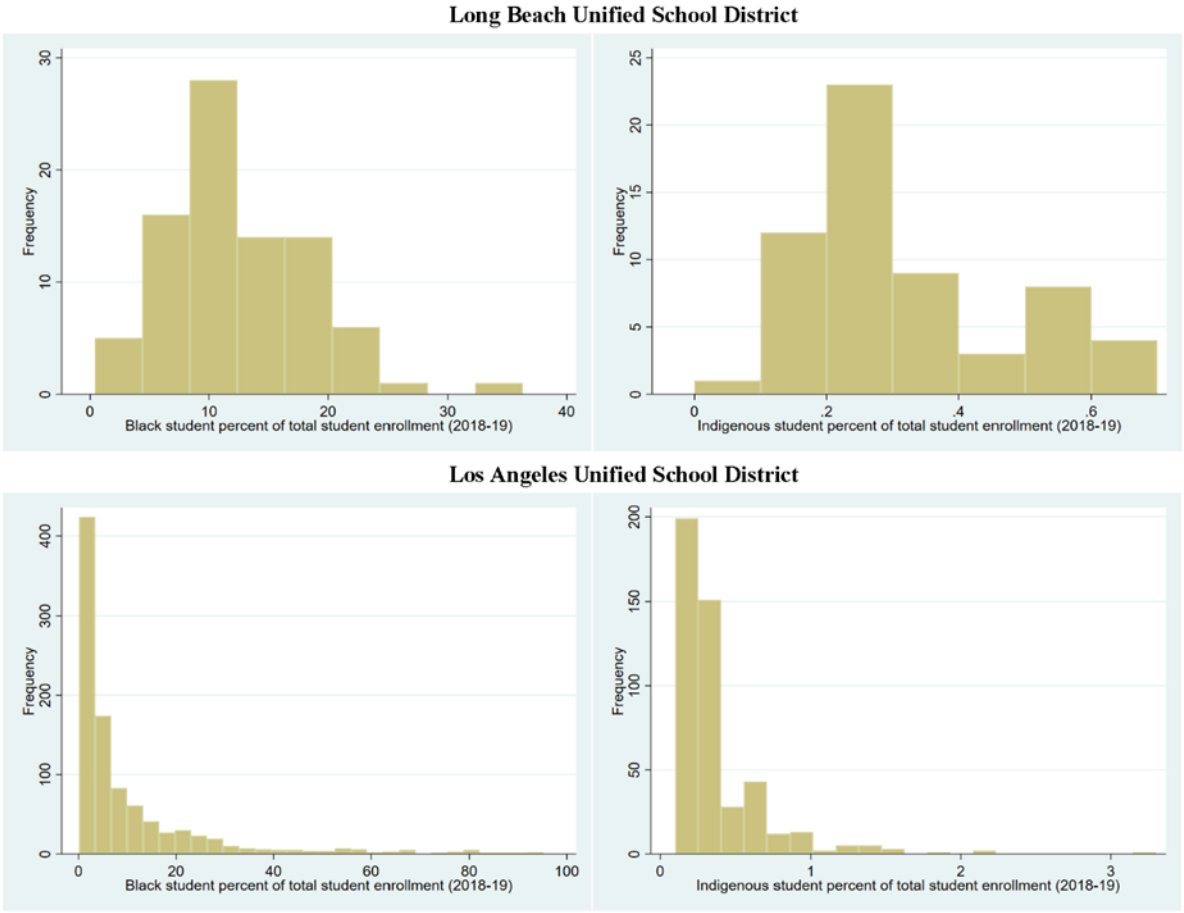
Note. Given the composition of the data, data referring to "all children" are in whole numbers while all other data is represented in percentages.

As seen in Table 5.1, the mean and standard deviations alert that the data is potentially skewed in terms of which schools Black and Indigenous students attend. This likely means that many Indigenous and Black students attend schools where they are few in percentage relative to total student population and the expected population percentage based on district average. The data highlights that across each district it is apparent that there are some schools where the percentage of Black or Indigenous students exceeds the mean, but that for most schools, Indigenous students and all Black students remain within -1 SD on the lower end of the bell curve. This means that it is likely that larger numbers of students may be concentrated in specific schools. Histograms are helpful to better understand such data, in terms of specific school concentration [see Appendix MM for this analysis].

Looking closer at the individual districts helps see local characteristics. Black students are in 85 (97.70%) LBUSD schools and 960 (93.30%) LAUSD schools. Indigenous students are in 60 (69.00%) LBUSD schools and 465 (45.2%) LAUSD schools. This means that LAUSD has higher total numbers of schools which are tasked with educating both Black and Indigenous students, which is expected considering that LAUSD is the largest school district in California. However, considering the percentage of schools, each LBUSD school is more likely to be responsible for educating an Indigenous or Black child. These data help us begin to understand why LBUSD and LAUSD should be concerned about ensuring that Indigenous and Black children are served by the districts.

In Figure 5.1, the histograms for the individual school districts by racial group are skewed to the right, continuing to signal that most schools have a comparatively lower percentage of Indigenous and Black students when considering the total student population. However, the distribution specifics appear differently in each district.

Figure 5.1 Histograms of Black and Indigenous Student Enrollment per School per School District



Note. Per SARC data, the graphs represent the 2018-19 frequencies via percentage of Indigenous (right) or Black (left) students enrolled at a school, considering the total student population, in LAUSD and LBUSD respectively. The frequencies represent the number of schools which have a particular percentage of Indigenous or Black students. It is important to think about the visual differences between LAUSD's and LBUSD's histograms which are the result of different amounts of schools (frequencies) and student populations (student percentage of enrollment).

As displayed in Figure 5.1, across LAUSD, most schools have an Indigenous or Black student population that comprised of 1 percent or less of the total student enrollment. Reflecting

on such results, the fact that most LAUSD schools may only have what is often considered a small percentage of Indigenous children and Black children highlights a statistical problem where these students, Indigenous children especially, are being invisibilized. In LBUSD, most schools have less than 0.3% Indigenous students. As in the case with LASUD, this may lead to Indigenous students being invisibilized in the LBUSD schools they attend. For Black students in LBUSD, the 10% marker is the pivot point, suggesting that many schools educate fewer than 10% of Black students relative to the total school population, but also that an equivalent number of schools educate more than 10% of Black students. This spotlights that LBUSD may have a districtwide reason for a more uniform responsibility to ensure that Black students receive appropriate services. Other descriptive statistics data show what the breakdown of Indigenous and Black students looks like across the districts and can be compared to the categories which comprise the unduplicated student group.

In Table 5.2, the Long Beach Unified School District, Black students are counted in 85 schools (mean = 12.27%, standard deviation = 6.02% with a minimum of 0.40% and a maximum of 36.30%) and Indigenous students in 60 schools (mean = 0.27%, standard deviation = 0.16% with a minimum of 0% and a maximum of 0.70%). Here we see that regardless of small percentage or not, there is at least one Black child in each school and at least one Indigenous child in over 70% of every LBUSD school in the 2018-19 school year. Such data suggests that the education of Black and Indigenous students should be a factor at every school in the district. Further, for Black students in LBUSD, there are some schools where Black students comprise over twenty percent of the student body and one school over thirty percent. These instances likely point to situations where Black communities have historically gathered due to racist policies from the past.

Table 5.2 Summary Statistics for Long Beach Unified School District, School Year 2018-19

Population	Number of Schools	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Black Students	85	12.27%	6.02%	0.4%	36.3%
Indigenous Students	60	0.27%	0.16%	0%*	0.7%
Children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages	85	68.47%	24.77%	17.5%	96.6%
Children placed in the foster care system	74	0.76%	0.50%	0.1%	2.4%
Plural lingual children	85	17.31%	12.96%	0.6%	49.6%

Note. This table shows summary statistics for populations of interest and those districts are required to serve under the LCFF.

* Zero values reflect a percentage below 0.05% but above 0%.

Also as seen in Table 5.2, children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages are in 85 schools (mean = 68.47%, standard deviation = 24.77% with a minimum of 17.50% and a maximum of 96.60%) while children placed in the foster care system are in 74 schools (mean = 0.76%, standard deviation = 0.50%, minimum = 0.10%, maximum = 2.40%). Here, in terms of the increased or improved services mandate, LBUSD these two student subgroups are present in most or all schools. However, as in the case with the concentrations of Indigenous and Black children, the standard deviations and minimum/maximum suggest that there is variation across schools in terms of concentration. LBUSD has one school where 96.6% of the total student body is categorized as children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and one school where the population is 17.5%. The large standard deviation across schools serving children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages suggests that there are some schools with more substantial concentrations of these children and thus more reason for the LBUSD to target specific schools serving these children. Similarly, the standard deviations point to higher concentrations of youth placed in the foster care system in certain schools allowing for the LBUSD to ensure there is more targeted support. Overall, the data suggests that LBUSD should have districtwide strategies

to ensure that Indigenous and Black children in every school receive targeted support, but also strategies for more targeted support where there are schools with known higher concentrations.

Table 5.3 shows that in Los Angeles Unified School District there are Black students in 960 schools (mean = 10.18%, standard deviation = 15.29%, minimum = 0.10%, maximum = 95.20%) and 465 schools with Indigenous students (mean = 0.38%, standard deviation = 0.33%, minimum = 0.10%, maximum = 3.30%). In LAUSD, Indigenous children are in about forty-six percent of schools and Black children are in about ninety-five percent of schools for the 2018-19 school year. This analysis suggests there is decent distribution across LAUSD schools for both Black and Indigenous students. However, again, the standard deviations, particularly when considering the respective means, and the minimum/maximum ranges highlight a wide range of percentages for schools across LAUSD. Per the minimum and maximum for Black students, there is at least one school where their population exceeds 95% and at least one school where the population is 0.1%. For Indigenous students, the range of .1% to 3.3% is smaller, but still wide when compared to the population mean and standard deviation.

Table 5.3 Summary Statistics for Los Angeles Unified School District, School Year 2018-19

Population	Number of Schools	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Black Students	960	10.18%	15.29%	0.10%	95.2%
Indigenous Students	465	0.38%	0.33%	0.1%	3.3%
Children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages	1008	82.28%	20.12%	5.3%	100%
Children placed in the foster care system	824	1.09%	3.41%	0%*	94.3%
Plural lingual children	1007	22.79%	14.95%	0.2%	84.6%

Note. This table shows summary statistics for populations of interest and those districts are required to serve under the LCFF.

* Zero values reflect a percentage below 0.05% but above 0%.

Table 5.3 also shows that there are 1,008 schools that have children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages (mean = 82.28%, standard deviation = 20.12%, minimum = 5.30%,

maximum = 100%). Children who are in the foster care system are found in 824 LAUSD schools (mean = 1.09%, standard deviation = 3.41%, minimum = 0%, maximum = 94.3%). On average, children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages comprise over 80% of each LAUSD schools' population. However, the analysis shows there is a large standard deviation, as a +1 standard deviation is not possible, which means that there are schools which have low populations of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. Further, the LAUSD has at least one school where over 90% of the total population consists of children who are placed in the foster care system , highlighting an opportunity for the district to ensure there are adequate services at the site and communicate this via the LCAP.

Across LBUSD and LAUSD, there are drastic differences in the percentage concentration of Black and Indigenous students across the schools as seen in the minimum and maximum percentages and standard deviations. As Black and Indigenous students may attend a school where they comprise a disproportionately high or low percentage of the total student population in comparison to the districtwide percentage, each district has a responsibility to vary its services scope. This highlights a cause for both districts to target schools which serve higher percentages of Indigenous and Black students, while also broadly ensuring that schools with lower percentages are also well supported.

5.2 Understanding Where Black and Indigenous Students Appear in the LCAPs

In Chapter 4, the findings highlighted a tendency for state officials to broadly speak to the plight, according to state metrics, that Indigenous and Black children experience in educational settings. Further, the findings showed California officials used outcomes deemed measurable to speak to an urgency to act to support said children, but that the responses tended to be more

performative than actual. Lastly, the findings juxtaposed potential legal constraints (e.g., Proposition 209, 1996) versus legal obligations (e.g., Williams v. California, 2004).

Through examining the LBUSD and LAUSD 2018-2019 LCAP documents, similar themes arise. In this section, I present lexical chain analysis as an analytic approach from SFL that illuminates the ways the student populations in focus for this study are present in the LCAP documents. In a lexical chain analysis, key words are identified and tracked as they occur in a text. For this analysis, lexical chains were identified using key words that refer to Indigenous students or Black students. These references were tabulated across each district's LCAP, noting where the location and the nature of the mention. Thus, the lexical chain analysis reveals where and if the LEAs are attentive to Indigenous and/or Black students in their LCAP.

To begin the lexical chain process, the documents were searched for terms identifying or referring to racial students from the racial categories "African American" and "American Indian," including abbreviations and variations like "African," "African-American," "Black," "Native American," "Indigenous," "American Indian," and "Indio." The analysis identified and tracked where in the LCAP the terms occurred, noting section and subsection of the document.

5.2.1 Racial Mentions tend to Occur in the Annual Updates Section, but Notable Mentions can Occur Throughout the LCAPs

The prominent goal is to understand where in the LCAP document that LBUSD and LAUSD think about Black and Indigenous students in different ways. Therefore, next step in this lexical analysis, after identifying basic notions of frequency and placement [see Appendix LL for this analysis], is to ascertain the nature of the mention (e.g., in reference to students and/or other persons or refer to an outcome data deemed measurable by the district). This means that the analysis led to coding which simplified the counts to exclude unremarkable mentions where the

LEA referred to Indigenous or Black students in the same manner (e.g., mentions of Black students' graduation rates across individual school years between 2017-2020). These removals allow for understanding where in the LCAPS the districts are uniquely thinking about Indigenous and Black children.

The findings, expanded upon in Appendix LL, showcase, in the LBUSD LCAP, most references to Black students are found in the *Annual Update* section and there is a hyper focus on outcomes deemed measurable for Black students across all grade levels in these mentions. There are four mentions of Indigenous children which are also mostly related to outcomes deemed measurable. With such an intense focus, one might expect an equivalent focus on goal setting, action and service plans, and resource allocation to match this attention for Indigenous and Black students. However, as we will begin to see later below, this is not the case. Further, Latin* students and Black students are mentioned in the same places of the LCAP except for mentions related to performance gaps, 2017-18 actual actions/services, and increased or improved services which are unique to Black students.[72] These two areas of difference help guide how the LBUSD is referring and attending to Black students in unique ways in comparison to Latin* students. However, there is a concern with LBUSD discussing Black and Latin* students in similar ways as the district could be conflating the differing needs of the groups which could be detrimental for Black children as they are greatly outnumbered by Latin* children.

The LAUSD LCAP lexical findings (see Appendix LL) reveal that Black children are the most referred to racial group by far with fifteen mentions and these mentions primarily occurring in the *Annual Update* section. There are also two mentions of Indigenous students, who account

[72] Additionally, the two groups of children are mentioned in the same quantity in the document except for goal implementation impact and stakeholder engagement.

for the third most racial mentions.[73] Black and Indigenous children are mentioned together in one instance, referring to a program (see Appendix MM). These finding demonstrate that the LAUSD is hyper focused on Black students, over all other student race groups, and, Indigenous students also constitute a focus, over most other student racial groups.

Comparably, considering the lexical chain results, the LAUSD LCAP showcases a primary focus on Black students while the LBUSD LCAP presents a nearly equal focus on Black and Latin* students. In either scenario, as Black students are not the majority population, this represents what appears to be an unequal focus on Black students. However, Indigenous students are also mentioned in both districts more often than other racial groups with higher population totals. These findings suggest that both districts are attentive to Black students and Indigenous students in their 2018-19 LCAPs in a manner that is disproportionate to their total population or population percentages in LBUSD and LAUSD which could mean that the districts are attentive to the historic needs that Indigenous and Black children may have under current learning conditions. However, further analysis will highlight that these mentions are not coupled with any meaningful action to support the learning outcomes for Black and/or Indigenous children. Both districts also make a reference to parents or families, with LBUSD making a reference to Black parents and families and Latin* families and LAUSD making a reference to Latin* parents. These mentions are unique in that each district is acknowledging caregivers and community members alongside the students that the districts are entrusted with educating and caring for. Further, through the mentions, the districts acknowledge that racial groups of parents and families are important to be mindful of. Therefore, we might expect that, particularly in LBUSD,

[73] Latin* students account for four mentions.

that there would be important consideration given to Black parents and families' desires and input with respect to the education of Black children in the district.[74]

5.2.2 Mentions of Black and Indigenous Children Tend to Refer to Outcomes Deemed Measurable

Further results from the lexical chain analysis show that both LEAs were attentive to tracking student subgroups by outcomes deemed measurable (as will be outlined in Table 5.4) and this was stark for Black children. These results were obtained by tracing racial mentions and identifying the context of the mention; this led to tracing which outcomes were being tracked by each district and which student racial subgroups were being mentioned and tracked in association with said measures with primary attention given to Black and Indigenous students.

In LBUSD, as displayed in Table 5.4, graduation rate is tracked along most student race group, but Indigenous students are notably missing here. Through this process, we gain greater clarification regarding how Black and Latin* children are being mentioned together. For instance, Black and Latin* students tend to be tracked alongside one another other in all instances of outcomes deemed measurable with the lone exception being for the Early Assessment Program in ELA which is unique for Black students. This may suggest that the district is equally concerned about how Latin* and Black are progressing or that both race groups are of concern for the district. Outside of tracking graduation rate, Indigenous students are only tacked for suspension rate, Pacific Islander students for Smarter Balanced Assessment math, and White students for chronic absenteeism.

[74] As explained in Chapter 1.5, my pilot study showed that this is in fact not the case.

Table 5.4 also shows that suspension rate is one of the outcomes deemed measurable that is tracked by LBUSD. This metric is an outcome that results from direct actions or choices by the district. As such, the fact that Black, Indigenous, and Latin* students are disproportionately suspended brings attention to systemic issues within LBUSD, particularly for Indigenous students, who comprise under one percent of the total student body.

This hyper focus on Latin* and Black students in tandem might, on one hand, suggest that LBUSD maintains a commitment to these racial groups and their improvement in outcomes deemed important for future success. On the other hand, this could suggest that the district does not differentiate between what Latin* students and Black students might need or want. This is a potential problem for getting services to Black students as they are vastly outnumbered by Latin* students in the district and most schools. Further, this type of tracking may mean that the district construes both student populations as difficult to educate.

Table 5.4 Lexical Chain Analysis Results of Black and Indigenous Students Mentions by Outcomes Deemed Measurable

	Race Mentions in 2018-19 Local Control Accountability Plan by Outcomes Deemed Measurable										
	Graduation Rate	AP Scores	AP Course Access	SBAC ELA	EAP ELA	Early Literacy	SBAC Math	EAP Math	Suspension Rate	A-G Reqs	Attendance/ Absenteeism
Long Beach Unified											
Black students	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Indigenous students									✓		
Asian students	✓										
Latin* students	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓
Pacific Islander students	✓						✓				
White students	✓										✓
Los Angeles Unified											
Black students	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Indigenous students	✓										
Latin* students				✓		✓	✓				

Note. Themes related to student outcomes deemed measurable by race subgroup are reported for two school districts. Only student race groups being tracked in the LCAP are included.

Whereas LBUSD maintains a joint focus between Latin* and Black students, LAUSD maintains a primary focus on outcomes deemed measurable for Black students. Table 5.4 shows that Black students are tracked across ten metrics, three for Latin* students, and one for

Indigenous students. This focus on Black students might suggest that LAUSD is most concerned about the academic progress or success of their Black students above all other student race groups. Conversely, it may be a consequence of LAUSD Black students performing worse than all other race subgroups and that the district tracks the progress of these students out of a felt necessity.

The Table 5.4 mention of Indigenous students by LAUSD is in reference to an identified performance gap in graduation rates alongside students with disabilities, children placed in the foster youth, and plural lingual learners. This identified performance means that Indigenous students' high school graduation rates are "two or more performance levels below the "all student" performance" (LAUSD LCAP, 2018, p. 5). This is notable, as Indigenous students are the only racial group mentioned in LAUSD's *Performance Gaps* subsection of *2017-20 Plan Summary*. While LAUSD makes this acknowledgement, as required under state law, the fact that Indigenous students are not tracked along other measures is troubling. Given this gap, it would be appropriate for LAUSD to ensure that factors which contribute to a successful graduation are tracked, however, this is missing. This suggests that the LAUSD may not be committed to solving graduation gap issues for Indigenous students or that graduation may not be a priority.

The other three other mentions of Black students are unrelated to outcome data figures. One of these is related to an outcome deemed measurable outcome, but with no figure reported. In district's reflective analysis of a goal from the 2017-18, LAUSD describes the implementation of the actions/services by concluding that they analyzed data and provided reports regarding suspensions and expulsions of Black students and students with disabilities. The mention is notable as it is the only instance in which the LAUSD mentions race in an analysis of any of its goals from the 2017-18 school year. This suggests that the LAUSD is aware of an ongoing

problem where their Black students are disproportionately suspended and expelled from its schools. However, LAUSD does not provide clarity on how tracking the data itself helps "support Local District School Operations and Restorative Justice staff with monitoring and supporting school site efforts" (LAUSD LCAP, 2018, p. 61). If Black students are suspended and expelled, they lose access to regular education and thus opportunities which may come with being in school.

Table 5.4 displays LAUSD and LBUSD tracking similar outcome measures for student race subgroups in general with the only differences being that LAUSD tracks for early literacy and Early Assessment Program (EAP) in mathematics and LBUSD tracks access to Advanced Placement courses.

5.2.3 Lexical Chain Analysis Show that Districts Mention Black and Indigenous students, but generally do not Create Programming Meant to Principally Benefit Indigenous and/or Black Children

The lexical findings pinpointed instances where the districts discuss programs or funding directed towards Black and/or Indigenous children. For example, the analysis pointed to an LAUSD program which principally directs services to students based on their race. Both Indigenous and Black children are targeted under this program which promotes learning "standard" and "academic" English. As outlined in the example analysis in Chapter 3, the LAUSD widely asserts that the children targeted in the program do not speak standard English and that the district is tasked with fixing this supposed fact. The analysis also identified, as a budget line item in the LBUSD LCAP, a reference to the receipt of federal funding to educate the

Indigenous students under its care.[75] Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that LBUSD has established some service to support Indigenous students in the district. However, the lexical chain analysis did not yield any results which pointed to the LBUSD establishing any services dedicated toward serving Indigenous students.

Further, the lexical chain findings revealed a broad similarity between the two districts with respect to their perceived attentiveness to Black students, who are widely mentioned throughout their LCAPs in association with outcomes deemed measurable. These findings bring attention to both districts' attentiveness to how their Black student body is performing and/or receiving services. In the description for Goal 6 of the 2017-2018 school year, the LBUSD again acknowledges its "Orange" state dashboard designation for the suspension rates of Indigenous students, Black students, and children in the foster system (Orange is California's second lowest color-coded performance level for accountability indicators). Despite maintaining a smaller percentage within the respective district's population, Indigenous students are tracked across one metric in both LEAs. Such attention highlights some tactic awareness of Indigenous children by LAUSD and LBUSD. These findings highlight an importunate to understanding Black and Indigenous students' distribution and academic performance according to outcomes deemed measurable across both districts.

5.3 Nuancing the Standardized Test Score Academic Achievement of Black and Indigenous Children Across LBUSD and LAUSD

Next, I continue with another finding from the lexical chain analysis, the use of metrics related to outcomes deemed measurable by both districts to track Indigenous and Black children.

[75] While LAUSD does not list federal funding received for educating Indigenous students, as they are not required to list these funding, it is likely that LAUSD does also receive such funding.

This finding suggests a necessity to begin to think about how Indigenous and Black students at schools within the districts are performing as another step in determining whether district discourse matches its actions. One way to make this determination could be to determine how districts get assistance to Black and Indigenous students who, according to state outcomes deemed measurable, are not academically thriving. However, given the constraints of the data compiled under SARC, it is not possible to ascertain how individual students perform. It is possible to understand how aggregate totals of Black students and some Indigenous students perform on standardized test scores at a particular school and compare those average percentages to other schools and the district. Therefore, in this section I use quantitative data to nuance my understanding of LBUSD and LAUSD's use of metrics to track Indigenous and Black children.

5.3.1 Overall CAASPP Results Show that Neither District Meets Acceptable Achievement Levels and there is Wide Variance Between Schools' Scores

This subsection evaluates the descriptive statistics of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics (Math) test scores for both districts and provides findings which speak to the districts individually and collectively. CAASPP data are an example of outcomes deemed measurable and outcomes where students are tracked in a socially acceptable manner which purports academic achievement rankings among students. The SARC data provides CAASPP test score results for grades 3-8 and 11 in ELA and Math.[76]

As seen in Table 5.5, for the 2018-2019 school year, eighty-four schools are included for LBUSD and there are 959 schools for LAUSD. LBUSD schools averaged 55.4% of students who

[76] Results for Science or any other subjects are not provided.

met or exceeded the ELA CAASPP standard and 48.01% of students for the Math CAASPP standard. When compared to the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years, ELA and Math scores are up for students in schools on average in LBUSD. For LAUSD, the 2018-2019 average across schools for students who met or exceeded the standard in ELA is 42.96% and in Math 31.75%. Similarly, to LBUSD, LAUSD school score averages are up for the 2018-19 school year in comparison to the two previous school years.

Table 5.5 Mean Percentages by District by ELA and Math Scores by School Year

	No. Schools	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
LBUSD					
ELA 2016-17	82	49.17	18.29	7	98
ELA 2017-18	84	52.49	19.23	6	97
ELA 2018-19	84	55.40	18.52	0	95
Math 2016-17	82	40.13	18.48	0	96
Math 2017-18	84	44.94	20.15	0	97
Math 2018-19	84	48.01	19.99	0	95
LAUSD					
ELA 2016-17	941	39.87	19.22	0	98
ELA 2017-18	944	42.27	19.06	0	97
ELA 2018-19	959	42.96	18.54	0	98
Math 2016-17	941	28.50	18.16	0	100
Math 2017-18	944	30.32	18.56	0	99
Math 2018-19	959	31.75	18.51	0	99

Note. Mean is equal to the average percentage of all students who met or exceeded the standard for the test, therefore the standard deviation, minimum, and maximum are also percentages.

For the three school years, 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019, the average percentage of all students who met or exceeded the standard for the CAASPP tests at schools in both LAUSD and LBUSD increased each year for both ELA and Math. In general, LBUSD students' CAASPP school averages were higher by at least 10% in ELA and Math when all students are considered for all three school years available. Overall, this suggests that students in both districts are improving yearly and that students in LBUSD are performing in accordance

with the CAASPP standardized tests standards at a higher rate than those at the LAUSD, but there is more to the story.

While the findings show growth, there is room for concern as for the 2018-2019 school year, nearly 45% of LBUSD students did not meet the ELA standard and over 50% did not meet the Math standard on average across schools. Similarly, the 2018-2019 scores show that over 55% of LAUSD students did not meet the state standard in ELA and over 67% of students did not meet the Math standard. These results suggest that on average, across all LBUSD and LAUSD schools, most students do not meet the designated state standards, let alone exceed them. While improvements should be acknowledged, there are too many children in these districts who are struggling according to state standards and both LAUSD and LBUSD are responsible for ensuring the basic education of every child.

Further, as shown in Table 5.5, the minimum/maximum and standard deviation suggests that there is a wide range of student average scores occurring across the LBUSD and LAUSD. Considering the minimum and maximum percentages for schools, both districts had at least one school in both subjects where no students were deemed to have met the CAASPP standard in either subject; and at least one school where 95% or more of students met the standard. Such wide gaps in academic performance as measured by these tests suggest that there might be a lack of parity in the districts between their schools. Some schools within each district perform very well, and others are struggling according to the CAASPP standards.

Also as seen in Table 5.5, both districts have a standard deviation above 18% for ELA and Math, suggesting a wide variability in standardized test scores between schools. Such results imply that some students who are still not performing well tend to be grouped together in the same school. While all students deserve adequate and appropriate services, standardized test

score results suggest that some schools might not receive appropriate assistance to ensure their students have an opportunity to academically succeed according to state standards. Considering the average scores for all students across both LAUSD and LBUSD, the districts have reason to allocate resources based on school sites as some schools score very well and other school sites perform poorly. These results do not speak to any potential racialized score differences between or across the districts. As this study maintains a focus on Indigenous and Black students, an analysis of the descriptive statistics interrogating performance by race as measured by these standards is also needed. Next, I look at the district descriptive statistics data by race, focusing on Indigenous and Black children within each district.[77]

5.3.2 LBUSD CAASPP Findings Invisibilized Indigenous Students and Show that Black Students Perform lower than Other Racial Groups

The SARC also provides data at the school level by student subgroups such as race and for LBUSD, and the findings show that Indigenous children are invisibilized in the data and Black children, on average, score lower than other children. All LBUSD schools are dropped from the analysis due to *student privacy* or *statistical accuracy* concerns[78] for Indigenous students. Similarly, though not as drastic, there are some schools where Black students are dropped from the sample, also due to having under ten students.

In the LBUSD, there are 84 schools with test results where 55.37% of all students met or exceeded the standard for ELA CAASPP tests (standard deviation = 18.50%, minimum = 0%, maximum = 94.68%) and 48.00% of all students met or exceeded the standard for Math CAASPP tests (standard deviation = 20.01%, minimum = 0%, maximum = 95.14%). With this,

[77] However, across both districts, nearly all Indigenous students are invisibilized in the SARC data.
[78] SARC data notes that "Percentages are not calculated when the number of students tested is ten or less, either because the number of students in this category is too small for statistical accuracy or to protect student privacy."

there are 78 schools with at least ten Black students with ELA and Math CAASPP test results. In these schools, 97.36% of Black students took the test, with only 41.97% of students meeting or exceeding the standard for ELA (standard deviation = 14.22%, minimum = 0%, maximum = 78.26%). In comparison to all students across LBUSD schools, on average, over 13% fewer Black students meet or exceed the ELA standard in each school. So, on average, Black children in LBUSD are scoring less than all students in ELA. An average of 97.07% of Black students took the Math tests across LBUSD schools, with only 31.41% meeting or exceeding the standard (standard deviation = 15.64%, minimum = 0%, maximum = 76.92%). Compared to all students, this amounts to 16.59% fewer Black students meeting or exceeding the CAASPP math standard. Again, Black children score less on average across LBUSD schools in Math when compared to all students. Based on schools with test score data, there are six schools with Black children who are invisibilized due to having ten or fewer students. This suggests there should be some concern that Black children will be missed, with efforts to address the needs of all Black children focused on sites with higher concentrations.

Overall, these findings highlight there could be a greater concern for Black children in ELA and Math classes, thus justifying the quantity of racial mentions which were discovered through the lexical analysis. Additionally, the minimum and maximum gaps point to a large discrepancy between at least two schools in terms of performance. This means that in at least one school, over 75% of the Black children are performing at or above the state standard in ELA and/or Math and at least one school where there are no Black children who meet the state standard in either subject. This means that some schools educating Black students may need more resources and support than others. The standard deviations also suggest a wide score discrepancy between schools in terms of performance for Black students in both subjects. The

findings establish an expectation that the LBUSD would include specific programming and allocation designed to meet the needs of Black children, based on the district's *local needs* and that these needs by vary on the specific schools that Black children attend.

For Indigenous students, there are no descriptive statistics findings for ELA and Mathematics as there are fewer than ten Indigenous students in each LBUSD school. Therefore, it is not possible to know how any Indigenous students are doing across schools within the LBUSD in the SARC data and thus impossible to compare Indigenous students' CAASPP performance in particular schools to all students. This makes it difficult to hold the LBUSD accountable for the education of Indigenous students, bearing in mind schools attended when considering CAASPP scores. While statistical significance may not be possible with small numbers of students, the ability to view and compare such data is of vital importance, particularly for Indigenous children. However, there is no such opportunity afforded given how California compiles and limits the SARC data [see Appendix NN for analysis of schools with Indigenous children].

5.3.3 LAUSD CAASPP Findings Shows that Indigenous and Black Children are Invisibilized in the Data and, Where Available, these Children score Lower on Average Across Schools

Only two LAUSD schools have more than ten Indigenous students. Most Indigenous children are then invisibilized when attempting to analyze SARC CAASPP data. While Black children attend 960 LAUSD schools, due to the SARC privacy settings over half of these schools, and thus large numbers of Black children, are invisibilized in the data There are 960 LAUSD schools with reported CAASPP scores for ELA and Mathematics and 42.90% (standard deviation = 18.58%, minimum = 0%, maximum = 97.73%) of all students met or exceeded the standard for ELA and 31.71% (standard deviation = 18.52%, minimum = 0%, maximum =

99.09%) for Math. Of those schools, 426 LAUSD schools have at least ten Black students and reported test scores. In these schools, 96.32% of Black students took ELA subject tests and 96.18% took the Math test. For the CAASPP ELA tests, 34.25% (standard deviation = 18.8%, minimum = 0%, maximum = 100%) of these Black students met or exceeded the set standard. In the CAASPP Math tests, 22.10% (standard deviation = 16.54%, minimum = 0%, maximum = 81.82%) of Black students in these schools minimally met the standard, which is very concerning. This tells us that most schools in LAUSD have ten or fewer Black students and as such, it will take wide reaching efforts to ensure all Black children are receiving assistance. And while the average LAUSD school's Black students do not meet the ELA or Math standards, the maximum scores inform us that at least one school's Black student body consists of a majority population that does meet the standard. These results suggest that targeted approaches by LAUSD might want to consider school site average scores.

While only two LAUSD schools met the set data inclusion standard for having at least ten Indigenous students, the data shows that Indigenous children generally do not meet or exceed the state standards. For these two schools,[79] 100% of Indigenous students took the CAASPP mathematics tests with 28.90% (standard deviation = 10.56%, minimum = 21.43%, maximum = 36.46%) meeting or exceeding the standard. All students also took the CAASPP ELA tests with 27.92% (standard deviation = 0.92%, minimum = 27.27%, maximum = 28.57%) minimally meeting the set standard. These results suggest that in ELA, Indigenous students in these two schools are performing nearly the same but below the districtwide average for all students. For Math, there also appears to be a difference between the performance of the Indigenous students at the two schools, both of which are below the LAUSD mean. Given the relatively low number

[79] There are twenty-five Indigenous students across these two LAUSD schools.

of Indigenous children at each school, it is important for the LAUSD to ensure that approaches to assisting these children are wide reaching as it would be difficult to target school sites with higher concentrations of Indigenous children. Further, as over one thousand Indigenous children are invisibilized in the data, it is impossible to have a more complete picture with respect to ELA and Math averages by school. However, these results suggest that there is reason to expect that Indigenous children are being evaluated by CAASPP tests similarly to Black children and could benefit from targeted interventions by LAUSD.

5.3.4 Invisibilizing Student Standardized Score Data Makes it Difficult to Support all Indigenous and Black Students and Spotlights Concerns Regarding Population Distribution

There should be a foundational belief that on average, regardless of race or parental wages or wealth accumulation, all students have statistically equivalent innate capabilities to academically succeed which should be reflected in assessments and results. However, standardized test results consistently position Black and Indigenous children as performing lower than their peers and not meeting designated standards. Indeed, unsurprisingly, the 2018-2019 SARC data support the notion that Black and Indigenous children are not meeting the curated state standard for Math and ELA. However, across both districts, the findings also show that many Black children and nearly all Indigenous children attend schools where they comprise less than ten total students. And under data collection guidelines used by the state of California, these students do not appear in school level data and are effectively invisibilized. For Indigenous children particularly, this reduces opportunities for quantitative data to be used by community members to advocate for change or to compare district discourse more easily to actions. Population data tells us that the number of schools with majority populations of Black students are decreasing in LAUSD and LBUSD. This trend has existed for Indigenous students for some

time and these children tend to be ignored in quantitative data. As such, districts and researchers should abandon a reliance on population concentration as it will be more difficult to target individual schools to reach Black students as it is for Indigenous students in districts like LAUSD and LBUSD. Therefore, it is necessary for the districts to be more attentive with efforts to reach these children.

5.4 Understanding Identified LCAP Sections Using Genre Analysis Techniques

Using Martin (2003) and Rose (2013) as a guide, I undertake a Genre analysis of the two LCAPs which ultimately provides a framework to gain a sense of the organizational structure of the documents with the intention of identifying sections important to answer this chapter's Research Questions. This analysis begins by using the LCAP format developed by the California State Board of Education, which requires six sections with options to duplicate some subsections as needed (see Appendix Table OO.1). California mandates an LCAP template with general directions for LEAs to complete the documents. Both districts completed those LCAPs in accordance with the CDE guidelines and as such the sections identified about are of interest. sections, these are the sections of interest and why.

Genre analysis provides a way to approach large, complex documents quickly and develop understanding of the purpose of each section. Through this the analysis identified (sub)sections which could potentially be ripe for further exploration and speak to how the two districts choose to focus on Indigenous and Black students. The following (sub)sections were noted as portions of the document as ripe for further exploration: *The Story*, *LCAP Highlights*, *Review of Performance*, *Goals*, *Planned Actions/Services*, and *Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Pupils*. These (sub)sections were identified given the organizational differences which were apparent between how the LBUSD and LAUSD chose to

present data. Further, because of the state guided prompts provided, these were portions of the document provided distinct opportunities for each LEA to be attentive to their Indigenous and/or Black students.

The lexical chain analysis pointed to three sections within the 2017-20 Plan Summary as potentially ripe for further analysis and the Genre Analysis confirmed the sections as viable. Further, the results from the Genre Analysis really highlight the potential importance of *The Story* and the *Goals, Actions, and Services* section. These are areas of the document where LEAs are explicitly asked to reflect on their student population or to outline how students will receive assistance. The Genre analysis further pinpoints these as having the potential to contribute to the Research Questions of this study.

The Genre analysis also helps me think about the purpose of the sections that were identified in the lexical and descriptive statistics analysis. Therefore, the Genre analysis helps identify the purpose of each section and connect these sections to the potential to serve Indigenous and Black students and how the two districts serve these children. By understanding the potential of the (sub)sections using the Genre analysis, I can ascertain where there is potential for the inclusion of Black and Indigenous students despite a lack of a legal requirement to attend to these children.

5.4.1 The Story Subsection as a Core Portion of the Document

The 2018-19 LCAP opens with a subsection called *The Story*. According to the prompt which says, "describe the students and community and how the LEA serves them," its purpose is to provide space to establish what the district knows about its students and its community through using descriptive terms. Further, the LEA has a responsibility to generally outline *how* it works to serve its students and community. This section therefore provides an opportunity for

LEAs to quickly establish the parameters of who is served and how the LEA plays a role in the process. This is distinctly a space for LEAs to discuss a commitment to Indigenous and/or Black children and describe the LEA's role in providing support.

The Story, LCAP Highlights, Review of Performance. Of these three, the Genre analysis further identified *The Story* as an important portion of the document as it is likely to be read by the average person given its prominence to begin the document and a seemingly lack of technical language. The analysis identified that LAUSD and LBUSD used *The Story* in differing ways to develop phases under the subsection prompt to *describe the students and community and how the LEA serves them.*

For example, LBUSD uses *The Story* space to develop phases to share *results* which ground the district's reputation; *describe* its history, population, and ethnic and lingual diversity; establish the district *setting* through population and space; outline *events* which contribute to success; and express further *results* connecting a positive academic reputation.

Whereas LAUSD's *The Story* unfolds in a more disjointed, yet more compact manner. Though distinct, the LAUSD phases are not presented in a clean manner. LAUSD shares: *comments* which note the district's focus, their responsibility to equitable practices and using resources effectively, and a commitment to embracing strategies; *problems* which students face; a *description of* the lingual and ethnic diversity; and a *reflection* on their employees' importance.

5.4.2 The Goal and Planned Actions/Services Subsections as a Joint Package and a Core Portion of the LCAP to Showcase District Action

The Genre analysis also identified the *Goals* and *Planned Actions/Services* subsections as potentials for further exploration. The *Goals, Actions, and Services* section directs LEAs to input their strategic planning details by copying the goal table for each goal and actions/services table

for each service developed to support an identified goal. Both LBUSD and LAUSD chose to duplicate the tables and establish a comparable number of goals and actions/services. It is distinctly within these portions of the document where each LEA is asked to specifically outline student services and thus an important space to grasp any semblance of district action for the betterment of Black and/or Indigenous children. And it is here where the *Goal* and *Planned Actions/Services* subsections together can be most powerful and impactful for the education of any child.

There are no provided guidelines surrounding goal, actions, or services crafting and as such there is tremendous difference between how the LAUSD and LBUSD scribe here. For instance, in the *Goal* subsections, there are formatting differences (e.g., LAUSD writing goals in bold uppercase with a larger font and LBUSD continuing with consistent font, font size, and text appearance) which can communicate more than words alone, and significant differences in the extent of Goal statements (e.g., LAUSD goals are brief phrases and LBUSD goals are sentences).

5.5 Analyzing the Social Actors in the LCAPs and Themes from the Appraisal Analysis

This chapter concludes by discussing the representation of social actors to understand who is being represented in the Genre identified sections of the documents. While it is true that specific persons are responsible for composing and finalizing an LEA's LCAP, the findings presented here are ultimately related to systemic issues which persist in society at large and in our political system, many of which have been foreshadowed in previous chapters.[80] Here, the analysis of specific language choices in the document is presented as evidence for my claims

[80] I note that this is not an analysis or indictment of the people who wrote the LCAPs.

about these larger issues highlighted through findings in Chapter 4 and through the lexical chain analysis.

As described in Chapter 3, this research is grounded in a theoretical framework which heavily leans on two tenets of an approach to CRT in education and as such helps guide the interpretive language lens used here. This research *legitimizes the knowledges and experiences of Indigenous and Black students* and *uses this research to advance issues of social justice within schools*. The forthcoming findings continue to heavily lean on the CRT tenet that *racism is ordinary, structural, built into all our institutions*, including education institutions, and that it is important to uncover areas in which racism operates in education policy so that real change can be achieved.

Through these tenets, my approach to the Appraisal framework-guided discourse analysis results in findings which show how the districts fail to support Indigenous and Black students in meaningful ways. The analysis shows how SFL, a meaning-based theory of language which analyzes linguistic *systems* to describe how systems *function* to make meanings, guided by my CRT in education tenets, reveals the ways that principles operate in the districts' goals, funding allocations, and representations of Black and Indigenous students. There is a focus on services dedicated towards children identified as unduplicated students as most Black and Indigenous students have caretakers who are paid poverty wages and thus will be labelled as unduplicated students. And considering a lack of dedicated goals, actions, or services specifically dedicated towards Black or Indigenous youth, services dedicated towards unduplicated students are evaluated as an imperfect proxy for services which could benefit Indigenous and Black children. Through textual analysis, I show that the districts' LCAP discourses lack a commitment to social justice and do not recognize the centrality of experiential knowledge in meaningful ways. More

importantly, the findings show how racism and negative tropes are strongly embedded into how the LEAs discuss Black and Indigenous students in their LCAPs. Highlighting word choices in specific examples from the LEAs' LCAPs reveal tendencies to rely on negative judgments of students, especially Black children, to justify their positions and choices.

The following findings focus on analyses of the *Goals, Actions, and Services* section of the LCAP and *The Story* subsection the *2017-20 Plan Summary*. There are three main themes which arise from the Appraisal framework of these (sub)sections. The first theme is that there is a lack of alignment between LAUSD and LBUSD goals, actions, and services and the funding that the LEAs allocate. To illustrate the relationship between funding allocation and goals, actions, and services, LAUSD's and LBUSD goals and respective allocated budgets are compared, demonstrating that the LEA goals are largely unrealistic as they employ language choices which convey high certainty of goal completion. In addition, students are an undifferentiated group, yet agentive, positioned as responsible for the completion of most goals.

The second theme finds that the LEAs position positive performance as central trait of the districts and use research via outside agencies to bolster claims. This finding highlights that the LEAs' public image presentation obscures the relationship between the districts' discussion of success and the relativity of those successes. Examples from LBUSD's LCAP are presented to highlight language choices which refer to success with Black students or children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages without specifically naming those student groups in the text. Instead, the district uses the undifferentiated group "students" or other word choices which allows a casual reader to conclude that the LBUSD refers to all students. The analysis also suggests that LEAs position research and outside organizations as reputable and knowledgeable about K-12 education to support notions of its success with these student groups. Such tactics

remove the spotlight from Black and Indigenous children in favor of broad representations of all students, which condenses needs and erases nuance.

The third theme finds that the LEAs use coded language which negatively positions Students of Color and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages while simultaneously positioning themselves as doing well serving these students, despite the students' difficulties. The districts express a strong belief in the efficacy of their respective approaches to goals/services development and resource allocation. Through Appraisal analysis I show that the LEAs positively position and forefront successes while minimizing and backgrounding shortcomings, particularly with respect to Students of Color broadly.

While the lexical chain analysis revealed that both LEAs broadly mention Students of Color throughout their 2017-18 LCAPs, the Appraisal analysis reveals that most of these mentions are deficit laden. The districts invoke deficit ideologies which position children as a problem and the LEA as the fixer who is burdened by issues which children bring to schools. Examples from LAUSD are highlighted to showcase how Black student are negatively framed and the continuing disappearance of Indigenous students.

5.6 LAUSD and LBUSD's 2018-2019 LCAP Goals are Unaligned with the Devised Actions/Services and Supported Funding Allocation

Below I analyze the goals, actions, and services for LAUSD and LBUSD. I use tools from SFL's Appraisal framework to draw attention to the meanings infused into goal statements, even if they are brief, and whether the districts take the opportunity to dedicate services towards Black or Indigenous children. First, I present the analysis of the LAUSD *Goals, Actions, and Services* section, focusing on the district Goals, including funding allocations [see Appendix PP for more information on LCFF grants]. Then I discuss specific actions and services developed by

LAUSD before concluding by outlining discrepancies between district goals, actions, services, and funding allocation. Next, I review the LBUSD's *Goals, Actions, and Services* section, discussing the Appraisal analysis. Then, I review individual LBUSD actions and services developed for students and conclude by showing how they are unaligned, considering district Goals and funding allocation. Lastly, I compare the two districts' goals and consider the viability of district goals. Overall, the districts align their goals to all eight state priorities, as seen in Appendix QQ, while choosing to not scribe any local priorities. I show how their priorities, while seemingly attending to students who can most benefit from targeted services, are never specifically focused on Indigenous and Black children.

5.6.1 Appraisal Findings Show that LAUSD Goals are not Clearly Defined Though Express High Confidence Without a Visibly Aligned Budget Allocation

Table 5.6 shows that for the 2018-2019 school year, LAUSD set six goals with thirty-five actions/services which the district outlines throughout the *Goals, Actions, & Services* section, spanning pages 73-157. The LAUSD allocates $4,112,443,221 in base grant funds and $1,221,361,505 in supplemental/concentration grant funds.

Table 5.6 The 2018-19 LAUSD Goals and Actions/Services

Goal	Goal Text	Total Actions/ Services (Total for unduplicated students)	State Priorities Addressed by goal	Total Budget (Total Supplemental/ Concentration Budget)
Goal 1	**100%** Graduation	10 (8)	4. Pupil achievement; 5. Pupil engagement; 7. Course access	$957,272,387 (S/C: $911,704,513)
Goal 2	Proficiency for ***all***	12 (7)	2. Implementation of State Standards; 4. Pupil achievement; 7. Course access; 8. Other pupil outcomes	$3,365,579,641 (S/C: $227,496,750)
Goal 3	**100%** Attendance	4 (3)	5. Pupil engagement	$33,968,752 (S/C: $28,607,433)

Goal 4	Parent, Community, and Student Engagement	2 (1)	3. Parent involvement; 6. School climate	$8,117,777 (S/C: $7,915,096)
Goal 5	*ENSURE* School Safety	2 (1)	6. School climate; 8. Other pupil outcomes	$68,813,159 (S/C: 11,028,708)
Goal 6	Basic Services	5 (2)	1. Basic services	$900,053,010 (S/C: $34,609,005)
Total Goals: 6		Total A/S: 35 Total A/S for unduplicated students: 22		Total Budget: $5,333,804,726 Total S/C Budget: $1,221,361,505

Note.[81]The Appraisal analysis of the LAUSD goals for 2018-19 while also outlining the applicable priorities and allocated funding by grant type. Column 2 shows the complete text of the LAUSD goals, though text has been formatted to allow for coding; LAUSD's goal text is written in bold uppercase in the LCAP. The final row shows some relevant totals.

The LAUSD keeps its goals brief, in total the goals range between two and five words. Though brief, Appraisal tools are useful and in seeing meaning in the Goal text. Here, analysis of the LAUSD goals reveals that the district's language choices, constructed with Modality denoting high certainty that is reinforced with Graduation resources. These language choices convey confidence that the LAUSD's goals will be accomplished.

For example, in Goal 2 the district asserts that "all" its students will achieve proficiency, denoting high certainty with no wiggle room for other options. The LAUSD also uses Graduation to communicate intensity when it quantifies aims to achieve Goal 1 and Goal 3 at 100%, again high certainty that all students will meet the goal. It is practically impossible, especially considering the number of total students, that the district will be able to achieve these

[81] Glossary reminder: Positive Judgement is underlined, Negative Judgement is double underlined, **FORCE** is bold capitals, *FOCUS* is italics capitals, ***heterogloss*** is bold italics, *moderate certainty* is italics and underlined, ***high certainty*** is bold italics and underlined.

goals. The implausibility of these goals raises doubt about the commitment of the district to achieve its goals and thus serve its students. [See Appendix RR for more analysis.]

Though there are many different facets of education which may contribute to a child graduating from high school, the LAUSD's designed a singular goal to reach a 100% graduation goal. Seemingly considering the robustness of factors that can contribute to a student graduating, the LAUSD dedicated most of its LCFF supplemental/concentration funds towards Goal 1, which also addresses the state priorities related to pupil achievement, pupil engagement, and course access. To evaluate progress toward the completion of Goal 1, in accordance with state standards, for the 2018-19 school year, the LAUSD relies on seven annual outcomes deemed measurable. These measures are all quantified and relate to cohort graduation rate, middle and high school dropout rates, percentage of eleventh grade students exceeding Early Assessment Program college readiness standards in ELA and Math, percentage of graduation cohort members scoring 3 or higher on at minimum two Advanced Placement exams, and the percentage of graduating cohort members completing A-G requirements[82] with at least a grade C. Further, 74.6% of the LAUSDs $1,221,361,505 supplemental/concentration funds are also allocated in Goal 1.

As seen in Table 6.1, overall, the LAUSD allocates the most total LCFF base funding to Goal 2, "proficiency for all" and allocates $227,496,750 of supplemental/concentration grant funding. Therefore, Goals 1 and 2 account for $1,139,201,263 in supplemental/concentration grants, or 93.3% of all the LAUSD's funding intended for the increase or improvement of services for unduplicated students. Based on funding allocation, LAUSD positions high school

[82] Reminder A-G requirements refers to a set of courses, which may be substituted by college courses or AP/IB exams, which qualify a student for admission to a University of California or California State University campus. The courses meant to satisfy A-G requirements must be UC or CSU certified and cover different subjects (history, English, mathematics, science, non-English language, visual and performing arts, and college-preparatory elective).

graduation as the singularly most important goal for unduplicated students and thus for most Indigenous and Black students. Within Goal 1, $738,991,096, all supplemental/concentration funds, is allocated toward Action 5, which targets all unduplicated students, and aims to provide additional autonomy to individual schools. The LAUSD utilizes an equity-based index to distribute funding to schools to determine which additional support to provide to unduplicated students. While schools have autonomy in determining services, the district has a core expectation that schools will position the district, and thus the LCAP, as the primary determining metric. LAUSD's LCAP states:

> Services and positions supported by this resource are to be aligned with the District's investments and strategies outlined in the District LCAP and a school's single plan for student achievement (SPSA) to ensure there is a focus on the outcomes the District has determined for these students. (LAUSD LCAP, 2018, p. 86)

Though the 2018-19 LAUSD goals are brief phrases, topping out at five words, the district's LCAP communicates a high confidence that the goals will be achieved. Despite the certainty expressed through the goals, the commitment is not always apparent when analyzing the LAUSD's actions, services, and funding allocation.

For the 2018-19 school year, the LAUSD had a total budget of $5,333,804,726 with $1,221,361,505 of those funds coming from the LCFF supplemental/concentration grant. The LAUSD set twenty-two actions/services using supplemental/concentration grant funds. In outlining the actions/services meant to increase or improve services for children identified for unduplicated students, the analysis shows that the connection to goal tends to be unclear.

5.6.2 Appraisal Findings Uncover Evidence of High Certainty in LBUSD Goals and Actions/Services, but the Budget Allocation fail to Support the District's Confident Goals

Table 5.7 shows that the LBUSD set seven goals with thirty-two actions/services which are outlined in detail across the *Goals, Actions, & Services* section which span pages 87-159 of the 2018-2019 school year LCAP. The LBUSD allocates $626,559,731 in base grant funding and $120,331,406 in supplemental/concentration grant funding.

Table 5.7 The 2018-19 LBUSD Goals and Actions/Services

Goal	LBUSD Goal Text	Total Actions/ Services (Total for unduplicated)	State Priorities Addressed by goal	Total Budget (Total Supplemental/ Concentration Budget)
Goal 1	Students ***will receive basic services*** that ***are*** fundamental to academic success, including qualified teachers, standards-aligned instructional materials, and appropriately maintained school facilities.	6 (4)	1. Basic Services	$88,951,473 ($10,262,136)
Goal 2	Students ***will make academic progress*** on the Common Core State Standards so that they *can be prepared* for both college and careers upon high school graduation.	9 (6)	2. Implementation of State Standards; 4. Student Achievement	$580,792,419 ($57,307,228)
Goal 3	Students ***will succeed in Algebra*** to ***ensure*** high school graduation and expand college and career opportunities.	1 (1)	4. Student Achievement; 8. Student Outcomes	$1,600,000 ($1,600,000)
Goal 4	Students ***will participate and excel in rigorous coursework***, including Advanced Placement.	2 (2)	4. Student Achievement; 8. Student Outcomes	$4,006,874 ($4,006,874)
Goal 5	Students ***will demonstrate readiness*** for college and careers.	2 (2)	7. Course Access; 8. Student Outcomes	$20,975,371 ($20,975,371)
Goal 6	Students ***will be actively engaged in their learning*** so that they *can* meet the Common Core State	8 (7)	5. Student Engagement; 6. School Climate	$39,068,911 ($19,764,663)

	Standards and prepare for college and careers.			
Goal 7	Schools ***will be safe, inviting, engaging, and supportive places*** for students, parents, and staff.	4 (3)	3. Parent Involvement; 6. School Climate	$11,496,089 ($6,415,134)
Total Goals: 7		Total A/S: 32 Total A/S for unduplicated students: 25		Total Budget: $746,891,137 Total S/C Budget: $120,331,406

Note.[83]The Appraisal analysis of the LAUSD goals for 2018-19 while also outlining the applicable priorities and allocated funding by grant type. Column 2 shows the complete text of the LAUSD goals. The final row shows some totals.

For the 2018-19 school year, LBUSD has a supplemental/concentration grant budget of $120,331,406, with 64% of those funds going towards Goals 2 and 6.[84] Further, with Goal 5, which also refers to college and careers, the LBUSD is dedicating 81.5% of the supplemental/concentration budget towards endeavors meant to support positive post-secondary outcomes. This allocation strategy suggests that the LBUSD is strongly committed to all students transitioning out of high school into careers or college. This strategy also suggests, given the goals' focus on the Common Core State Standards, that the LBUSD believes that the standards provide a positive influence, particularly for children identified as unduplicated students. However, there is less certainty communicated in Goals 2 and 6 as we will see below.

In the 2018-2019 LCAP, the LBUSD sets seven goals with thirty-two actions/services. The district addresses all eight state priorities including addressing State Priorities 4 and 8 three times across the seven goals and State Priority 6 two times. Each of the other priorities are addressed once and the LBUSD does not identify any local priorities to be addressed by its

[83] Glossary reminder: Positive Judgement is underlined, Negative Judgement is double underlined, **FORCE** is bold capitals, *FOCUS* is italics capitals, ***heterogloss*** is bold italics, *moderate certainty* is italics and underlined, ***high certainty*** is bold italics and underlined.
[84] Goal 2 accounts for 47.6% and Goal 6 for 16.4%.

LCAP goals, ignoring local concerns which relate to children like Black and Indigenous students. The seven LBUSD goals, as outlined in Table 6.2, are sentence structured and range between eight and twenty-six words. As the district created goals with fully formed sentences, there is more to analyze with the SFL tools. The SFL analysis shows how the LBUSD's language choices display modality of high certainty or obligation across the goals, with only two instances of moderate certainty or obligation. The LBUSD introduces some moderate certainty as it relates to what will happen once their goals are met. The goal language also introduces a notion of forward thinking projections with the use of words like "will." Additionally, the first six goals place a responsibility on students to achieve the goals set while the final goal places a general onus on schools. Therefore, overall, the goals are examples of overdetermination (an inverse of responsibility).

When LBUSD allocates 2018-2019 LCFF base funds, they make the decision to only target "all" students and do not choose to target students with disabilities or any other student groups. The LBUSD allocates LCFF supplemental/concentration funds through actions/services which predominantly target any or all unduplicated students.[85] Indeed, the LBUSD established twenty-three actions which purport an intention to serve plural lingual children, youth placed in the foster care system, and/or children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. Here, the LBUSD makes use of the conjunction *or*, denoting a choice that the district could choose to use the funds to target one or all the student groups.[86] This language choice stands in contrast to the intention that each LEA be clear about which students will be served. There are two actions with

[85] When prompted to select which students will be served for these actions, the LBUSD writes "English Learners, Foster Youth, and/or Low Income" for twenty-three of the twenty-five actions using LCFF supplemental/concentration funds.
[86] When selecting students to be served for actions/services contributing to the increased or improved services requirement LEAs are asked to "select from English Learners, Foster Youth, and/or Low Income." Rather than selecting, LBUSD appears to simply copy by leaving in "and/or" which has language implications.

outlined services using LCFF supplemental/concentration funds which are clear as to which student groups will be served: Goal 2, Action 9, which is established for plural lingual children and Goal 6, Action 5 which promises to serve youth placed in foster care system.

Additionally, the LBUSD makes use of the unmodified term *students* in every goal. While it could be understood that LBUSD intends to refer to *all* students, the district's repeated choice to be unclear or imprecise, leaves it open to accusations that the LBUSD does not intend for its goals to apply to all students, or even all students targeted in the actions/services. Further, as some goals, like Goals 3-5, are solely supported by supplemental/concentration grant dollars, the reader may conclude that the references to students in these goals do not in fact mean all students, and likely only mean unduplicated students as the district is promising to only support unduplicated students with those funding dollars and thus those goals. However, as I show below, the LBUSD blurs the lines even when it asserts to be providing services for the improvement of children identified as unduplicated students.

As seen in Table 6.2, in the first six goals, the LBUSD states what students "will" do. Use of modalized processes like "*will be actively engaged* in their learning" (Goal 6) and "*will succeed* in Algebra" (Goal 3) communicates high obligation and confidence that the goals will be achieved. At the same time, in creating the goals, the district places the onus on fulfilling the goals on students as students, as students are the actors who are expected to "make academic progress," (Goal 2) "succeed," (Goal 3) and "be actively engaged" (Goal 6).

While each of the goals suggest high certainty of success, the notion of *ability* is injected into Goals 2 and 6 with the word(s) "can" and "can be." These words denote less certainty regarding the outcomes. Goal 2, for example, suggests that the LBUSD is not completely confident that if a student does *make academic progress on the Common Core State Standards*

that they will indeed *be prepared for both college and careers* once they graduate high school. For Goal 6 the document expresses only moderate certainty that students who "actively engaged in their learning" will be able to "meet the Common Core State Standards and prepare for college and careers."[87]

In both Goals 2 and 6, the district communicates moderate certainty with respect to students' postsecondary opportunities even if they are successful in meeting the goals. Given that plenty of other factors, including race, can influence postsecondary opportunities and success, it is appropriate for the LBUSD to be hesitant in word choice. However, the goals are unwavering in their expectation of what students must do, regardless of whether each individual student will ultimately benefit from the outlined services for the goals. And the LBUSD's choice in *can* and *can be* indicates that the LBUSD is not fully certain that there is a relationship between a students' effort and their potential for successful postsecondary opportunities. The lower certainty in Goals 2 and 6 text allows for charges that the LBUSD is not using these funds in a manner to target those children which could disproportionately benefit from the actions/services.

The LBUSD outlines seven goals in the 2018-19 school year LCAP, written in sentence structure and ranging between eight and twenty-six words, which communicate a high confidence that the goals will be achieved and strong onus of responsibility on children. The Appraisal analysis shows that the LBUSD's goals rely on Modality largely communicating high certainty and intensifying the certainty using Graduation resources and modalized processes. In Goals 2 and 6, there is a modification of the initial statement, by communicating moderate certainty, which reduces the LBUSD's commitment to the goal completion only the initial statement (e.g., in Goal 2 the LBUSD remains committed to students making academic progress

[87] While Goal 6 mentions Common Core State Standards, the LBUSD does not mark this goal as addressing State Priority 2

on the Common Core State Standards, but not towards students being prepared for both college and careers upon high school graduation because of the academic progress on the Common Core). While high certainty of completion is generally established, the LBUSD does not allocate funding in manners which support the relayed importance of the LCAP goals, which ultimately allows for questions regarding the efficacy of the district's strategies, goals, and funding allocation for children identified as unduplicated students [see Appendix SS for an example].

LBUSD has a total LCFF budget of $746,891,137 with $120,331,406 of the funds coming from Supplemental/Concentration grants. Across actions using base grant funds, the LBUSD largely targets all students for every action service. The LBUSD develops twenty-five actions and services dedicated towards increasing or improving the education of children identified as unduplicated students. In twenty-three of these actions/services, the LBUSD is unclear as to which (sub)groups of unduplicated students are meant to benefit from the services. The analysis shows, by using the unmodified term students and the funding allocation, that the LBUSD ultimately communicates a lack of certainty in these instances, calling into question whether the beneficiaries are truly children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. Analysis related to funding allocation uncovers foundational problems with the LBUSD's goals, actions, and services.

5.6.3 Both LAUSD and LBUSD Align their Goals to State Standards Rather than Using Local Control Powers to Set Goals, Actions, and Services Primarily Reflective of Local

Though both the LAUSD and LBUSD display high confidence across most of their goals, the analysis has raised questions as to whether the overall goals are attainable during the school year, the three-year LCAP period, or at all. Thus far, I have shown that each district fails to set goals that are attainable. In this next portion of the findings, I compare the goals of the two

districts, considering their similarities. Lastly, I reflect on connections between the districts' goals and state standards.

For LAUSD, as shown in the analysis of Goal 1, the LEA crafts goals that are aspirational rather than practical, attainable, or time bound. Further, for the 2018-19 school year, the district chooses not to provide a rationale for any of their goals, as the district leaves the "identified need" prompt blank.[88] LBUSD, as highlighted in Goal 3, crafts goals that are broad rather than specific, relevant, or attainable. In contrast to the LAUSD, however, the LBUSD does provide insight to their goals and completes the "identified need" prompt for each of their seven goals.

As previously discussed, the LAUSD and LBUSD set goals, actions, and services that address the mandated state priorities. While the districts create goals that are different in terms of exact text, there is marked alignment between their goals. This sameness can be attributed in part to an alignment to the eight state priorities. Both the LAUSD and the LBUSD have a goal that addresses topics like school safety and basic services, which are strongly aligned with the wording from state priority 6 (school climate) and state priority 1 (basic services) respectively. LBUSD Goal 1 begins "students will receive basic services…" while LAUSD Goal 6 simply states "basic services." LBUSD Goal 1 and LAUSD Goal 6 communicate a strong alignment to state priority 1, which is actualized using phrasing from the state.

Both districts create a goal that is aimed at addressing state priority 3 (parent involvement) and state priority 6 (school climate) simultaneously. In doing so, both districts use similar words in crafting their goals. LAUSD Goal 4 states "Parent, Community, and Student Engagement" and LBUSD Goal 7 states "Schools will be safe, inviting, engaging, and supportive

[88] However, in other school years, the LAUSD does complete the "identified need" prompt for each LCAP goal.

places for students, parents, and staff." Each district uses variations of three words (student, parent, and engage) to craft goals addressing these two state mandated priorities. The term "parent" can be seen as directly coming from state priority 3. The word "involvement," also in state priority 3, comes from the root word "involve" which is a synonym for "engage," the root word for LAUSD's and LBUSD's "engagement" and "engaging."

5.6.4 The Misaligned District Goals Communicate a Lack of Commitment and Showcase a Lack of Commitment to Meet Student Needs Broadly

Through using Appraisal tools, I have shown that in general there is a lack of alignment between goals, actions, services, and funding allocation in the LCAPs of LAUSD and LBUSD. In particular, the districts use words which communicate a high certainty that the goals will be completed and that the goals are of great importance for students to achieve. However, when the related actions and services are compared to funding allocations, it shows that the districts fail to support the measures in a meaningful manner. This misalignment suggests that the districts are not truly committed to achieving the outlined goals. Alternatively, this suggests that districts do not have adequate funding to achieve the goals which they have created. In either case, the findings suggest that districts must work to create goals which can be accomplished and meet student needs.

5.7 LBUSD and LAUSD use the LCAP to Celebrate Successes and Express a Firm Belief in their Respective Approach to Serving All Students

Aside from the goals, actions, and services, there is another section of the LCAP, the *2017-20 Plan Summary*, that invites LEAs to tell their stories. This section, and in particular the subsection *The Story*, has been intentionally left to conclude the analysis to further illustrate

points that have been made over the past two chapters. Conclusions from the analyses of the stories are presented and explained with an example from one or both districts.

A key theme resulting from the Appraisal analysis is that the districts tout their positive performance as a central trait, but the façade does not hold when interrogated. An example from the LBUSD most succinctly embodies this theme. The district repeatedly suggests it is a superb school system. Appraisal analysis shows that LBUSD positively positions the district's successes by invoking outside agencies which are used to cosign and promote the LBUSD's claims. However, when interrogating the nature of the organizations, realities surrounding the districts claims become clearer and situate a truer meaning to the LBUSD's broad pronouncements.

Throughout *The Story* subsection of the LCAP, the LBUSD attempts to convey that the district and its students are academically succeeding at an elite level. The Appraisal analysis of the text reveals the LBUSD is positively positioning the district itself and its performance, relying on the insinuated prestige of awards and outside organizations to bolster their asserted superior performance. For example:

> The Long Beach Unified School District has **EARNED** a reputation as one of America's **FINEST** school systems, ***winning*** **MANY** awards as a ***national*** and ***international*** model of excellence. ***The Global Education Study*** by the nonprofit ***Battelle for Kids organization*** lists LBUSD among **FIVE** of the world's **HIGHEST** performing school systems. ***Similarly***, LBUSD ranks as one of the world's **TOP 20** school systems -- and one of the **TOP THREE** in the U.S. -- in terms of **SUSTAINED** and **SIGNIFICANT** improvements, ***according to*** a ***McKinsey & Company report***. For **INCREASING** student success and **NARROWING** the achievement gap], the district has *RECEIVED*

the ***Broad Prize for Urban Education*** and is a **FIVE-TIME** finalist for the ***award***.[89] (LBUSD LCAP, 2018, p. 1)

Using Attitude resources to position the reader, the LBUSD uses instances of positive Judgement to assert the district is a great school system. It positions itself as being among five of the highest performing school systems in the world and ranked top twenty in the world and top three in the United States. These clauses assert that among all the thousands of school systems around the world, the LBUSD ranks among the very best. Further, as shown in what also serves as the opening sentence to the LCAP, the LBUSD touts that they have earned this reputation.

To embolden this notion of being the best, using Engagement techniques to convince the reader, the LBUSD uses heterogloss language to pronounce, affirm, and endorse the purported positive position of the district. One way that this is accomplished is by invoking other organizations or people. The LBUSD uses multiple organizations to bolster the legitimacy of the proclamation. For example, it refers to a study and a report, from other organizations (Battelle for Kids and McKinsey and Company, respectively), attributing to the study and the organization endorsement of the claim that the LBUSD is an elite school system. By aligning itself with these organizations, LBUSD reinforces the notion that it is a great school district. Further, when the LBUSD invokes McKinsey and Company, the district positions McKinsey and Company as an authority in global school systems ranking by using the phasing "according to."

The use of Engagement resources using Force and Focus language choices assists the LBUSD to add emphasis and depth to the central claim of strong academic performance here. A key strategy is the use of numeric ranks which assert that the district, out of the hundreds of

[89] Glossary reminder: Positive Judgement is underlined, Negative Judgement is double underlined, **FORCE** is bold capitals, *FOCUS* is italics capitals, ***heterogloss*** is bold italics, *moderate certainty* is italics and underlined, ***high certainty*** is bold italics and underlined.

thousands around the world, is highly ranked. The LBUSD intensifies its McKinsey report rankings through contextualizing its performance as being sustained and significant. The Appraisal resources position the reader to conclude that the district is highly regarded because of its ongoing success in achievement.

5.7.1 Districts Use Deceptive Tactics to Convince the Casual LCAP Reader of District Status and Approach to Educating Children like Indigenous and Black Students

This portion of the analysis shows how CDA, using SFL Appraisal tools helps the analyst reveal how the LBUSD positions their success. The LBUSD's evocation of a study and report by outside organizations that have determined the district to be a top performing school system in the world provide validation to the district's claims of being a quality school district. By invoking an outside report done by an organization that is by default positioned as reputable in evaluating education, the LBUSD is reinforcing the claims of being a top-performing institution of education. The reference to the report and study positions the reader to interpret conclusions from the organizations as reputable and rigorous.

However, a critical SFL approach, informed by CRT and CPA tenets, that looks more closely into these organizations and reports offers a different perspective. This further inquiry is key to understanding how the presentation of the data from Battelle for Kids and McKinsey and Company are exaggerating the LBUSD's success and the rankings that the organizations are giving. Further, when considering the organizations doing the evaluations, we can see that the LBUSD does not mean all students are being considered when the district refers to being successful.

The LBUSD broadens its esteem beyond the borders of the United States with reference to the McKinsey & Company report which is a study designed to examine twenty-five school

systems deemed to be *top-performing* around the world.[90] LBUSD (2010) states that McKinsey & Company is "a trusted advisor and counselor to many of the most influential businesses and institutions in the world" (para. 2). The LBUSD does not provide any information which suggests McKinsey & Company is well-versed in K-12 education. As LBUSD does not mention which students are responsible for the achievement and which improvements are being recognized, a natural assumption is that the LBUSD is referring to academic achievement for all students. However, when considering the report's focus, we gain a clearer notion of what the McKinsey & Company report values [see Appendix TT.1 for analysis]. The results from the report do suggest that the LBUSD made improvements over time during the 2000s which were reported in test scores that the district submitted to the authors. But it appears that the LBUSD is being compared against itself as the results are not contextualized in comparison with other school systems. This means that LBUSD is judged on year to year district data.

The LBUSD also invokes the Global Education Study authorized by Battelle for Kids[91] which the district labels as a "nonprofit" in its text, seeking to align with the generally positive viewpoint associated with nonprofit organizations. However, the Battelle for Kids organization is a not-for-profit organization.[92] As some might misunderstand the difference between the two classification statuses, the LBUSD mislabeling this organization may lead to an incorrect interpretation of Battelle for Kids' recognition of the district [see Appendix TT.2 for further

[90] To determine eligibility, the report used many different international and national assessments (e.g., 1995, 1999, 2003, and 2007 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS); 1971–2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for US school systems; and 2000, 2003, 2006 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)).

[91] According to their website, they are a national "not-for-profit" organization focused on school system transformation with a purported dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion while also focusing on tropes of 21st century learning goals and students needing to be lifelong learners and contributors (Battelle for Kids, n.d.).

[92] A non-profit must serve the public good, while a not-for-profit does not carry this distinction. In fact, a not-for-profit organization does not have to serve any good cause and can simply serve the interests or aims of its members or board. A non-profit has paid employees while a not-for-profit has volunteers. Such distinctions between a nonprofit and a not-for-profit carry immense social implication.

analysis]. It may seem that, given the recognition from Battelle for Kids, the reader could conclude that the LBUSD is implicitly referring to the scholastic performance of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and those who perform lower than other students on standardized assessments. But based on 2018-19 CAASPP math and ELA standards data presented earlier in this Chapter, Black students perform lower than their peers and Indigenous students were entirely hidden in the data. The descriptive statistics data, show a lower percentage of Black students met or exceeded the ELA and math standard across LBUSD schools. These figures suggest that the Battelle for Kids and LBUSD might be referring to a different standard of success or that the LBUSD success has decreased since the 2012 Battelle for Kids' study. The "Story" of success thus obscures the reality experienced by most Black and Indigenous students.

5.7.2 LBUSD and LAUSD Express Negative Views About Students of Color and Children Whose Caretakers are Paid Poverty Wages, yet Tout Successes Working with these Children

Another theme resulting from the Appraisal analysis is that the LBUSD and LAUSD position themselves as doing well in serving their students while simultaneously suggesting that their students have problems which need to be overcome. This theme also shows that the two LEAs use coded language which indirectly refers to specific student (sub)groups. In general, the districts convey a strong belief in the chosen goals/services development and resource allocation approach outlined in the respective LCAPs. Both LBUSD and LAUSD positively position student successes, particularly for Students of Color, while minimizing and backgrounding shortcomings (e.g., student test scores). Through Appraisal analysis, it is revealed the districts uses awards and other organizations to implicitly refer to children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and/or Students of Color broadly. For example, rather than directly explicitly naming these student groups, the districts suppress these children who are responsible for the

awards that LBUSD touts. The districts also purport an intention to make sure that all students successfully exit their LEA. Appendix UU outlines how the LAUSD positively positions its efforts while negatively positioning Student of Color and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages broadly.

The Appraisal analysis also reveals that there are times when an LEA references a student group but does not explicitly name them. In the following example which highlights this revelation, the LBUSD broadly boosts success through awards. The Appraisal analysis reveals inconsistencies which question the nature of the purported success. The analysis finds that the LBUSD uses the awards to discuss the performance of Students of Color and children whose caretakers are paid wages in lieu of naming them explicitly. By not directly naming the student (sub)groups, the LBUSD allows for a casual reader to incorrectly interpret the nature of a recognition by generalizing its applicability to all students. Further, a reader might prematurely conclude that most students are meeting or exceeding academic standards.

> Long Beach schools have ***visited*** and ***praised*** by the nation's president, attorney general, **FOUR** secretaries of education, *FORMER* Secretary of State Gen. Colin Powell, and other high-level officials *SEEKING* to **REPLICATE** LBUSD's successes. Local schools have ***won*** **NUMEROUS** California Distinguished, National Blue Ribbon, and National Green Ribbon ***awards***.[93]

Using positive Judgment, the LBUSD expresses that Local schools have ***won*** **NUMEROUS** California Distinguished, National Green Ribbon, and National Blue Ribbon ***awards***, adding Force (Graduation) in the choice **numerous** as it touts the performance of its

[93] Glossary reminder: Positive Judgement is underlined, Negative Judgement is double underlined, **FORCE** is bold capitals, *FOCUS* is italics capitals, ***heterogloss*** is bold italics, *moderate certainty* is italics and underlined, ***high certainty*** is bold italics and underlined.

schools by sharing awards that the schools have received. Further, the LBUSD is suggesting that the visits and praise by United States government officials speaks to the greatness of the district.

Again, this excerpt shows the LBUSD uses outside entities to add to their stated legitimacy as a pillar of education and the district adds quantification to reinforce that its successes are ongoing. And again, the distinct nature of the recognition is implicit. Understanding the nature of the awards that LBUSD received can help further interpret the text by pinpointing the student groups that the LBUSD is referencing throughout its *The Story* subsection as well as understand the nature of federal government officials *SEEKING* to **REPLICATE** LBUSD's successes.

The three awards[94] mentioned are given in recognition of the performance of Students of Color and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages in comparison to those who do not fall in those categories or for school-based focus or improvements. As seen earlier, The LBUSD also invokes another award in *The Story* stating, "For **INCREASING** student success and **NARROWING** the achievement gap], the district has *RECEIVED* the ***Broad Prize for Urban Education*** and is a **FIVE-TIME** finalist for the ***award***."

The LBUSD mentions receiving Broad Prize for Urban Education, California Distinguished, National Blue Ribbon, and National Green Ribbon awards. To be eligible for these awards, school districts must serve a population of students with significant proportions of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and/or are Students of Color. LBUSD schools are being recognized for excelling with children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and

[94] "Schools selected for the Distinguished School Award demonstrate significant gains in narrowing the achievement gap" (Awards Unit, 2022). However, U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools is a federal recognition award given to schools or districts that "reduce environmental impact and costs," "improve the health and wellness of schools, students, and staff," "and provide effective environmental and sustainability education" whereas ""Green Ribbon Schools" without the U.S. Department of education is not ED's award, but instead a separate program overseen by another organization" which the National Green Ribbon appears to fall under. is given by the United States Department of Education to (U.S. Department of Education, 2023).

Children of Color, children whom the award givers do not expect to succeed in schools. In this sense, the positive Judgement of the schools remains the normative reading, but a CRT perspective recognizes an embedded negative judgement, based on deficit ideologies, of the children. It is only in understanding that these awards are given to school districts in recognition of positive improved (positive improvement) academic performance, specifically amongst children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and/or are Students of Color in comparison to student who are not in those subgroups. With this concluding sentence to *The Story*, the LBUSD has finally allowed us to conclusively understand which student subgroups they are referring to when mentioning their successes.

At the same time, while positioned as success and cloaked in notions of prestige, the LBUSD is relying on notions that Students of Color and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages generally do not do well in school. This deficit narrative also suggests that schools and districts must do things to help fix these students so that they can excel. Indeed, these awards that LBUSD boasts about are given to schooling systems that appear to produce results where Students of Color and/or children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages perform better than expected. However, this positive performance should not be equated with equal performance with other student groups.

5.8 Chapter Conclusions

This chapter provides a blueprint, centering Indigenous and Black students, for understanding the data sources (LCAP and SARC) by subjecting the data to a rudimentary analysis which allows for deeper understanding of the LCFF through LEA LCAPs and SARC data. The descriptive statistics analysis of the student body composition provides understanding

of the complex distribution of Indigenous and Black students across LBUSD and LAUSD while simultaneously pinpointing limitations of the SARC dataset itself.

5.8.1 Responding to the Research Questions

In this chapter we learned that the neighboring school districts LCAP documents do not actually outline notable educational opportunities for Indigenous or Black students for the 2018-19 school year. Further, neither district uses their local control powers to allocate funding to specifically target Black or Indigenous children. Through a quantitative critical analysis, we also learned that Indigenous and Black children are invisibilized in the data due to choices in the name of student privacy. The analysis highlighted the ramifications of the choices which include difficulty in achieving assistance for Indigenous and Black children when they are few and the inability to hold schools accountable for ensuring equitable educational opportunities for these students. We also traced themes from California state level discourse surrounding Black and Indigenous children which were apparent in the 2018-2019 district LCAPs. Namely, LBUSD and LAUSD highlighted poor academic outcomes for Black and Indigenous students but failed to intentionally develop programming or allocate resources to address the recognized concerns. Like the state, the districts resorted to tracking Black and Indigenous children along outcomes deemed measurable or creating affinity groups with little or no political influence to create change. The findings also established that both LEAs position Indigenous and Black children, and Students of Color and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages broadly, negatively using deficit-laden language. The analysis highlighted that these discursive choices suggest LAUSD and LBUSD tend to believe that such children are a burden on their resources. The dearth of information in the LCAPs about the actions they will take to achieve the goals they set

makes it difficult to conclude that the districts equitably allocate resources and opportunities to support Black and Indigenous students.

5.8.2 The Analytical Methods Provide Distinct Ways to Reach Conclusions

The test score data across schools supports a conclusion that LBUSD students, including Black and Indigenous students, do on average score higher than LAUSD students. However, the data also reveals that LBUSD students score poorly in English language arts and mathematics across schools. When considering Black student achievement, Black children perform worse on average in both school districts in comparison to the district average. And Indigenous students are largely invisibilized by the data as Indigenous children often comprise less than ten students in any individual school and are removed from the dataset by CDE for "privacy reasons." While the data also shows that Black students are also often in small numbers at school sites, historically there are immense associations with Indigenous erasure which places a disproportionate spotlight on Indigenous children in this area. Such results point to a need for greater scrutiny regarding choices in data collection, particularly regarding Indigenous students, which may obscure the needs of student groups who may not be numerous in an LEA or school site.

The CDE developed LCAP framework serves as a useful organizing tool in approaching the document. But through Genre analysis, I made the LCAP more accessible for analysis by identifying the most meaningful sections of the documents which would be useful for addressing the research questions. Through lexical chain analysis, it is apparent that the districts are mentioning race mainly where they are reporting results related to academic outcomes deemed measurable, giving greatest importance to quantitative results that are used to position Black and Indigenous students as "achieving" or not along these dimensions.

The Appraisal analysis and CDA approach to the LCAP data resulted in three main thematic findings. First, there is a general lack of alignment between the goals that LBUSD and LAUSD establish when compared against the goals, actions, and services and funding allocations. Second, the districts use outside sources like research to bolster claims surrounding success. And third, both LEAs use exclusionary tactics to indirectly discuss student subgroups, relying on coded language to refer to Students of Color and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. Further, the LEAs positively position their actions while negatively judging the diverse attributes of their students.

Chapter 6 Discussion of the Study

As schools head into the 2023-2024 school year, LEAs have made progress in how they discuss addressing the needs of Black and Indigenous children in their LCAPs. For instance, in the 2022-2023 school year, LAUSD and LBUSD created a goal and/or an action/service respectively to address the needs of Black students in their districts and both explicitly included statements acknowledging a need to center the needs of Indigenous students by addressing historical wrongs. Based on the analysis presented in this study, these changes alone are a notable improvement from the 2018-2019 school year where neither LEA included either a goal or action/service to directly address the needs of Black children and barely acknowledged Indigenous children. Further, LCAP templates have been updated to provide more transparency regarding the wide-ranging type of funds received by LEAs including federal funds, non-LCFF state funds, and local funds. However, despite these improvements, the LCAP remains a document where LEAs outline budgeted expenditures related to LCFF funds and procedures. While the landscape has changed from the 2018-2019 school year, the findings and conclusions coming from this study remain relevant.[95]

In this chapter, I review the research questions. Next, I review the findings and key themes from Chapters 4 and 5. Then, I discuss the contributions of the study over three subsections. I close the chapter by discussing the study's implications and significance. As a reminder, this study addresses the following research questions:

[95] For example, Allen and Schleppegrell (2022) examine the 2022-2023 LBUSD LCAP and highlight the embedded racism within the action/service developed to support Black children.

Research Question 1: How does the historicity of California public school funding, specifically key moments, social actors, and laws like the Local Control Funding Formula, contribute to an understanding of the documents and students' educational opportunities and outcomes?

Research Question 1A: How do two neighboring California school districts' education planning and accountability documents reveal the goals, funding allocations, and educational opportunities and outcomes for Indigenous and Black students considering the historicity of California public school funding?

Research Question 2: What does a quantitative critical analysis of district accountability data reveal about the (in)equity of funding for Indigenous and Black students?

Research Question 3: What types of messages regarding Black and Indigenous children are communicated through California state level discourse, as evident in the districts' planning and accountability documents?

Research Question 3A: How are Black and Indigenous children discursively positioned in these messages and how may that positioning be relevant to their access to equitable educational opportunities and outcomes?

Chapter 4 addressed Research Questions 1, 3, and 3A and produced two main claims. First, LCFF does not exist in a bubble, as education funding policy history and lack of attention to race in California influences the possibilities of the LCFF policy and how districts set goals and make funding allocations in their LCAP documents. And second, that California policy discourse often performatively attended to the role of race in society for Black and Indigenous children but has provided no real solutions to address racial disparities let alone systemic issues (e.g., systemic racism reinforced by laws or state propositions) of white supremacy and racism. Ultimately, given a tendency to position Black and Indigenous children as agentive for solving poor outcomes, but not agentive when it comes to creating solutions, the state's discourse is superficial in nature and lacks teeth backed by funding and meaningful action.

Chapter 5 addressed Research Questions 1A, 2, 3, and 3A and produced three main claims. First, that SARC student demographic data highlights that most schools have low population percentages of Black and Indigenous children which presents concerns regarding how children in these environments can be effectively served without targeted approaches which consider race. Second, that choices in how to present school-level SARC data related to outcomes deemed measurable leads to the invisibilization of Indigenous and Black children which makes it difficult to hold schools accountable for the education of these children. Third, the 2018-2019 LAUSD and LBUSD LCAPs are reflective of trends seen at the state level where there is surface-level attention to the needs and trials of Indigenous and Black peoples, but, in the respective LCAPs, there is a lack of meaningful action to address acknowledged conditions while continuing to hold children responsible for improving their outcomes. This chapter discusses these findings and suggests their implications for needed changes.

6.1 Understanding Policy and Analysis Considering Racial Impact

California's policy context comes out of a history of embedded and structural racism coupled with race-evasive strategies to address the untoward (and intended) policy consequences for Black and Indigenous students. This race-evasiveness in education policy discourse sustains tenets of white supremacy. The state and the school districts use racial identity commodification (Leong, 2013) which allows historically white institutions to derive benefits from diversity discourse without equivalent real support or action and leaves Indigenous and Black children to be blamed when there is little academic improvement in terms of outcomes deemed measurable. These finding further support and build on previous work in education policy research.

6.1.1 Situating the Political Context of Education Finance in California adds to the Literature and helps Understand the Limitations of Present Day Policies

This study foundationally answers the implicit call from Alemán Jr (2013) who asserted the importance of understanding the context of public education history and the evolution of laws to understand present day funding policies. Further, Alemán Jr signaled an education finance literature gap which has failed to consistently account for issues related to institutional racism or historical oppression. This study addresses both concerns by using critical methodologies to evaluate the LCFF and the LCAP documents of two enormous California school districts. Chapter 4 showcased the importance of history, as highlighted through the analysis of court cases, state propositions, and legislation, to provide an understanding of how the LCFF has evolved from earlier education policy initiatives and how it stands today. Through this analysis, I intentionally attended to issues of race and racism to highlight California's failure to serve Black and Indigenous students in public schools and detailed the repercussions of specific legal decisions which defined constitutional obligations to serve students (e.g., *Williams v. California*) and eliminated protections (e.g., *CQE v California*). By explicitly analyzing California's funding history and being attentive to historical oppression and institutional racism, I provide an example to actualize Alemán Jr's points.

6.1.2 Policy Context Points to a History of Embedded Racism and Race-Evasive Strategies

Bradbury (2020) suggests that a CRT policy analysis helps us understand how policy's impact on Black and Indigenous students and how the context of influence where policy is created matters. And Gillborn (2020) identifies a scholarly void in examining policymaking through the eyes of politicians' biographies, perceptions, and actions to more fully show how policy decisions are shaped by assumptions and actions. CRT policy analysis creates space for questioning the context of influence to understand whether those who create and carry out policy are committed to racial equity; in this study I evaluated the actions and expressed views of

politicians (e.g., Jerry Brown), educator-scholars (e.g., Michael Kirst), and the judicial system (e.g., the California State Supreme Court). Through evaluating persons, both private and elected, and collective bodies, I revealed a history of racism which has permeated from the state government, and I showed how race-evasive strategies were constantly used to solve issues which the state previously acknowledged had racial implications. While the LCFF policy may have been well meaning, the policy brief which the law was based on avoided addressing the importance of race and was filled with deficit-based views on the innate learning capacity of student groups, including plural lingual learners and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. The evidence I have provided describes a policy development context that displayed a lack of commitment to racial equity, particularly for Black and Indigenous children, out of a deference to appearing neutral.

6.1.3 Race-Evasiveness in Policy Discourse Sustains Tenets of White Supremacy

Discourses protecting whiteness that led to benefits like better access to education often remain unacknowledged, even though the covert positioning of the superiority of white ideas/values, white experiences and behaviors, and White people themselves, are entrenched in our day-to-day lives (Randall, 2021). While looking at assessment design, Randall makes an argument which is compelling to this study, that a commitment to neutrality helps sustain *whiteness-as-superior* biases. This study furthers that argument and brings it into a policy perspective to assert that a commitment to neutrality, or race-evasiveness, in education policy helps sustain whiteness and white supremacy and actively works to ensure that Indigenous and Black children never achieve equity in access to educational opportunities. Through the critical policy analysis, I identified tenets of neutrality in both historical and current manifestations of California's funding policies.

Although the Fourteenth Amendment and other equal protection laws tend to be heralded for being color-blind and fair for all, these laws are an enduring example of whiteness as property, as courts are frequently tasked with deciding whether something is *facially* neutral with respect to race (Leong, 2013). This facially neutral concept ensures that race is not used to uplift, while at the same time not protecting People of Color from discrimination. Indeed, the equal protection law was used to deny equitable protections for Persons of Color and women identified people under Proposition 209 (1996). Such color evasive policies attempt to assert the irrelevance of race, but with no social efforts to make colorblindness true in people's everyday lives. Proposition 209's attempt to establish a race blind California has only served to protect white interests. The Proposition created a legal standard that leaves the state and its agents unable to directly address issues related to race. As shown in this study's findings, there are legitimate reasons to be attentive to the needs of Indigenous and Black children in schools, however most legal minds assert that this remains illegal under the Proposition 209 doctrine and perhaps more so under the new federal ideation stemming from *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard College* (2023).[96] As Proposition 209 publicly targeted post-secondary education, *Students for Fair Admissions* is similarly situated, but as argued in this study, Proposition 209 created impactful restrictions on K-12 education and there is reason to suspect that *Students for Fair Admissions* will be similarly weaponized. Therefore, the new federal standard stemming from *Students for Fair Admissions* will likely make it even harder to get needed attention to Indigenous and Black children out of deference to racial neutrality.

[96]In 2023, SCOTUS overruled its 2003 decision in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, which upheld the University of Michigan's consideration of race as a factor in law school admissions, by declaring affirmative action programs and consideration of race in admissions to be a violation of the equal protection clause in *Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*.

6.1.4 Racial Identity Commodification Allows White Institutions to Derive Benefits from Diversity Discourses Without Real Support or Action

Further, while race-evasiveness is a readily apparent component in policy discourse, at times strong racial capitalist foundations shine through. Leong defines *racial capitalism* as "the process of deriving social and economic value from the racial identity of another person" (p. 2152) and describes its negative consequences for society and individuals. Racial capitalism relies on racial identity commodification and displaces meaningful social reform in favor of superficial assignment of value to Persons of Color. This commodification continues in, sometimes well-intentioned, discourses of diversity which create social value for white institutions and White people to derive capital from racial identities belonging to Persons of Color (Leong, 2013). This study showed how the districts commodify Black children's test scores to positively position themselves; for example, as LBUSD touts in their LCAP how, on average, Black children in the district score higher than other Black children in the state. At the same time, the LBUSD's LCAP offers little evidence of meaningful efforts aimed to support Black children's education. The district celebrates meager gains because there is some social value to *helping* Black children succeed at white standards. This discourse embodies the notion of racial capitalism as LBUSD attempts to elicit praise for its purported successes with Black children.

6.1.5 There is a need for Monitoring as Change can be Performative, Brief, and Unsustained

Gillborn (2020) notes that political movements can create public pressure leading to those in power feeling compelled to enact changes in response, yet these responses tend to be short-lived as institutions, and the people, tend to revert to the racist norms. This study showed that LBUSD and LAUSD use the 2018-2019 LCAP process to display being attentive to Black

children especially. However, further analysis showed that these mentions were largely meaningless and without funding for significant actions. With increased social pressures to enact meaningful structural changes to support Indigenous and Black peoples, it is unsurprising to see that both LAUSD and LBUSD have made changes to how they address structural racism and the needs of Indigenous and Black children, as reflected in their 2022-2023 LCAPs. However, as Gillborn warns, institutional changes tend to be performative and short-lived and ultimately revert to racist norms. Therefore, there is a need to more closely monitor how districts use their LCAPs to support the education of Black and Indigenous children.

6.2 Potential Obstacles to Addressing the needs of Indigenous and Black Students

The study also recognizes impediments to ensuring that Black and Indigenous student are provided with equitable access to education opportunity and an educational system which supports their educational needs and desires. While the LAUSD and LBUSD are responsible for using the LCFF and the LCAP to fully support the education of Indigenous and Black students, the districts' uneven (in)action to support Black and Indigenous children can be partially attributed to systemic roadblocks like funding inadequacies and Proposition 209 (1996). The lack of clarity in the instructions for the CDE-approved LCAP template and the choices LEAs are allowed to make using local control powers are amplified by failures of the state, the CDE, the CSBE, and local COEs to hold LEAs accountable for the expenditures intended for children identified as unduplicated students. As population densities of Black students continue to decrease, it will be more difficult to broadly target Black children in places like LAUSD and LBUSD, similarly to how Indigenous children are treated under notions of low population percentage or numbers. Therefore, it is imperative for education policy and funding to be leveraged to widely support Indigenous and Black children's education in every public school.

Ultimately, the path to getting past these obstacles will require action; crucially, policymakers must work to change laws and judicial decisions which operationally or purposely prohibit California from creating a modern education system which serves all students.

6.2.1 Funding is Inadequate for Addressing the needs of Indigenous and Black Students

In this study, the analysis of the district LCAPs revealed that, while LAUSD and LBUSD could do better in allocating resources to needed populations and causes, there were issues related to funding inadequacy. For example, the analysis highlighted that LAUSD allocates 74.6% of the 2018-19 supplemental/concentration funds towards its Goal 1 (100% Graduation). And, despite this tremendous commitment of funds, LAUSD students remain far from this (impossible) goal. Affeldt (2015) suggested that the weighted student funding formula is important as it redistributes state funding and places an emphasis on student groups, but warned that funding inadequacy would ultimately undermine the LCFF's educational outcome equity components and risk the LCFF being branded as a failure due to a lack of increase in actual funding for California schools. Indeed, this is in fact what has happened. More funding is needed to allow LEAs to better address their goals and ultimately provide all children with equitable opportunities. As it currently stands, the LCFF does not modernize K-12 funding in California. To overcome an antiquated school finance system, California must finally address how it funds its schools and eliminate provisions (e.g., hold harmless funding provisions) which advantage children whose caretakers are paid above living wages and White children.

6.2.2 LEAs are not Truly Held Accountable for Expenditures for Unduplicated Students, thus Amplifying LCAP Instruction Clarity and Local Control Choices

Chen and Hahnel (2017) assert that the power of the weighted student formula funding model and the flexibility afforded to LEAs is that the LCFF can be a lever for change. This optimistic view of this law was not readily apparent in my analysis of the two districts' LCAPs. There were instances of programming being used to target groups with an identified or expressed need (e.g., LBUSD's Math Collaborative program) which suggest that the LCFF can be used to create positive changes for children in need. However, overall, both district's LCAPs showcased LBUSD and LAUSD's inability to use the LCFF local control flexibilities to be attentive to the needs of their communities. For example, neither LEA developed any 2018-19 Goals which were reflective of local priorities; instead, both districts only set goals which were attentive to the state priorities. Generally, LAUSD and LBUSD failed to target specific schools for additional support despite evidence, as showcased in the descriptive statistics analysis of the CAASPP ELA and Math tests, signaling that some schools need an influx of resources more than others. The analysis highlighted that LAUSD and LBUSD appear to be using the LCAP, and thus the LCFF, as an accountability measure and not for a lever of change.

Regardless of the failure to increase overall school funding and while a reader can generally understand how much funding an LEA claims has been allocated toward a specific goal or action/service, the accessibility and clarity of LCAPs remain a problem. Chen and Hahnel (2017) suggest that the CDE-required template that guides LEAs' completion of the LCAP does not require LEAs to clearly outline how supplemental and concentration grant dollars are spent to ensure the increase or improvement of services for children labeled as unduplicated students. Further, there is a lack of clarity to whether the schools and students who generate the most additional funding are receiving more funding. This study added to this narrative by highlighting a lack of alignment between goals and allocated budget. Ultimately, the

LAUSD and LBUSD goals, and LCAPs at large, were more aligned to California standards than using local control efforts to meet the needs of students. Both districts composed goals which included language mimicking state standards. Overall, both districts allotted large portions of their supplemental/concentration budgets to goals, actions, and services. However, the findings showed that there was a lack of clarity in how children identified as unduplicated students were benefitting, let alone Black and Indigenous children. Ultimately, outside of a few programs, there was a lack of information in the LCAPs to understand how LBUSD and LAUSD allocated and spent funds meant to benefit students identified as deserving of additional educational opportunities and resources. The study adds to the research which asserts calls for clarity from the LCAP regarding the allocation and spending of LCFF funds, particularly those meant to improve educational access and opportunity for Black and Indigenous children.[97]

6.2.3 Decreasing Population Densities will make it more difficult to target Black Students

Howard et al. (2017) recommends that Los Angeles County public schools rethink what it means to be successful in school as there are many ways that students will "manifest their brilliance, intellect, and promise" (p. 26). However, as shown in the analysis of the LEA LCAPs, the districts focused on narrow conceptions of success. Indeed, the findings show that Black brilliance, and Indigenous brilliance when acknowledged, is legitimized only when identified through outcomes deemed measurable in terms of quantitative statistics. Further, I outline how the districts primarily focused on positive information from standardized test results even when the data showed that most children were not meeting state standards.

[97] As always there are changes being made to the LCFF. And on July 23, 2023, Governor Newsom signed the legislature passed Senate Bill 114 which requires revisions to be made to the LCAP template for the 2024-2025 school year with the CSBE responsible for adopting the new template and providing instructions by January 2024.

Howard et al. note that it was difficult to find school sites in Los Angeles County with a *significant* percentage of Black students as there has been a declining presence of Black students in public schools across the county. The findings highlight that LAUSD and LBUSD acknowledge Indigenous presence, but do not go much further. As I have shown, the situation for Indigenous populations is even worse, as they have been systematically destroyed over time to a point where many people have entirely lost direct connections to an Indigenous heritage. Indeed, through the descriptive statistics of the demographic data, the findings highlighted how both Indigenous and Black children are being invisibilized in the SARC data, given low numbers per school site. And, just as has occurred with Indigenous children, as the Black student population continues to decrease, it is likely that the needs of Black children may be ignored or diminished due to *insignificant* population. As signaled in the analysis, there should be a legitimate worry that LEAs will not be attentive to the needs of Black children, given that most schools in the two districts maintain lower percentages of Black students with most schools in LAUSD now having ten or fewer Black students. Indeed, as Indigenous children have an even lower population percentage, LEAs are often indifferent to their presence. This indifference, resulting from the invisibilization causes Indigenous children's needs to be ignored and districts to abscond their responsibility to ensure all children have equitable access to education. To counteract ignoring lower populations of students, school districts could ensure that all schools are prepared to serve all children in the district.

6.3 Methodological Contributions of the Study

The third set of contributions of the study come from the critical methodologies and frameworks which guided it. CDA revealed the ways that power and authority are enacted in the district LCAPs (e.g., performative narratives that positively position the district in relation to

their outreach to Black families) which perpetuate the social wrong against Indigenous and Black students. Critical quantitative methods brought attention to potential racial intragroup differences in student needs, while simultaneously signaling that Black and/or Indigenous children have differing needs which could be addressed in policy, or LCAP documents, and funding allocations. Lastly, CRT and SFL jointly spotlighted covert racist, deficit views of students. CPA and CDA uncover the exclusion of social actors which the LEAs refer to.

6.3.1 Policy as a Display of Power and Authority to Focus on Desired Points or Perspectives

Woodside-Jiron's (2004) Critical Discourse Analysis revealed how power can be used to attempt to create consensus by positioning experts, like people or research, to control a narrative. In telling the story of the district, LBUSD focuses on controlling the narrative and asserting that the district is of high quality and succeeds in educating its students, ignoring all evidence which shows that many students, especially Black and Indigenous students, fail at unacceptable levels. Instead, the LBUSD redirects the attention of readers by citing data to simply assert that the district is high quality or to report that student groups like Black students perform higher than peers on average. Further, I showed how the LBUSD invokes research, outside organizations, and people in positions of esteem to embolden the district to claim that they are a high quality school district. For instance, the analysis highlighted how the LBUSD uses the Broad Foundation to assert that LBUSD is one of the top school districts in the world. This performative display creates a context where power and authority are being used in lieu of meaningful efforts for change.

6.3.2 Critical Quantitative Methods Help Recognize Racial Intragroup Differences in Needs

By using CRT with quantitative methods to critically examine assumptions regarding subcategories of the Asian community, Teranishi (2007) provides an example of the need to understand intersecting identities and within group difference with respect to race. While the data examined in this study do not allow for the depth of analysis that Teranishi undertook, the findings do highlight some important differences to be aware of. For instance, in my analysis of LAUSD CAASPP ELA and Math test scores, the standard deviations, and minimum and maximum school score averages for Black students revealed that there was at least one school where nearly all students met or exceeded the California standard for the CAASPP tests. This data led to a conclusion that there is also a need for the LAUSD to be attentive to individual school site averages to ensure that schools who are struggling, as evidenced by their Black students having low average standardized test scores, receive more LCFF funding assistance. However, this type of critical work also helps those in power move beyond average scores and begin to consider individual circumstances to ensure that all children receive assistance (e.g., considering the standard deviations and the minimum and maximum scores can identify some schools with a wide variety of scores and others where most students score low or high). Therefore, while overall this study spotlights a need for attention to be given to all Indigenous and Black children, the conclusions remind that the needs of all Black and Indigenous children will look different, and that LEAs will need to target approaches based on both school site and individual student needs to ensure success.

6.3.3 CRT with SFL is Helpful in Spotlighting Covert Racist, Deficit Views while CPA and CDA can be used to Uncover the Exclusion of Social Actors in Policy Texts

CRT has been used to evaluate LCFF directed district practices to help understand how district practices are influenced and shaped by racism (Daramola et al., 2022). This study

contributes to this agenda by showing how a CRT-informed analysis of district LCAPs, an LCFF directed practice, can uncover racist, deficit views of Students of Color broadly when supported by a linguistic analysis grounded in a theory of language in its social context, SFL. In particular, the findings highlighted how LBUSD relies on deficit-capacity views of Black children to assert the esteem of the district. The analysis also shows that to support their claims, the LBUSD relies on a deficit ideology which asserts that Black children are innately harder to educate and that schools must work harder to help these children achieve. The analytic methods showcase benefits associated with using social context and history, with attention to the impact of race and racism, to add robust meaning making potential and provide a template to uncover embedded meaning and thus make it possible to demand change. While this study focused on racism, the methods allow for an analyst to bring to light any hidden meaning in a text.

Nikolaidis (2022) used CDA and policy analysis to demonstrate the use of deficit-ascriptive language in a social justice oriented school initiative and highlighted the need to challenge white supremacist discourses, particularly when the significance of race is backgrounded. This study responds to this call by using CPA and CDA to highlight the use of exclusionary language to indirectly discuss student groups, including racial groups, thus effectively hiding the significance of race while simultaneously attempting to gain social esteem on the backs of the backgrounded groups. For example, the findings highlight how Critical Policy Analysis is used to complete a historical analysis which situates the context of racial issues and public education funding. This historical analysis provides a foundation of knowledge to understand how California has previously been attentive to the needs of Indigenous and Black children which helps establish the failure to address these children's needs as a systemic issue rooted in racist or race-evasive tactics and laws. The historicity explored in Chapter 4 allowed

for a clear view of the existence of systematic racism, and specific laws and judicial decisions, which inhibit California's ability to create a modern future for Indigenous and Black people. With this type of context established, in Chapter 5, the findings discussed how both LAUSD and LBUSD express negative views about Students of Color broadly while simultaneously discussing successes working with those children; these district-level findings were able to be situated as part of a larger prevalent systemic issue stemming from the state context. The analysis further highlighted how the districts were using other language tokens (e.g., "awards") to reference Students of Color and/or children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. The findings highlighted how the districts excluded Students of Color as social actors while discussing awards or broad references to difficult students in similar ways which were apparent in state level discourse. Critical Discourse Analysis is thus a valuable tool for uncovering and making prominent the ways that language works to shape social contexts and Critical Policy Analysis helps establish a historical context behind a policy.

6.4 Impact and Significance of Findings

While this analysis focuses on a California policy, the approach to the analysis has wide-reaching applicability, particularly considering the theoretical and methodological approaches that offer new ways to engage in policy analysis. These approaches can be used to evaluate education policies in other states as well as policies tackling other issues in education or other fields. The analysis showcased CRTs legal roots through the analysis of court cases and applying those decisions to present day issues in education and thus showcasing the importance of a thorough context analysis.

Going forward, further critical policy and discourse analysis could continue to look at race, but also other groups (e.g., LGBTQIA+ people) who are disenfranchised by political or

structural inequities. The analysis could consider different issues in education such as behavioral modification programming (e.g., Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports). Ultimately, these methods can be used to uncover embedded and covert racism, sexism, transphobia, etc., and have the potential to support advocating for and establishing texts and programming which are affirming, creating action, and honoring the contributions and inherent knowledge of Indigenous and Black people. This is the critical promise of this work, to locate where direct action can create the change that well-meaning people claim to want to establish.

This study showcases the beginnings of a Critical Race Theory Systemic Functional Linguistics (CritSFL), which is rooted in a long history of SFL work which has challenged norms, and has the potential to be a launching point for more directly understanding and positioning race in discourse analysis that uses a theory of language in social context to explore and evaluate the texts that shape our social lives. CritSFL can be widely applied to uncover the role of race, racism, and whiteness, not only within policy documents but also in other written or transcribed texts. Exploring the ways texts like these education policy documents shape the lives of people who are impacted by them has the potential to lead to greater consciousness and ultimately social change.

6.5 Improvement Ideas to Constituent Groups Stemming from this Study

To conclude this study, this dissertation provides reflections on potential ways that change seekers and those in positions of established power can move forward in establishing an educational system which realizes ideals foundationally suggesting that all children deserve an equitable education. Those visionaries who accept that unjust systems are irreparable will recognize that the path to establishing a system which provides notions of equitable education funding and opportunity for Black and Indigenous children will require a complete rebuild.

Unfortunately, contemporary ideologies which hold onto systems of oppression cannot conceptualize a world where they do not exist, and because individuals with these ideologies are typically in positions of power and authority, societal norms privilege working towards (incremental) systemic change. Therefore, building off my analysis and findings, I conclude this dissertation by offering some improvement ideas to LEA LCAP writers, policy analysts, policy researchers, and community members who are committed to seeking change while simultaneously operating within the current confines of the systems and ideologies typically, given systemic issues, established with malicious intent steeped in racism, classism, misogyny, homophobia, and other discriminatory perspectives.

Those committees and people responsible for scribing and updating the LCAP should use the process to be imaginative using their authority positions within an LEA to broaden their notion of what community collaboration looks like and leverage the resources and opportunities afforded under the LCFF to institute actionable changes. For instance, while the LCFF law does not require LEAs to spend any specific proportion of the funds apportioned based on its concentration of unduplicated students, LEAs are required to demonstrate and justify how services directed toward unduplicated students are being increased or improved. LEAs and those persons who write the LCFF could be transparent about how their LCFF fundings are being allocated and spent on behalf of children identified as unduplicated students. LEAs can use the local control powers under the LCFF to co-establish goals, actions, and services which are responsive to Communities of Color.

The study highlighted issues with LCAP clarity in terms of which students are being served by goals, actions, or services and the funding supporting those measures. LEAs are required to collaborate with their communities and local county offices of education (COE) are

positioned to oversee LEA LCAPs and expenditures. However, there are many procedural blind spots which, unfortunately, require community members to bear the responsibility of ensuring that appropriate services are provided, and funding is fairly allocated. For instance, while a COE can ask an LEA to provide clarity regarding LCAP content and provide recommendations which must be considered at a public hearing, the LEA is not required to make any changes to their LCAP in response to COE feedback (Petek & Alferes, et al., 2023).[98] In this sense, community members could use a systemic creation like the Uniform Compliant Procedures (UCP) process to request an LEA to follow the law. In the case of the LCFF, community members are empowered to file UCP's to ask LEAs to implement corrective action.[99] This study outlined how UCP's were effective in challenging the funding allocation in both LBUSD and LAUSD, requiring the districts to make changes. Community members could also use the UCP for issues like failure to follow school funding requirements to use supplemental and concentration grant funding to disproportionately improve the education of children identified as unduplicated students. But community members are relegated to using the LCAP as a piece of evidence to support any claims regarding LEA expenditures despite the vague nature of the LCFF's funding reporting requirements.

This study highlights the importance of individual and collective groups of people in shaping and impacting education policy. Policy researchers and journalists (e.g., people like Michael Kirst), who have the greatest access to policymakers, are positioned to have a disproportionate impact on improving policy issues and could offer greater insights to illuminate

[98] Further, "charter schools are not required to have their LCAPs reviewed and approved by a COE" (Petek & Alferes, et al., 2023, p. 12).
[99] However, along with the disproportionate responsibility, this compliant must be filed within twelve months for most problems, except for issues related to bullying, harassment, or discrimination with must be filed within six months of the issue.

structural racism that impact policy creation. For example, researchers in the California Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), who are tasked with providing advice and information to the California Legislature regarding fiscal and policy implications, produce important work which provides ongoing analyses for policies like the LCFF. The LAO could use its work to more effectively advise the legislature to make more appropriate changes rather than leaving it to the politicians and policymakers to draw conclusions. For instance, the LAO concludes that the LCFF was created with a goal in mind to "distribute funding more equitably based on student needs" (Petek & Alferes, et al., 2023, p. 12) and suggests that "the Legislature *could* [emphasis added] evaluate whether the levels of funding for the main components of the formula (base, supplemental, and concentration grants) are distributed in a way that aligns with best practices for serving EL/LI students" (p. 12). In this instance, the LAO could have advised for changes to the formula and requirements to distribute funding equitably to support the education of plural lingual learners, instead of a weak suggestion of what is possible. I encourage the LAO and other policy analysts and researchers to provide specific recommendations to policymakers, given their proximity to power and influence. Further, this study has shown that wider perspectives, including historical context, need to be taken into account to present more fully developed perspectives on the legislative or judicial constraints which must also be addressed in order to effect change.

This study also calls into question the appropriateness of outcomes deemed measurable used by the state and LEAs to ascertain student's knowledge and the limitations that come with choices in how outcome data is represented.[100] The SARC data currently does not provide any information about schools that have ten or fewer students for standardized test results within any

[100] There is ample space to question the legitimacy of standardized tests given that there are choices made in scoring (e.g., test question removal, etc.) which sways the results and test question reliability itself.

category (e.g., Indigenous students or total students in a school). In this study, I show how this negatively impacts Indigenous students, a historically disenfranchised group of children. However, this choice also negatively impacts rural LEAs and schools. When data is not available, it becomes more difficult to hold LEAs and schools accountable for the education of the children they are entrusted with. Further, while the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015), the latest reauthorization of 1965's Elementary and Secondary Education Act, continued provisions requiring regular standardized tests for students, it also provided guidance for school systems to consider measures others than large scale standardized tests to understand student learning. However, California continues to prioritize the use of standardized tests, alongside other metrics like graduation rates, to gauge student success. However, there is another area where the "local control" component of the LCFF could be called on, by empowering local schools and LEAs to determine which types of summative metrics best represent the knowledge that their students have gained. In this, there is still an important role for state agencies and personnel, particularly to ensure that all students' brilliance is being honored and local schooling systems are not engaging in racist practices.

The dissertation study is titled *A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats*. And like many powerful messages meant to uplift and protect Indigenous and Black people, this aphorism has been muddied, twisted, and hijacked. However, I return to its original meaning by asserting that when Black and Indigenous children are not properly supported, all children are failed. Given the historical wrongs that have been perpetrated on Indigenous people and Black people in the United States, we must ensure that Black and Indigenous children are provided with quality education opportunities. When we make the decision to ensure that our communities which have been purposely relegated to the lowest social castes in the United States for centuries are

properly and fully supported to succeed, all people will have access to success. It is only when all people are equitably valued that every American can benefit. Ensuring that Black children and Indigenous children receive quality education and educational opportunities benefits not only Indigenous and Black children, but all other children. The tide that *trickles* down from the top will continue to destroy those boats at the bottom. The tide must rise from the bottom to ensure that all boats are safe, supported, and valued.

Appendices

Appendix A: Factors Leading to Indigenous Migration to Los Angeles

The environmental destruction that was the Dust Bowl, the early years of the Great Depression, and land seizure by the United States government contributed to increased numbers of Indigenous people in Los Angeles during the early 1930s. During World War II, Indigenous people outside of boarding schools and other Indigenous civilians moved to Los Angeles; by 1950 the census counted 1,671 Indigenous people in Los Angeles County. Again, given errors in counting, actual numbers were likely much greater (Rosenthal, 2012).

Appendix B: Black Migration to Los Angeles Was Precipitated by Racism Elsewhere

This Western Idealism inspired many Black people to seek out the opportunities that they were denied in the East (whether in the North or South). During WWI, many Black people fled to the North and places like Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland and they were resented by White people in these cities along with the Black people who had long settled there (Flamming, 2005). Black leaders encouraged and many Black people fought for the United States during WWI with the idea that military service to their country would result in racial equality within America (Flamming, 2005). And though Black people volunteered, they were often denied the right to serve and those who did join were ultimately drafted and were given labor duty as White people refused to serve alongside Black people (Flamming, 2005). Prejudice and racism also existed in housing, jobs, and education, as Black people were always considered "to be the most basic nonwhite group, the nation's fundamental "other" (Flamming, 2005, p. 334), but Black people in Los Angeles could own homes and unlike other Persons of Color were *allowed to* vote. In 1910, 36% of Black families in Los Angeles were homeowners in stark contrast to the North, Midwest, South, or other cities out West where none exceeded 15% (Flamming, 2005). Los Angeles records from 1917 indicated that 90% of Black Angelenos had been born outside of Los Angeles with 73% being born in the south, and the majority had come from Texas cities with other sizeable populations from New Orleans and Atlanta. (Flamming, 2005). Generally, there were enough opportunities to economically thrive in Los Angeles that Black people generally felt that racial conditions were better than elsewhere. However, these

conditions deteriorated as time went on and the Black population increased and increasing numbers of White southerners and Texans moved in and brought their racist ideologies with them (Flamming, 2005).

Appendix C: Black and Indigenous Families are Overrepresented in the Foster Care System

In Los Angeles County, where LAUSD and LBUSD are located, there is a particular past and current history highlighting connections between being an Indigenous or Black child and having guardians or parents who are paid poverty wages or being involved with the foster care system. Ruffin et al. (2022) establishes a connection to the hundreds of thousands of Indigenous children in the US, beginning notably in the 1800s, who were removed from their homes before discussing the current overrepresentation of Black children in the foster care system in Los Angeles County. Ruffin recalls that many of the Indigenous children who were removed from their homes were, put into the foster care system, adopted by non-Indigenous families, and/or sent to boarding schools. These efforts and others worked to strip Indigenous children of their familial identities, languages, and ultimately their race to forcibly erase through assimilation. Ruffin et al. (2022) asserts that Black and Indigenous children are overrepresented in the foster care system in part because over half of all Indigenous and Black children experience at least one child protective services investigation during their first eighteen years of life. Ruffin makes the connection that most Indigenous and Black children are not removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect but largely because their caregiver(s) are paid poverty wages. This spotlights an importance of focusing on the education of Indigenous and Black students, but particularly considering the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) which does include a focus on students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages and youth in the foster care system.

Appendix D: The State Superintendent of Public Instruction has Minimal CSBE Authority

The publicly elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction is also responsible for overseeing the CDE and serves as the chair of the California State Board of Education (Mays, 2022). Per CSBE bylaws, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction shall serve as secretary and act as executive officer but is not a voting member of the CSBE. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction is only permitted to presider during the proceedings for the election of the CSBE President, or when given permission by a majority of the board members, and once the President is elected, that person takes over the meeting immediately. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction is generally given space to provide a report at all regular business meetings. State Superintendent of Public Instruction and authorized staff can submit items to be considered by the CSBE.

Appendix E: SCOTUS has Reinforced Race-Evasive Policies

Post *Brown* there were only two (*Regents of University of California v. Bakke* and *Grutter v. Bollinger*) instances where the Supreme Court of the United States, under strict scrutiny, upheld a governmental policy which was race-conscious in a fully argued case (Liu, 2004). Such data suggests that at the highest court in the United States, there has not been a tendency to uphold laws which are purposively race conscious. Such a judicial standard serves to reinforce race-evasive policy strategies which ultimately do not combat white supremacy nor help Indigenous and Black people progress.

Appendix F: Persons and Organizations Involved with Serrano vs Priest

The actual named persons in the lawsuit were: State Treasurer Ivy Baker Priest then later State Treasurer Jesse M. Unruh, Superintendent of Public Instruction Wilson Riles, State Controller Houston I. Flournoy then later State Controller Kenneth Cory, and Superintendent of Los Angeles County Schools.

Western Center on Law and Poverty was formed in Los Angeles in 1967 by a group of legal scholars and attorneys who graduated from local universities. It is unclear who are the graduates from UCLA, USC, and Loyola law schools that are responsible for the founding of Western Center on Law and Poverty or if they received any financial assistance from other individuals, foundations, etc. But together these legal minds are credited with setting a foundation for the group to advocate and provide representation for those who are paid poverty wages. Attorneys associated with Western Center on Law & Poverty who served on the Serrano case included Daniel M. Luevano, Rosalyn Chapman, Philip E. Goar, John E. McDermott, Rose Matsui Ochi, David A. Binder, Harold W. Horowitz, Michael H. Shapiro, Mary S. Burdick, and Richard A. Rothschild.

Prior to joining Western Center for Law and Poverty as a director, Luevano served as a California assembly member 1959-1960 and chief deputy director in the Department of Finance from 1960-1964 under Governor Pat Brown (Vasquez, 1988). Chapman graduated from Berkeley School of Law and served as associate director for Western Center on Law and Poverty 1969-1972 and worked with the group from 1973-1977 before being appointed as a federal

magistrate judge (JAMS, 2023). Goar graduated from USC Law school and served as director of litigation from 1972-1976 before serving on the Court of Appeals in 1983 (MetNews Staff Writer, 2016). McDermott graduated from Harvard law school before serving as a staff attorney and executive director with the Western Center on Law and Poverty between 1972-1981 (Ohio Wesleyan University, 2018). Ochi was born in East Los Angeles and earned a law degree from Loyola law school before working with the Western Center on Law and Poverty; Ochi later worked across many local and national administrations and had a reputation as being an advocate for civil rights, criminal justice reform, and causes important to Japanese Americans (Watanabe, 2021). Binder was a Los Angeles native who got a law degree from Stanford University and served as the director of Litigation 1969-1970 for Western Center on Law & Poverty before serving at the UCLA law school for 50 years (UCLA Law, 2020). Shapiro earned bachelor's and master's degrees from UCLA and a JD from University of Chicago before holding numerous positions with Western Center on Law & Poverty including assistant director of litigation and acting director of litigation. Burdick began working with the Western Center on Law and Poverty in 1975 and worked with them for over twenty years including as executive director (California Bar Journal, 1997). Today, Rothschild serves as director of litigation and is positioned as the key individual over the past four decades for every landmark case dealing with defending or expanding the rights of persons and families paid poverty wages in California (Western Center on Law & Poverty, 2019).

Public Advocates Inc was founded in northern California and began service in September 1971 with initial support from the Ford Foundation and the Zellerbach Family Foundation (Public Advocates, 2022a). The group was founded by four attorneys who moved to northern California Robert Gnaizda, J. Anthony Kline, Sid Wolinsky, and Peter Sitkin. Wolinsky

graduated from Yale Law school and is today recognized as a disability rights advocate with a commitment to mentoring and training new generations of public interest attorneys (Curtis, 2011). Sitkin graduated from Columbia law school and was a welfare rights advocate. Gnaizda was a Yale Law school graduate who was later appointed by Governor Jerry Brown as California's Health Director and Chief Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Prisons, and was the State Bar representative for the Federal Judicial Selection Committee. Kline is a Yale Law school graduate who in 1975 was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown as the Legal Affairs Secretary. Public Advocates notes the group had an initial goal to center collaboration and working *with*, not simply for, communities, ally organizations, and clients. Of the founding members, only Wolinsky is listed as counsel for the *Serrano* case.

Appendix G: San Antonio School District v. Rodriguez Decision Details

In *San Antonio School District v. Rodriguez* (1973), SCOTUS held, in a 5-4 decision, that there is not a federal constitutional right to an equal education (Horsford, Scott, & Anderson, 2019, p. 69). With this decision SCOTUS rejected the 14th Amendment claim postulated in *San Antonio School District*. Justice Thurgood Marshall in a dissenting opinion joined by Justice William Douglas stated:

> The Court today decides, in effect, that a State may constitutionally vary the quality of education which it offers its children in accordance with the amount of taxable wealth located in the school districts within which they reside. The majority's decision represents an abrupt departure from the mainstream of recent state and federal court decisions concerning the unconstitutionality of state educational financing schemes dependent upon taxable local wealth. More unfortunately, though, the majority's holding can only be seen as a retreat from our historic commitment to equality of educational opportunity and as unsupportable acquiescence in a system which deprives children in their earliest years of the chance to reach their full potential as citizens. The Court does this despite the absence of any substantial justification for a scheme which arbitrarily channels educational resources in accordance with the fortuity of the amount of taxable wealth within each district. (*San Antonio School District v. Rodriguez,* 1973, pp 70-71)

Marshall's dissent highlights the majority decision as a retreat in the battle for educational opportunity through a refusal to evaluate an arbitrary funding system which depended upon local district property taxes.

Appendix H: Forces Behind the Fight for Proposition 13

Kirst notes that those advocating for finance reform by increasing funding in districts and schools with the lowest funding were coordinated by either of two groups, the Ford Foundation and the National Institute of Education or the University of Florida. While efforts seeking to limit tax and spending were led by Howard Jarvis' American Tax Reform, a conservative 501(c)(4) "social welfare" nonprofit group engaged in political activity surrounding limiting taxes, that was behind Proposition 13, or National Tax Limitation, another nonprofit focused on limiting taxes, sought to keep education to the basics while suggesting that education spending is not a worthwhile endeavor (Kirst, 1979, February). Today, Howard Jarvis and Paul Gann are credited with getting Prop 13 passed, but it seems clear they were influenced by Lew Uhler and National Tax Limitation who found success in other parts of the country.

Appendix I: Proposition 13 Limited Property Taxes in Three Ways

Proposition 13 limited property taxes in three ways: shifted property tax authority to the state and capped property taxes at one percent; set property taxes to be based on purchase prices (rather than market rate) where the taxable value increase at the lower rate of either two percent or the inflation rate; and, required a two-thirds voter approval for localities to levy special taxes (Chu & Uhler, 2016, September).

Appendix J: Introduction to Michael Kirst and Some of Kirst's Scholarship

Kirst is a trained economist who first became a professor of education in 1969 and has had a long and influential impact on education since. Between 1972-1975, Michael Kirst worked on research teams under Ford Foundation-funded projects studying state education finance reform in Florida and Oregon. In 1973 Kirst co-authored a major study of school finance in Florida, "Revising School Finance in Florida," which biographer Dick Jung states is "amazingly similar to the principles that you have in the Local Control Funding Formula" (Fensterwald, 2022).

While serving as CSBE president, Kirst authored many scholarly contributions including the previously shared reaction to the passage of Proposition 13 and another outlining nine forces impacting K-12 education through the 1970s requiring education organizations to adapt while still providing effective services to children. Through such contributions, Kirst leveraged an education and finance scholar career alongside the office of the CSBE president to contribute to the public discourse. Kirst's scholarly contributions and influences are reflective of popular sentiments being shared and thus serve as one helpful entry point to understanding how California was coping with and responding to a changing educational landscape in California and nationally. Nationally, former California governor and President of the United States Ronald Reagan was making contributions (e.g., the United States National Commission of Excellence in Education's 1983 report "A Nation at Risk" suggesting that schools were worse without acknowledging contextual factors).

As the 1980s were on the horizon Kirst reflected on the changing state of public education by outlining forces believed to be most impacting schools and while many are valid, the way the forces are discussed are ultimately not helpful in achieving equity in education, particularly for Students of Color. Kirst (1979, July) suggested that nine forces impacted public schools in California between 1970-1980: a "likely" 1980 ballot measure for school vouchers,[101] a 1980 ballot initiative for a statewide spending limit, dozens of reform initiatives including pre-1970 federal and state mandates and minimum competency tests, declining support and esteem for public education systems, an increasing Latin* population across schools juxtaposed against a declining enrollment in schools, the *Serrano* decision as a cause for multiple school finance schemes, Proposition 13, court-ordered integration of the largest school systems particularly concerning integration across district lines in metropolitan areas (e.g., the greater Los Angeles area), and the "imposition" of collective bargaining (e.g., teacher unions).

The "ostensible reasons" provided for a voucher system included providing "choice and diversity for parents" and increased competition between schools. Fortunately, the school vouchers measure never made it to the California voters. And, it is necessary with any conversation of school vouchers, or school closures, to acknowledge its racist origins. In fact, some school systems, e.g., Prince Edward County in Virginia which was one of the consolidated cases under *Brown v. Board of Education* (*Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County*), chose to close its schools rather than comply with *Brown*, desegregation requirements under and provide their white families with school vouchers to attend private schools. Using language that suggests that school vouchers will provide *choice* or *diversity* ignores which

[101] The "Initiative for Family Choice in Education" was not able to collect adequate signatures to qualify for the June 1980 California Ballot despite or because of promises to limit public school expenditures and to eliminate the use of property taxes for elementary or secondary education (Szanto, 1980).

parents would be allotted those notions. And primarily White parents with greater social and economic mobility are most acutely positioned to take advantage of a system which promotes a semblance of choice.

California voters did adopt a constitutional amendment limiting state and local spending, including for schools. In November 1979, California voters passed Proposition 4 (1979), also known as the Gann Limit, which added Article XIII B to the California Constitution. The Gann Limit, which was proposed by Paul Gann a republican conservative who worked with Jarvis on Proposition 13 (1979), had a goal of keeping state and local government spending, including public school spending, capped at 1978-79 levels with some adjustments for changes in inflation and population (Fiscal Policy Office, 2023). The notion of spending in the state was positioned as those who feel Proposition 13 did not do enough to prevent the government bodies from spending money and those who felt Proposition 13 did too much and thus encouraging the passage of state sales and income taxes which have no possibility of being returned to taxpayers. However, an important component of taxes is that when property and income taxes are inappropriately low, costs to maintain a functioning society do not disappear. So, the burden is shifted to those who are paid poverty wages who are disproportionally Persons of Color. Considering this type of information puts the actions of California voters into a clearer perspective which recognizes that wealthier, White individuals were working to pass laws to legally horde their wealth while simultaneously making it difficult for Persons of Color to move up economically.

California in the 1970s is positioned as a state which openly adapts marketplace reforms without properly vetting them and infrequently repealing them, creating a system rife with competing messages and requirements. What is missing in the discussion is the harm being

caused by the state mandated embracing of reform measures. The state mandates to adopt reform ideas come at a cost for school districts and the children trying to learn. These costs are not equally distributed as, particularly given the frequent switches between reform efforts, those school districts with less room in their budgets are being required to spend funds to adopt short-lived measures. At the time, this system of frequent reforms could have been more frequently highlighted as a menace to the education of Black children, Indigenous children, and other Children of Color.

Declining public support for California public schools is attributed to a decline in percentage of adults with children in K-12 schools, the "necessity to close schools" causing alienation in affected neighborhoods, and media claims of decline in students' basic skills. Again, within these narratives, race-blindness is used to discuss very racialized and racist situations. For example, it seems that White people were postponing or having less children, but this racialized reality is often missing from the discussion in favor of blanket statements surrounding population trends. Sentiments of the time know this is true given the next force deemed to be impacting public schools.

In general, declining public school enrollment decreased across the United States, and people observed population trends across some Californian suburbs and cities where school populations *drastically declined* leading to school resources declining. The narrative acknowledges that enrollment decline occurred for White students while Latin* students were *dramatically increasing*. Notably narratives claim that Latin* students *require* bilingual education, which positions increasing numbers of Latin* students as a strain on the education system rather than an asset. While students with diverse linguistic capabilities, including Indigenous and Black children, may require schools to expend more resources, these children are

an asset that requires an additional investment to develop the fully bilingual citizens that are necessarily in the globalized economy that many claim to support. Increasing numbers of Latin* and other students require a change in the K-12 education system which supports students' plural lingual skills rather than one that positions certain varieties of English as deficient rather than as resources.

The fallout from *Serrano* included requirements for updates to the school finance system. Initial responses to these changes suggested that some districts received large amounts of aid while others were unable to have adequate funding to meet real expenses. With this, there is an explicit understanding that school expenditures have not universally kept pace with California cost of living and funding schemes. However, narratives suggesting that *Serrano* caused harm to those wishing to increase their expenditures suggests that Children of Color asking for equitable schooling harms wealthy White children.

Some have characterized Proposition 13 as negative as it provided power to California to centralize all school financing and exert state control over local education leading to decreased employee morale. Proposition 13 is also characterized as having an impact centered initially on the highest spending school districts. Focusing a narrative on the wealthiest school districts, local control, and employee morale ignores most Children of Color. Proposition 13 was a conservative republican measure intended to decrease local and state spending with an intention to ensure that these governmental entities would be especially limited in spending funding to benefit People of Color. And certainly, when Communities of Color are harmed by policy, all people are harmed, yet People of Color are disproportionately harmed, and this should be centered in discussions.

Under California state law, racial isolation is illegal per the California Supreme Court thus leading to massive desegregation efforts in places like Los Angeles, San Diego, and San

Bernardino. Narratives at the time suggested that "desegregation has led to a growth in private schools and creates even more uncertainty in school organizations" (Kirst, 1979, July, p. 29) and suggested that there could be a ballot initiative to require California to follow federal precedent and not *meddle* in instances of *de facto* segregation. Such narratives position integration and efforts to achieve equity in access to the wonderful resources and opportunity available in this country as the problem, rather than the racism and classism coming primarily from White people. Suggesting that desegregation efforts are causing a proliferation of private schools, and new school districts, and suggestions that some school districts are running out of White students ignores the racism-fueled exodus from Los Angeles County to Orange, Ventura, and Riverside Counties. Further, it places a succinct blame on People of Color for demanding equity.

While noting that California managed to lack any state statutes recognizing collective bargaining until 1975 when a statewide law was passed, causing some discussion which positioned California's public school systems as becoming a highly unionized sector. Given concerns over employee morale, teachers and teacher contracts being recognized by the state could have been discussed as a positive move to assert teachers as a respected profession and the positives that such a system could do for Children of Color, however, narratives focused on the adjustments that administrators and board members had to make.

Appendix K: The Founding of PACE and its Aims and Supporters

In 1983, after stepping down from the CSBE, Kirst and UC Berkeley professor James W. Guthrie founded Policy Alternatives for California Education, which would be later renamed Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE), with financial support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation with a general mission to offer "nonpartisan, objective analysis of California education policy...to fill a gap between the legislature and good policy analysis" (PACE, n.d., para 2). This venture established a partnership between PACE and Stanford and UC Berkeley. PACE would later partner with the University of Southern California, UC Davis, and UCLA before David Plank took over in 2007 and opened it up to collaborators from all California research universities, but those five universities remain the foundational partners (PACE, n.d.).

Appendix L: Early Findings from Analyzing the Tougher Standards Associated with the Hughes-Hart Educational Act

Woo (1987) notes that two PACE USC contributors suggested that the tougher school standards imposed under Governor Deukmejian, like longer school days and years and robust high school graduation requirements, may have led to the increased gains among all students including those whose parents are paid poverty wages. The report found that between 1983 and 1986, all seventeen schools in the study increased their standardized test scores and had fully implemented the requirements under the Hughes-Hart Educational Act. The University of Southern California-led PACE report by Allan R. Odden and David D. Marsh suggested that reform policies like the Hughes-Hart Educational Act can work (Woo, 1987).

Appendix M: California's Revenue Limit Process is Controlled by the Governor and Legislature

The California Legislative Analyst's Office (2021, October 25) reminds us that California has a choice to exceed the minimum level, fund the minimum, or provide less than the guaranteed minimum with a two-thirds vote from the California legislature. The *minimum guarantee* is calculated by a formula that gets funded by apportionments from the general fund from the state and revenue from local property taxes (California Legislative Analyst's Office, 2021, October 25). Proposition 98 can be suspended, where there is a decision to provide less than the minimum guarantee, by the legislature and Governor; if legislators decide to suspend Proposition 98 there is immense discretion to what funding levels are provided (EdSource, 2009, March). The legislature and Governor have suspended Proposition 98 once, in the 2004-2005 school year (EdSource, 2009, March).

Appendix N: The Downside of Proposition 111's (1990) Formulas

As the California Constitution requires that excess state revenues up to a specified limit must go to public K-12 schools and community colleges, with the excess above that being returned to taxpayers, Proposition 111 changed how the minimum funding guarantee is determined and how the appropriations limit functions (Fong Eu, 1990). Proposition 111 adds a new cost of living factor, which for the state and schools is the change in California per capita personal income (Fong Eu, 1990). Whereas Proposition 98 established two formulas for funding guarantee and required that the larger amount always be chosen, Proposition 111 allowed the state to reduce the minimum guarantee when the state experiences low-revenue years with the caveat that the funding is returned in the future (Fong Eu, 1990). Here, the state of California legislature and governor actively sought an antagonistic relationship with its constituents while its decisions seemingly disregarded *Serrano* and weakened the intention of Prop 98. With this, Kapphahn notes that there is zero evidence of higher school funding between 1988-1989 and 2014-2015 school years due to the formulas created. Further, California admits that "the state has no clear evidence that school funding is higher today or school funding decisions are less political today than they would have been absent the formulas (Kapphahn, 2017, January 18, p. 6). Further, The California Legislative Analyst's Office is weary of funding formulas, cautioning the state to be *extremely cautious* about continuing to implement new budget formulas (Kapphahn, 2017, January 18). While at the same time efforts to adjust how education in

California has been funded continued there were continued complaints that education was unequal in the state.

Appendix O: The Roots and Political Rhetoric Surrounding Proposition 209 (1996)

The roots of Proposition 209 began in 1992 with the "California Civil Rights Initiative" which was authored by two academic white men, Glynn Custred, an anthropologist at California State University East Bay, and Thomas E. Wood, who received a PhD in Philosophy from UC Berkley and would later serve as executive director of the California Association of Scholars. The name of the initiative suggests that the authors are focused on civil rights for Californian Persons of Color. This type of deceptive naming is a blatant attempt to muddy the perception and the true aims of the initiative. Further alongside the deceptive aims, this initiative mimicked the language of the *Civil Rights Act* of 1964 to advocate that California should not discriminate based on race, gender, etc. while adding the phrase *preferential treatment*, thus suggesting that preferential treatment is akin to discrimination. This two word addition alters the meaning and sought to end instances to rectify remedies to directly combat racism and sexism and end preferential treatment which sought to provide government support that many White men received throughout the nation's history, including through various post-World War II efforts. By using the co-opted discourse, Custred and Wood suggest that being race-blind and gender-blind is the fair solution for all people which does not unjustly punish.

Larry Arnn, a White man who was president of the Claremont Institute and would later serve as the President of Hillsdale College, and Ward Connerly, a man, with Black and Indigenous roots, who identifies as multiracial and would serve as UC Regent, served as Proposition 209 chairpersons, branding themselves under the moniker of the "California Civil

Rights Initiative." Arnn and Connerly were influential in advocating for the passage of Proposition 209. This Proposition would also be supported by people like California Governor Pete Wilson, California Attorney General Dan Lungren, presidential candidate Bob Dole, and Newt Gingrich who argued that it would restore the intention of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (California Secretary of State, 1996). This proposition received input from candidates running for the presidency and the two main political parties. For instance, the 1996 democratic party platform noted:

> President Clinton is leading the way to reform affirmative action so that it works, it is improved, and promotes opportunity, but does not accidentally hold others back in the process. Senator Dole has promised to end affirmative action. He's wrong, and the President is right. When it comes to affirmative action, we should mend it, not end it. (Democratic Party, 1996)

Appendix P: Further Analysis from the CA LAO's Regarding Proposition 209 (1996)

The office concluded that "this measure would eliminate state and local government affirmative action programs in the areas of public employment, public education, and public contracting to the extent these programs involve "preferential treatment" based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin" (CA LAO, 1996). Further, the CA LAO noted that California State University campuses would have to cease using race as a factor in admissions while noting that the University of California Regents which changed admissions policies in 1995, set to go in effect for 1997-1998 academic year, to cease all considerations of race in admissions, would have to implement this sooner.

Appendix Q: A Contracting Firm Seeks to Invalidate Requirements to Work with Women and People of Color Through Proposition 209 (1996)

Another legal challenge to Proposition 209 began in 1997. A general contracting firm, Hi-Voltage Wire Works, Inc., submitted a bid in 1997 to San Jose for a project but was rejected as it intended to only use its workforce and not even attempt to outreach or gain the participation of others (*Hi-Voltage Wire Works, Inc. v. City of San Jose*, 2000). This led to a lawsuit against the city, *Hi-Voltage Wire Works, Inc. v. City of San Jose* (2000). The case made it to the California Supreme Court which, in a unanimous decision, affirmed constitutionality of Proposition 209, and required that San Jose remove requirements for contractors make efforts to work with People of Color-owned businesses and women-owned businesses ignoring the historical discrimination in construction and subcontracting projects that San Jose intentionally wished to address through their public works project plan.

Appendix R: Jerry Brown Wages Political Battles with a Racial Element, but is Given the Benefit of Doubt

Mac Donald (1999), of Manhattan Institute for Policy Research's City Journal, suggests that while Brown had "far-left pronouncements" during parts of the campaign, Brown ultimately shifted to a campaign strategy which surrounded law and order and private development projects while displaying a willingness to beat down any opposition to those goals.

As Oakland Mayor, Brown waged many battles in pursuit of shaping Oakland in a new light and bringing "accountability" to Oakland's government and city systems, unfortunately most of those early battles had a racial element which were initially met with uproar from constituents (Walsh ,1999). Less than one hundred days into that first term, Brown was met with backlash from the Black community as eleven Black city officials were ousted including the city's first Black police chief Joseph Samuels Jr. (Adams, 1999). Brown's administration also targeted the Oakland's school superintendent Carole Quan who was of Chinese descent and considered to be an ally of the district's administration who were primarily Black people (Walsh, 1999). The dismissals came without discussion or consultation of other city leaders, particularly Oakland's Black city leaders. The dismissals came as Black leaders were gaining power in Oakland and were left with a fiscally weakened Oakland. However, Brown's actions ignored the reality that the leaders were in and simply moved to unilaterally, though with the help of Oakland new city manager Robert Bobb a conservative Black man, break up the power that Black people were just beginning to build in Oakland with the intent of improving conditions for its Black residents.

Also occurring in Oakland was *Allen v. City of Oakland*, also known as The Riders scandal, which was a civil rights lawsuit which involved four police officers who planted drugs and viciously beat people in addition to pressuring rookie police officer Keith Batt, who would eventually turn whistleblower, to lie on reports to back them up. This case resulted in a still on-going two-decade federal oversight into the Oakland police department for their practices of corruption against Black people (Lee, H. K., 2004, December 14). This scandal was revealed about a year into Brown's tenure. And while Oakland had a Risk Management Incentive Program (RMIP), a program which held the police department financially liable for exceeding their budget particularly due to lawsuits for bad behavior, in place since 1997, after the case's conclusion, Brown pushed for the Oakland City Council to pass a proposal which ended RMIP (Akintunde, 2022). Further, local community groups, including the ACLU, urged Mayor Brown to fill five empty seats on Oakland's nine-seat Citizen's Police Review Board which was unable to meet due to not being able to meet quorum (ACLU, 2002).

Upon becoming Oakland Mayor, Brown pursued four goals, though generally positioned as positive three of the goals had overt racist undertones. Ignoring community backlash, Brown pursued four goals as mayor: bring in unsubsidized market-rate housing to downtown Oakland; reduce crime by twenty percent per year; strengthen the arts; and start charter schools (Mac Donald, 1999). Brown went from blasting welfare reform, conspiracies to imprison people, and waging a battle against corporate greed to troupes about welfare recipients *working the system*, wooing large corporations to Oakland, and touting a plan to imprison as many *criminals* as possible (Mac Donald, 1999). Brown noted that Oakland has a poverty and crime problem and that they had to deal with both issues but suggested that making streets safer needed to be accomplished while waiting for *great social change* (Slater, 1999). Residents also expressed

concerns over the mayor's downtown project, fearing that it would price out Black, Latinx, and Asian people to bring in affluent persons not connected to the city (Adams, 1999).

The move to bring in "unsubsidized market-rate" housing into downtown Oakland, an area with a higher percentage of Black residents and other People of Color relies on a negative thought pattern that Black people particularly lower property values, rely on government assistance, etc. This racist narrative intentionally disvalues Communities of Color and uses a market which disvalues blackness as proof that change should occur. Reducing crime rate generally relies on notions of imprisoning more people, often People of Color, for minor infractions and over policing Communities of Color. An ideology that Oakland needed to bring in people who could pay more in housing and increasing policing aim to terrorize and physically or economically push Persons of Color out of their communities in favor of increasing housing options for White persons and thus increasing property rates and lowering crime rates.

Appendix S: Brown had a Top-Down Education Reform Approach in Oakland, But a New Education Organization Sought to Work with the Community

The Oakland School District takeover and changing the school board composition put Jerry Brown in position to have greater singular control over education. In some ways, Oakland served as a pilot study for Brown and education reform. Further, these actions showcase Brown's method of enacting change in education.

Brown's education reform in Oakland maintained a top-down approach strategy which ignored community pushes for local solutions. There was a lack of open collaboration with others in the community or the school board. This type of strategy flies in the face of Communities of Color, particularly Indigenous communities and Black communities which have long worked in collaboration with their people to secure educational opportunities for their children.

Outside of the Mayor's agenda, education remained a topic of concern in the Oakland community at large and organizations like The Education Trust appeared in the city with an intent on making their voices heard. The Education Trust is a national nonprofit organization that advocates and produces research with general aims to end disparate educational outcomes for Students of Color and students from families paid poverty wages. The Education Trust advocates in seven states: California, Michigan, Texas, Tennessee, Louisiana, New York, and Massachusetts (The Education Trust, n.d.). The arm of the Education Trust operating out of California is known as The Education Trust–West. This affiliate is headquartered in Oakland and began operating in 2001 (The Education Trust–Midwest, n.d.). While we know that funding

sources and the ability to track where money is flowing are important in evaluating potential conflicts, The Education Trust–West does not openly list its funders on its website. However, buried in a 2018 annual report, a list of their funders for that year can be found (Ed Trust-West, 2019, March). The Education Trust–West would immediately become a major player in education policy and efforts to enact reform in Oakland and the state.

Appendix T: Analysis and Additional Information from the Learning Matters Documentary

Though there is equivalent attention given to civil rights issues like *Serrano* and immigration which are blamed for causing spending limits on schools in search of equity and the role of California statewide in-class education reform efforts (e.g., class size reduction and whole language approach). The *Learning Matters* documentary includes input from scholars like Michael Kirst, John Deasy (Superintendent of school districts like Santa Monica-Malibu, LAUSD, and Stockton), Catherine Lhamon (American Civil Liberties Union), Marion Jospeh (former CSBE member) James W. Guthrie, Peter Schrag (author and California politics scholar), and John Mockler.

In *Learning Matters*, much of the discussion focused on how wealthier districts responded to the changes that happened in education after civil rights efforts to impact education equity precipitated Proposition 13. Kirst asserts that "we really wrote off adequacy, and we ended up with equalized mediocrity" (Trei, 2004, January).[102] While John Mockler framed the impact of *Serrano* as harmful to wealthier districts who could raise more money because the money generated locally would not go to their schools. Mockler also acknowledges that private foundations amount to a quasi-privatization of public schools. James Guthrie suggests that "the detrimental consequence of Proposition 13 isn't so much money as it is how it changed the government structure of California's education system; Proposition 13 centralized decision-

[102] About 13:30 into the documentary

making. It changed California from a system of local schools to a state system" (24:11-24:23). Guthrie also suggests that private school foundations funneling additional money into schools are not illegal and that they, according to Guthrie's values, are not unethical or immoral.

While efforts to harm education by stripping funding were precipitated by requests for equitable education, asking for equitable access to education was not and is not the problem or reason for decreased student test scores or per pupil funding. Further, a centralized educational system, that tempers the notion of local control and power, is not inherently the problem. Racism and white supremacy fueling the outright refusal to ensure that all children, no matter their race or who their parents are, receive an education that truly provides an equitable opportunity to achieve the so-called American Dream is the reason why California funding and education test scores have plummeted since the 1950s. These sorts of perspectives point to an approach to education which tends to favor those with money while also encouraging Indigenous and Black children to simply pull themselves up by their bootstraps. Further, these types of perspectives ignore the inherent racism and whitelash associated with simple requests for equity, particularly for Indigenous and Black people, like seen with the redistributive aspect of the settlement to *Serrano*.

Appendix U: The Williams Settlement Required the State to act to Support Basic Educational Needs of Students

The *Williams* case settlement included an additional $138 million for schools in the two lowest 2003 Academic Performance Index ranks and another $50 million to go for implementation costs and school oversight activities for schools in the three lowest Academic Performance Index ranks (Government Affairs Division, 2021, December 8). Further, another $800 million would be set aside for critical facilities repairs for schools in the three lowest ranks in future years (Government Affairs Division, 2021, December 8). The first two amounts would go in effect for the 2004-2005 school year as adapted into the state budget and signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, and the latter would be phased in over time (Government Affairs Division, 2021, December 8). The *Williams* settlement was cemented into multiple pieces of legislation (S.B. 6, S.B. 550, A.B. 1550, A.B. 2727, and A.B. 3001) in August 2004 which are meant to resolve the case (Government Affairs Division, 2021, December 8). Another outcome from the *Williams* case were changes to the School Accountability Report Card which the CDE recommended to and approved by the CSBE on November 4, 2004. These changes included requirements that LEAs report on school conditions, teacher misassignments, vacant teacher positions, and textbook or instructional material availability. These elements were included in the template beginning with the 2003-2004 SARC which was released in December 2004.

Appendix V: LBUSD Accused of Failing Students through a UCP

For example, a UCP was filed that LBUSD was not faithfully engaging stakeholders in the LCAP creation. Public Advocates sent numerous letters of concern to LBUSD, as they had with six other districts previously, during the creation of the 2016-2017 LCAP and the proposal to spend supplemental and concentration funds on through the district-wide approach. The claim alleged insufficient evidence to demonstrate how the actions are principally directed towards or increased/improved services for high-needs students (Public Advocates, 2017, p. 1).

Appendix W: Brown Founds two Charter Schools

Brown was able to obtain charters for these two schools (The Oakland Military Institute and the Oakland School for the Arts), usurping the rejection by the Oakland school board, by gaining the support of the CSBE, particularly board members, and charter advocates, Don Fisher, former GAP founder, and Reed Hastings, Netflix founder (Freedberg, 2019, January 6). Through this process with the help of Governor Gray Davis the Oakland Military Institute, located on the Oakland Army Base, became the first state-sponsored charter, first public military school, and first school to be sponsored by the National Guard in 2001 (Oakland Military Institute, n.d.).

During this time as attorney general, Brown continued fundraising efforts for the two charter schools. Between 2007-2010, Brown solicited over four hundred donations for the two non-union schools amounting to $11.8 million, with about $7.7 million of those funds going to the Oakland School for Arts (Gammon, 2010, April 28). Gammon notes that the contributions came from expected entities: giant corporations, foundations lush in funds, and wealthy donors, many of whom are regular Brown campaign contributors.

Appendix X: Categorical Funding Programs are Positioned as Restricting Local Schools and a Push for Local Control

Over time, over forty categorical programs were instituted to address the needs of students who were not receiving a basic education as guaranteed under the state constitution. Bersin, Kirst, & Liu note that categorical programs were instituted beginning in the 1960s by state legislators responding to political pressures. LEAs who received categorical program funds were required to spend those funds in specific ways. Further, categorical programs were used to prevent LEAs from using the funds for increasing teacher salaries (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2008, April, p. 2). The authors contend that categorical funding restricts LEA's ability to address local concerns; because they typically do not undergo efficacy reviews, many fail to target the intended students or engage in equitable distribution based on needs (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2008, April, p. 3).

The California school finance reform brief establishes an argument that local schools and systems should be trusted to meet the needs of those learners who most deserve an investment of opportunity (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2008, April, p. 1). The authors note that school funding reform with changes in governance and accountability are key tenets to attain the goal of improved student achievement outcomes (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2008, April, p. 1). These arguments are potentially impactful, particularly for Indigenous and Black children who deserve investment. When considering the aftermath of *Brown II*, there should be concerns with entrusting local systems to do what is right for children in need, especially Black and Indigenous children.

Appendix Y: The Inclusion of Plural Lingual Learners has a Racialized Impact Without Mentioning Race

In California, given the state's large population of Latin* students and, to a lesser degree, students of Asian descent who are categorized as plural lingual children, any attention given to plural lingual children does not pertain to most Indigenous and Black children as they do not tend to be labelled as English language learners. There is an attention to services that might be helpful for plural lingual children when the authors cite the California Legislative Analyst's Office's call for an explicit funding weight for plural lingual learners. In particular, the authors acknowledged that most plural lingual children are also students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages, and these two qualities require a different instructional approach, but this did not come with a suggestion that this approach also include a separate weighted funding structure like the California Legislative Analyst's Office. Despite not naming race, an argument can be made that the authors explicitly champion LEA attention for some Latin* and Asian students given the disproportionate inclusion of these children as plural lingual children. This is a positive if plural lingual learners are being prepared to fully communicate in multiple languages.

Appendix Z: The Issue Brief Fails to Seriously Consider Racial Impacts and Maintains Deficit Ideologies

The authors argue that "many students face disadvantages that call for additional educational resources if they are to meet the same academic standards as their more advantaged peers" (p. 7). Bersin, Kirst, and Liu (2008) note a need for targeted funding in addition to special education funding. While the authors do not call for additional funding for special education or students with disabilities, there are already federal requirements and programs in place that provide some support here. However, the special education arena is an area, in the state and in Los Angeles County, where Black and Indigenous students tend to be overrepresented. As students in special education and students with disabilities can especially be susceptible to a lack of educational opportunities, this could have been an area for the authors to make an argument for additional targeted funding.

Discourse which asserts the disadvantages of students relies on a deficit ideology which suggests that there is something inherently wrong with the students. Here, the focus is on fixing the student rather than the system which is creating and sustaining the harm and observed differences in academic achievement.

Unfortunately, the brief's reliance on this deficit ideology is distinct and further noticeable with a suggestion that when students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages go to school with other students whose caregivers are paid similar wages, they "face a double disadvantage arising not only from their own poverty but also from the poverty of their peers" (Bersin, Kirst, and Liu, 2008, p. 2007). The brief states there is *some* evidence that suggests

when there is concentrated poverty over 50% there is a negative impact on achievement (p. 8). This type of research seemingly positions such findings as noteworthy or surprising. However, they are not as concentrations of poverty are socially constructed and maintained. These concentrations are the result of the actions taken by policymakers, whitelash, school reformers, etc. which have led to these concentrated environments. The context of results is vital to include. Any stances which fail to do so are irresponsible and perpetuate blame on the children as being solely or primarily at fault for their achievement results. This does not include the notion that standardized results are manufactured scores which choose to which questions to include or exclude in results and have a history of crafting question which favor White middle class lifestyle or values which should also be included.

This belief system, and research, ignore the socially created and enduring systemic systems which sustain environments where these students are provided with limited opportunities to succeed or thrive. The authors continue by suggesting that research says that students in this type of environmental circumstance maintain fewer chances to develop their vocabulary and cultural capital, ignoring the rich linguistic abilities and the immense cultural capital they do possess. In this, the authors appear to be doubling down on a notion of whiteness in education and suggesting that these students fail to have enough. The authors continue down this path, suggesting that when there is a high concentration of students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages, that they "tend to have lower aspirations, more negative attitudes toward achievement, and higher levels of disruption and mobility" (Bersin, Kirst, and Liu, 2008, pp. 7-8) and that their parents tend to be less likely to hold teachers accountable by being involved in school or provide financial or other support. Again, this type of research and thinking centers students, parents, and even teachers in a negative way suggesting elements of deficit traits or

capabilities. this type of research ignores a large corpus of research which asserts that Parents of Color and caretakers who are paid poverty wages have high aspirations for their children. Further, the contributory factors of racism, classism, and corrupt policies to poverty are wholly ignored.

Appendix AA: The AIEOC Came with Promise and Federal Government Alignment

This unit is tasked with providing the administrative oversight and technical support to ensure that Indigenous students in California can meet the most challenging academic standards which including policy development to address the learning needs of Indigenous children. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction is responsible for appointing a unit manager to oversee the AIEOC.

The AIEOC must ensure that any programs related to Indigenous education align with the cultural and education standards of Executive Order No. 13336, 69 Federal Register 25295 (May 5, 2004). The 43rd President of the United States, George W. Bush signed this executive order on April 30, 2022, and serves to "recognize the unique educational and culturally related academic needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students consistent with the unique political and legal relationship of the Federal Government with tribal governments" (Executive Order No. 13336, 2004). This executive order reaffirms an intention to work with federally recognized tribes to assist "American Indian and Alaskan Native" children meet No Child Left Behind Act academic standards and establishing an interagency working group to implement the order. The US Secretary of Education and the working group were also tasked with conducting a multi-year study of Indigenous education to improve conditions for Indigenous students.

Appendix BB: Additional Information on the Coral Construction Case

In 2010, two white-owned contractors challenged a San Francisco city ordinance which required race and gender be considered when deciding public contracts (Mintz, 2010). This ordinance sought to ensure Persons of Color-owned businesses and women-owned businesses were considered as the city frequently found that these businesses were underutilized when giving contracts. The contractors were back by the Pacific Legal Foundation (Mintz, 2010). The case would become *Coral Construction, Inc. v. City and County of San Francisco* (2010). And through the proceedings, the justices asked questions which suggested they were skeptical of any actual harm caused to the contractors or any bias against White persons, or White men broadly, because of the San Francisco ordinance (Egelko, 2010). Despite this, the justices felt compelled to uphold judicial precedent.

Appendix CC: The Initial Version of Brownley's Assembly Bill 18

This initial version of Assemble Bill 18 suggested three block grants (basic funding, teacher training, and plural lingual learners and children whose caregivers are paid poverty wages) for LEAs (Fensterwald, 2012, September 18). Brownley's bill included an overhaul of categorical funding programs with its replacement being the three block grants. A.B. 18 is unique in that it specifically provides funding for teacher training which is vital to continue to provide teachers with actual ongoing learning opportunities to strengthen their craft. However, the bill languished after being passed in the assembly and it seems that some behind the scenes political movements led to Brownley agreeing to rework the comprehensive funding reform effort.

Appendix DD: Reactions to Governor Brown's Weighted Student Formula

Fensterwald (2012, July 26) characterized California legislators as resentful towards the governor's attempt to usurp the legislative process while also raising concerns regarding the redistributive impact of the proposed bill. As the 2007-2008 school year represented a high point in funding, legislators noted that under the proposed formula some districts would not return to those levels. Some districts, particularly those in the Central Valley, would benefit from the proposed reform but were silent regarding the proposal which *baffled* persons like Michael Kirst. Therefore, it was clear from this initial proposal that a weighted student formula option would benefit some areas and school districts more than others. While race is not mentioned in the proposal, school districts in the Central Valley tend to be primarily populated with White students who tend to have parents paid middle-class or lower wages, thus signaling a potential racialized impact benefitting White students in the state. Further, the governor's proposal depended on a return to pre-Great Recession funding totals and California was barely beginning to recover from the recession.

Appendix EE: Indigenous and Black People's Enrollment Plummets at UC and CSU Campuses After Proposition 209

In the ten plus years since California voters passed Proposition 209, the University of California (UC) university system failed to enroll Students of Color at rates compensate to their racial totals in the state (Kaufmann, 2007). And these figures were most stark for Indigenous and Black students. Indigenous and Black student enrollment populations peaked at California State University schools in the mid-1990s, but after Proposition 209, in 2004 Indigenous and Black student enrollment had decreased at these campuses by 25% and 11% respectively. According to the University of California, the Indigenous student population at UC schools dropped by 38% and did not increase once through 2006 (Kaufmann, 2007). While overall Black student enrollment numbers across UC schools decreased, numbers were more extreme at UC Berkley and UC Los Angeles where enrollment decreased to 1970s figures (Kaufmann, 2007). Such data highlights that while Proposition 209 harms all People of Color and women, there is a disproportionately impact on Indigenous and Black people. While this data focuses on universities, there is a clear connection to K-12 environments as some component of university admissions is due to the opportunities which children have in secondary schools.

Appendix FF: Further Details on the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action Cases and Legal Arguments

The Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action and others, including high school and college students, filed a putative class action against the California Governor, who at original filing was Arnold Schwarzenegger but quickly would be switched to Jerry Brown, and the president of the University of California school system, who at the time was Mark Yudof. Schwarzenegger and Yudof alleged immunity from being sued, but this motion was denied as they were connected to the enforcement of Proposition 209 given their respective roles.

In the appeal, the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action noted that universities are permitted to depart from baseline admissions criteria for a host of purposes including veteran status, legacy status, and athletic background, but not for race under any circumstance. They argued that this system intentionally decreases admissions for Black, Indigenous, and Latin* students while also depriving these same individuals from petitioning UC regents to alter admissions criteria.

In Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action v. Brown (2012), the United States Circuit of Appeals, affirmed Coalition for Economic Equity v. Pete Wilson, held that Proposition 209 does not deny equal protection under the US Constitution. The court claimed that complaint lacked a statement of claim and that the arguments presented were already rejected in Coalition for Economic Equity v. Pete Wilson. The court further stated that they were simply bound by the ruling. The Court also reaffirmed that Yudof, as UC president, was not immune from lawsuit as Yudof had also appealed.

Though US Supreme Court case *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 306, 325, 123 (2003) found that narrowly tailored race-based admission policies that gives preferential treatment for certain Communities of Color did not violate the 14th Amendment. And that such programs could exist if other factors are also considered. However, in, *Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action v. Brown* judges noted that the ruling encouraged *race-neutral* alternatives while also suggesting that the *Grutter v. Bollinger* ruling was simply not applicable to the case and that it was impossible for *Grutter v. Bollinger* to overrule *Coalition for Economic Equity v. Pete Wilson*. Circuit Court Judge A. Wallace Tashima issued a ruling concurring in part and dissenting in part, noting the belief that *Coalition for Economic Equity v. Pete Wilson* was incorrectly decided but being bound by the decision.

Appendix GG: Wanting to Move from Categorical Funding, People Rally to Support Brown's A.B. 97

Some district officials lamented going back to the categorical funding system and wished for funding to remain without any requirements while also noting a need for a more stable funding structure. Shambaugh et al. (2011, May) notes that their district official respondents were clear in identifying for schools to move forward, there is a need to stabilize and increase education funding which would allow for better planning and allow California to be on par with other state education funding spending. In general, these officials championed funding flexibility that came with the Great Recession and wished for these to become permanent. A county superintendent expressed that, in reference to school funding in California, "as long as we are tied to personal income tax and sales tax and capital gains, there are going to be peaks and valleys" (Shambaugh et al. (2011, May). Further, respondents expressed that Proposition 98 (1988) essentially serves as a ceiling to education funding rather than a floor as it was seemingly intended (Shambaugh et al., 2011, May). Such data should point to a natural solution where there is more stable and increased education funding. However, there was a focus on A.B. 97 which promised no overhaul of where school funding comes from nor an intention to increase school funding beyond the minimum levels established under Proposition 98 formulas.

Numerous actors organized and spoke out in favor of the Brown backed A.B. 97. One such group was The Education Trust–West, which was prominent in forming Fair Share 4 Kids, a political advocacy campaign across California; Education Trust–West positioned its PAC as crucial in garnering support for the passage of the AB-97 (Ed Trust-West, n.d.). Other supporters

like David Plank, former Executive Director of Policy Analysis for California Education and a Stanford University professor, characterized the proposed legislation as a policy that would address the concern that students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages and English language learners "bring in problems they face in their communities to the classrooms" which make it difficult for teachers to aid them (Najarro, 2013). These social actors led a political blitz which benefited the Brown backed bill. Unfortunately, they tended to use messaging which, while offering support for the promise of the weighted formula, positioned children like students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages are burdens to the education system which LEAs needed help to solve their educational needs.

In a letter to California Senate President pro tempore Darrell Steinberg and Assembly Speaker Jon Pérez, a coalition of organizations, elected officials, school districts (e.g., the Education Trust–West, American Civil Liberties Union, John Affeldt and Public Advocates, Catherine Lhamon and Public Counsel Law Center, California School Boards Association, Silver Giving Foundation, Policy Analysis for California Education, Antonio Villaraigosa, Oakland Unified School District, Los Angeles Unified School District, and Long Beach Unified School District.) urged the state legislature to seize the opportunity and move to a weighted student formula with a claim that the system would fundamentally restructure the finance system for the better (Lobaco et al., 2012, August 28). The two districts of interest in this study, LAUSD and LBUSD, along with the district which Brown spent years attempting to unilaterally control, Oakland Unified School District, signed on to this bill, openly advocating for the weighted student formula as a solution. The coalition of signees expressed that implementing a system consisting of a weighted formula would finally achieve equity, transparency, and accountability for California students. This collective also suggested that a weighted formula "would streamline

California's complex school finance system, encourage local innovation, address historic inequities and finally make progress toward a new system that allocates resources based on student characteristics and need" (Lobaco et al., 2012, August 28). So, while Brown was the primary public architect advocating for the weighted student formula bill, a wide swarth of individuals and organizations would openly advocate for the bill to install this system. While likely the result of a behind the scenes political campaign, the widespread public support given for A.B. 97 provided Brown considerable cover, rewriting the narrative that Brown was strong-arming the legislature into passing this bill. However, those signing onto the bill were focused on the potential to solve historical inequities through a weighted student formula, something that was not a central point for Brown and others. This lack of messaging alignment should have been a cause for concern for those who truly wished to achieve equity by addressing systemic inequities.

Appendix HH: Additional Information for Propositions 30 and 38

Proposition 30 was backed by those like Governor Jerry Brown, California Teachers Association, California Police Chiefs Association, and California State Sheriffs' Association and opposed by groups like the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association. Whereas Proposition 38 was backed by Molly Munger (civil-rights attorney and daughter of Berkshire Hathaway executive Charles Munger), the California State Parent Teacher Association, and Education Trust–West and opposed by those like Governor Jerry Brown, California Democratic Party, California Republican Party, and California State Sheriffs' Association.

Proposition 38 was designed to send money directly to individual schools, bypassing the state legislature and CSBE, and would be paid for by raising income taxes on nearly all Californians. Proposition 38 was set to fund education and early childhood programs. Proposition 30 proposed a 1-3% increase in marginal income tax rate for individuals making over $250,000 for six years and an 0.25% increase in sales tax for four years. Proposition 30 promised to distribute revenue via the tax increases to K-12 schools and community colleges. Further, Proposition 30 was touted as an offset to planned $6 billion in spending reductions planned for the 2012-2013 school year.

Appendix II: Additional Information of Changes and Implications Under the LCFF

The LCFF attempts to provide a strong legislative action to gain education funding equity and resource accountability (Menefee-Libey & Kerchner, 2015). With requirements that LEAs set measurable goals intended to positively impact low-achieving students through budget allocations to schools for things like staffing and programming (Fuller & Tobben, 2014). Therefore, what results from the passage of the LCFF is not primarily a school finance reformation but rather a reorganization and decentralization of California's public education delivery system, equipped with an accountability framework (Affeldt, 2015). This law altered California's school district funding allocation and what the state does to provide support or interventions for LEAs considered to be underperforming (Taylor, 2013). Under the amended California Education Code, LEAs have a great deal of discretion in spending weighted funds but must adhere to some regulations; however, these regulations cannot be more restrictive than federal Title I funds and that allow these weighted amounts, allocated as supplemental or concentration funds, to be spent on a districtwide or schoolwide basis (Affeldt, 2015, p. 4). LCFF's hold harmless component guarantees that no schools would receive less than their 2012-2013 funding levels because of the implementation of LCFF (Vasquez Heilig, Ward, Weisman, & Cole, 2014, p. 882). While the LCFF provides some freedoms, there are still performance expectations for LEAs to adhere to. These expectations are primarily issues of concern for low-income and more concentrated populations of Children of Color, thus continuing an equity issue where these children's access to equitable education funding continues to be tied to academic

performance metrics. Further, as previously noted, the hold harmless provision tends to benefit LEAs which are more wealthy and less concentrated populations of Students of Color.

Appendix JJ: Notable Action in California After the Passage of the LCFF

This appendix covers notable actions in California after the passage of the LCFF which impacted education in the state.

JJ.1 Proposition 2 (2014)

In 2014, Californians passed Proposition 2 which requires California to save money for schools when the state general fund grows and subtract from the savings to protect school funding (Kapphahn, 2017, January 18). Such a measure is important given previous cuts and threats to cut school funding. LEA supplemental and concentration funding dollars would be particularly susceptible to changes in the state's finances without Proposition 2 of 2014. Further, this measure helps protect funding dollars for LEAs which primarily serve Black children, Indigenous children, and other Students of Color.

JJ.2 A Consolidated Case Ruling Declares there is not a Right to Funding Levels or Educational Quality in California

Though initially filed in 2010, during the Great Recession and prior to the passage of the LCFF, two lawsuits would be consolidated under one appeal and adjudicated in the California Court of Appeals in 2016.

One lawsuit, *Robles-Wong v. California* (2016), was filed in Alameda County against the state and asks that there be an alignment between California's school finance system and educational programs and assert that for this to happen, the state must develop a new finance system and accurately determine the appropriate cost to fund a public education which is capable

of meetings California's program requirements and meeting the needs of California children. This complaint was filed on behalf of dozens of specific students, nine school districts across the state, California School Boards Association. This initial complaint was also supported by the California State PTA and California Teachers' Association. This case was filed against the state itself and the governor. This case was heard on December 10, 2010, and dismissed on November 3, 2011. A notice of appeal was filed on January 25, 2012, and all briefs were submitted in January of 2013.

The other lawsuit, *Campaign for Quality Education* [CQE] *v. California* (2016), was also originally filed in Alameda County on behalf of five grassroots organizations including CQE with the legal representation of Public Advocates and other law firms. The named defendants are the state of California itself, the governor, the state controller, and the director of the department of finance. Specifically, this suit alleged that California has failed under the state's constitution and equal protection clauses to fund schools adequately and equitably to ensure all students have a sensible opportunity to obtain a meaningful education. CQE asked that the court declare the funding system unconstitutional and order the state to establish a new system aligned to the actual cost of schooling. CQE also asked that the needs of students whose caregivers are paid poverty wages and plural lingual children be considered. On January 14, 2011, the case was dismissed in the trial court with the declaration that the funding system could not be challenged under California Constitution Article IX. This ruling suggests that no statement of facts regarding funding matters and that a school funding system can never be challenged. On July 26, 2011, the CQE's amended equal protection argument claims were rejected. The was appealed to the California Court of Appeals.

Robles-Wong v. California and *Campaign for Quality Education v. California* both alleged that California's school funding system was unconstitutional for three reasons. First, that all children were not provided with an equal opportunity to obtain an education that would lead to economic success and capably participate in democratic institutions. Second, that the needs of students who are considered to be less advantaged are not considered. And third, that there is a failure to fund the actual cost of providing the state mandated education program. The Court of Appeal, First Appellate District consolidated the cases under *CQE v California* in 2013, but it was not until January 27, 2016, that the cases were finally heard. On a 2-1 decision, the three-person panel affirmed the lower court decision. The majority opinion was written by Justice Martin Jenkins, who in 2020 was appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom to the California Supreme Court becoming the first openly gay justice to be confirmed after serving as Newsom's appointments secretary, which dismissed the lawsuits and declared that there is "no constitutional guarantee of any level of educational quality or any minimum level of funding to support education" (Alegria & Affeldt, 2016). As California courts had frequently affirmed that education is a fundamental right in the state, Jenkins' decision is quite baffling. There has been judicial precedent which has honored the right to an education with the recognition that funding inequity is a central component to ensuring all children receive an education. The dissenting judge, Justice Stuart Pollak stated that "the Constitution requires a system that provides students with a meaningful basic education in reality as well as on paper" (Alegria & Affeldt, 2016). Garda Jr (2007) outlines that through the 1980s, U.S. state courts frequently found a state interest in promoting local control was sufficient to justify disparities in funding, but that there were successful lawsuits in seven states by 1988 which began establishing strict financial equality

between LEAs. The ruling disregards notions that financial equality between LEAs can be adjudicated.

The plaintiffs appealed the lawsuit to the California Supreme Court where in a 4-3 decision handed down on August 22, 2016, the court denied the petition for review, leaving in place the court of appeal ruling. Goodwin Liu, now a California Supreme Court Justice, and Justice Mariano-Florentino Cuellar wrote lengthy disserts to the majority's decision to not hear the complaint. Justice Liu wrote:

> It is regrettable that this court, having recognized education as a fundamental right in a landmark decision 45 years ago (*Serrano v. Priest*), should now decline to address the substantive meaning of that right. The schoolchildren of California deserve to know whether their fundamental right to education is a paper promise or a real guarantee. *CQE v California*, 2016

Justice Cuellar's dissent noted the importance that the California Supreme Court speak out on the issue given that California educates 12.5% of all public school students in the U.S. Justice Cuellar noted the realities of California's education system make it even more critical that the Supreme Court provide clarity. Justice Liu suggested that given the Supreme Court's failure to act, there is a certainty that the same issue will come through the court system again. The dissenting justices' remarks provide a stark reminder that, even under the LCFF, students are still not receiving adequate education and that funding is a central issue as there is simply not enough. *CQE v California* established a dangerous legal precedent, which did not exist in California, to suggest that the state constitution does not guarantee educational quality or a funding amount. While Proposition 98 and LCFF currently offers notions of minimum funding guarantee and *Williams v. California* suggested minimum guarantees for educational quality, the

CQE decision could allow for these to be unwound, allowing for a future that looks reminiscent of the past where schools with Black children and Indigenous children are poorly funded at best.

JJ.3 California Department of Education 2017 Communications News Release Expresses Concerns for Black and Indigenous Students

Indeed, funding remains a concern as does concerns about student performance particularly when grouped by race and Black and Indigenous students are consistently highlighted as subgroups of concern in the state of California. For example, a 2017 California Department of Education Communications news release, reports poor attendance is viewed as an indicator of an increased likelihood of dropout for some student subgroups, including children living with caretakers being paid poverty wages, students placed in the foster care system, Black students, and Indigenous students (Butler, 2017, March 3). Such discourse highlights an example of how a poor negative academic outcome is connected to a student by their race group with social class intersections. These types of negative connections, where socially created conditions and systemic inequity are ignored, are common for subgroups like Black and Indigenous students. And in this example, when student's dropout, chances are they will be paid poverty wages as adults thus continuing a cycle of poverty and lower access to education opportunities if they become caretakers of children.

JJ.4 Proposition 55 (2016) adds more years to the Increased Tax Rate that came with Proposition 30 (2012)

In 2016, Proposition 55 was introduced as a companion piece to Proposition 30 of 2012 as it extended the increased income tax rate for individuals making over $250,000 for another twelve years, expiring in 2030. Proposition 55 did not extend the sales tax. While Proposition 30 promised to divert all funds to K-12 schools and community colleges, Proposition 55 did not.

This measure only promised about half of the funds to K-12 schools and community colleges, while also diverting funds to Medi-Cal and other health programs, savings, and debt repayment. While Jerry Brown was a vocal proponent of Proposition 30, Brown was noticeably neutral on Proposition 55. However, the LAUSD, future Governor Gavin Newsom, future State Superintendent Tony Thurmond, and California State PTA all publicly supported the measure. The California Hospitals Committee on Issues and California Teachers Association each donated over $20 million in support of Proposition 55s eventual passage.Proposition 55 (2016) adds some greater financial stability to the California school finance system and protections to the general fund for a longer period. Though, the medical industry and other causes were added to the measure, decreasing the net positive impact for California's children.

JJ.5 A Yurok Tribal Citizen Brings Indigenous Knowledge and Advocacy to the CSBE

In July 2020, Governor Newsom appointed Jim McQuillen, a Yurok tribal citizen and Yurok education director since 2004, to the California State Board of Education and upon confirmation, McQuillen became the first Yurok tribe citizen to serve on the CSBE. McQuillen noted an intention to continue serving as an advocate for Indigenous rights, stating "I will continue to advocate for our native students and for all students to receive equitable educational services" (Casarez, 2020). Part of this advocacy acknowledges the inequity in tribal recognition while also recognizes that California is home to one in five tribes recognized by the U.S. government. McQuillen notes that there are over 120 tribes, out of the 560 federally recognized tribes, in California (Sellery, 2020).

McQuillen acknowledges that educational circumstances have *changed somewhat* for Indigenous students while also noting that Indigenous students face dropout rates that exceed the average and continue to display lower markers of achievement (Sellery, 2020). McQuillen states

that “Native American students fall behind in test scores, graduation, and college rates. There are some gains but it’s still an achievement gap.” Further, McQuillen expressed that there are still serious issues regarding a lack of a true history being provided about Indigenous people in classrooms. This is still light of California’s A.B. 738, which was signed into law in October 2017, and required the creation of a “Native American studies” curriculum for high schools (Jones, 2018).

McQuillen notes that, as Indigenous students often comprise less than one percent of enrollment, they typically fail to be acknowledged in institution related statistics. This leads to a further erasure of the mere existence of Indigenous peoples and inhibits the responsibility to provide services to Indigenous students. McQuillen states that Indigenous peoples began to create regional report cards on Indigenous students’ status in each county and used them as leverage in school board meeting to spark change as their demographic was often deemed statistically insignificant and not attended to (Sellery, 2020). McQuillen’s recognition of Indigenous children’s enrollment numbers is a partial reflection of a reliance on quantitative data as a central marker of importance. Therefore, like Indigenous communities are doing, researchers and LEAs have a responsibility to ensure that Indigenous people are attended to regardless of their statistical significance.

JJ.6 California Voters Reject Proposition 15 and Proposition 16’s (2020) Attempts to Address Property Taxes and Repeal Proposition 209 (1996)

The introduction of Proposition 15 in 2020 amounted to the first challenge to principles established in Proposition 13 (1978). Proposition 15 of 2020 sought to change the California constitution and increase funding for public schools, community colleges, and local government services by changing how commercial and industrial properties are taxed by the state. Estimates

suggest that increased property taxes on commercial properties valued over three million dollars would create between 6.5 and 11.5 billion in new funding with 60% going to local governments and the remaining 40% going to local schools and community colleges (California LAO, 2020). While Governor Gavin Newsom nominally supported Proposition 15, Newsom was not a vocal campaigner (Fensterwald, 2020). California voters rejected the Proposition 15 ballot initiative, refusing to touch any portion of Proposition 13 and rectifying a central component of funding in the state. USC School of Education Dean Pedro Noguera asserts that given the proposition's failure, the state legislature and Governor Newsom would have to assume responsibility for improving school funding (Fensterwald, 2020).

California Assemblymember Shirley Weber led a legislative initiative which resulted in Proposition 16 being added to the ballot for the 2020 election cycle. Proposition 16 sought to repeal Proposition 209 (1996) by calling for the removal of language which prevented the advancement of civil rights for persons like Black people and Indigenous people. The University of California Board of Regents supported this measure (Wolf & Abraham, 2020). This measure was opposed by conservative groups representing white interests and groups, purportedly representing Asian American people (Wolf & Abraham, 2020). With a turnout of 9,470,456 against and 7,096,584 for, California voters rejected Proposition 16 (Wolf & Abraham, 2020).

Proposition 209 remains law in the state. This has substantial implications as Nodine (2022) notes that "for schools, it means that LCFF cannot target supplemental funding based on race or gender. For school districts, it means that the racial composition of neighborhoods cannot be a factor in considering school boundaries" (p. 34). In essence, it seems as if we have a system where it is acceptable to mention race and track racialized outcomes, but not to make any actionable steps to correct issues, unless mandated by the federal government. This continues to

negatively impact Black and Indigenous students and flies in the face of the promise that *Brown v. Board of Education I* and *Serrano v. Priest* seemed to offer in terms of educational equity.

JJ.7 Assembly Bill 2774 (2022) Attempts to Rewrite the Unduplicated Student Category which would Benefit Student Groups Deemed to be Low-Performing

California Assemblymember Akilah Weber, M.D., daughter of current California Secretary of State Shirley Weber who was appointed to the position by Governor Newsom, with support from Assemblymember Chris Holden introduced Assembly Bill (A.B.) 2774 on February 18, 2022. This bill sought to adjust the definition of "unduplicated" pupils to include children who are in the *lowest performing subgroup(s)* as defined by recent California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress tests. The bill requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to make annual identification of the *lowest performing subgroup(s).* Also, A.B. 2774 was a reintroduction of Shirley Weber's A.B. 575 which was input into the 2019 budget as a block grant (The Education Trust–West, 2022)

As written, AB 2774 would alter the definition of unduplicated students to include groups like Black students and Indigenous students when they are deemed to be amongst the lowest performing, which they are historically every year. Watkins (2022) notes that 25% of Black students in California do not receive additional funding under the LCFF funding formula. And further, by state standards, Black children are the lowest performing student subgroup in California and thus, this bill, and its suggested change in definition, would have a substantial impact on Black students.

This bill would be passed in the state Assembly on May 26, 2022, and passed in the state Senate on August 31, 2022. However, the bill never made it to Governor Gavin Newsom. Initial reports were that the measure violated Proposition 209 (1996) (Lackey, 2023). However, the bill

is race-evasive and does not mention race or gender nor preference for either group. Instead, Lackey (2023) asserts that Akilah Weber pulled the bill due to a promise from Newsom that the issue would be addressed in the January 2023 budget. Further, The Education Trust–West (2022) asserts that Governor Newsom feared that the bill would conflict with Proposition 209.

After the initial 2023-24 fiscal year California budget was released, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond releases a statement on the education budget. Thurmond (2023) touted a new high for per-pupil spending with a record amount coming from Proposition 98 (1988) dollars. Thurmond also noted $300 million in ongoing funds for the equity multiplier, which was rooted in recommendations from the Black Student Achievement Task Force and AB 2274 would be key in leading a meaningful equity agenda (Thurmond, 2023).

For the 2023-2024 school year there is a new amendment to the California Education Code which institutes a requirement that LEAs focus on improving the outcomes for student groups or schools which are deemed to be *low performing*.

California *Education Code* (*EC*) § 52064 was amended to include a requirement that an LEA that meets certain criteria include one or more specific goals in the LCAP focused on improving student outcomes of low-performing student groups and/or schools. The legislative intent of these requirements is two-fold: first, to ensure that LEAs are addressing the needs of consistently low-performing student groups; and second, to ensure that higher performing LEAs are addressing the needs of low-performing schools within the LEA. (Local Agency Systems Support Office, 2023, January 30)

This change was implemented to "create a clear connection between an LEA's performance and the planning process that is memorialized in the LCAP" (Local Agency Systems Support Office, 2023, January 27). With this updated requirement, some LEAs will be

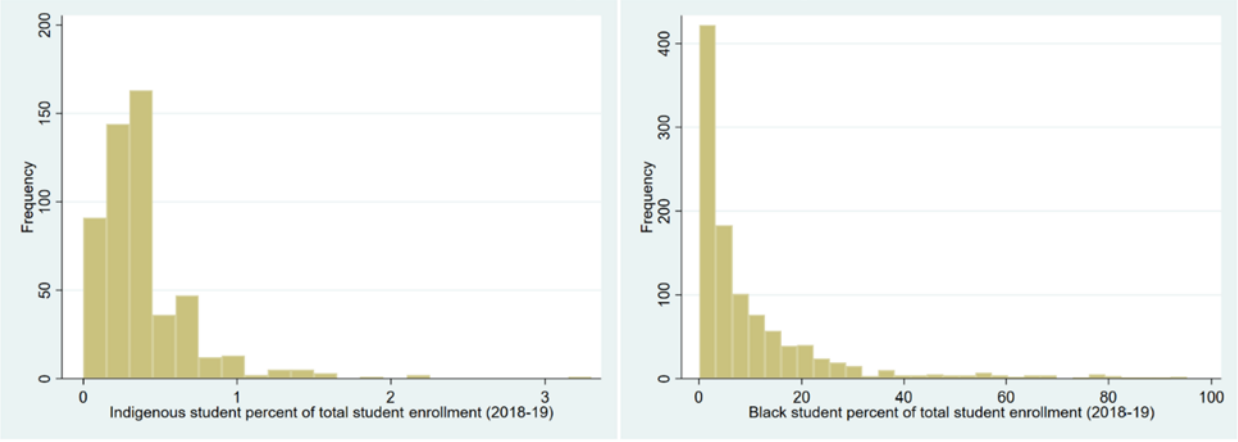
required to target specific student groups and or schools, but the data is based on 2018 and 2019 California Dashboard data. For the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years, LBUSD was not the target of any requirements under § 52064 (Local Agency Systems Support Office, 2023, January 27). However, in both years, LAUSD is required to target specific schools, but not any specific student groups (Local Agency Systems Support Office, 2023, January 27). For 2022-23 and 2023-24, LAUSD was required to target Richard A. Alonzo Community Day, Contreras Learning Center-School of Social Justice, and Crenshaw Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, and Medicine Magnet. Per 2021-22 data, each of the three schools has a total enrollment of students under 500 children. For 2022-23, LAUSD was also required to target Susan Miller Dorsey Senior High. Dorsey has a total enrollment of 748 per 2021-22 data.

For the 2023-24 school year, as of January 2023, only one LEA is required to target a student group by race (Local Agency Systems Support Office, 2023, January 27); Alta Vista Elementary School District is required to target White students. However, for the 2022-23 school year, six LEAs were required to target a student group by race with all being either Black students or Indigenous students (Local Agency Systems Support Office, 2023, January 27). Lakeport Unified School District was required to target Indigenous students. Oakland Unified School District, Mt Diablo Unified School District, Pittsburg Unified School District, Palmdale Elementary School District, and Ravenswood City Elementary School District were all required to target Black students.

Appendix KK: Histograms of Population Enrollment

Here I show histograms across both districts by Indigenous and Black students and then within both districts for both populations. These histograms illuminate to what extent the data shows population concentration at specific schools across and within these school districts. As seen in Appendix Figure KK.1, considering all schools in both LAUSD and LBUSD, the data for both Indigenous and Black students is skewed to the right, highlighting that indeed most schools with Indigenous and Black students have lower percentages of the total student population. There are very few schools with an Indigenous student population percentage over one percent with most under 0.5%. Most schools have under 5% of Black students with a several over 30%. Schools which have Indigenous students tend to have less than 0.5% and those which have Black students tend to have less than 2%.

Appendix Figure KK.1 Frequency Chart of Student Enrollment by Race Across LAUSD and LBUSD



Note. Per SARC data, the graphs represent the 2018-19 frequencies via percentage of Indigenous (left) or Black (right) students enrolled at a school, considering the total student population, across both districts. The frequencies represent the number of schools which have a particular percentage of Indigenous or Black students.

This means that there are large numbers of schools across LAUSD and LBUSD which have lower percentages of Indigenous and Black students. Specifically, approximately four hundred schools, out of the 525, have about 0.3% or less of Indigenous students. Similarly, about 600 schools, out of 1,045, have 4% or fewer Black students. Therefore, across both districts, most schools have low percentages of Black and Indigenous children in relation to expected population percentage. This highlights that a focus on schools with higher concentration will leave out most schools which serve Black and Indigenous children. As ensuring that all Black and Indigenous children's needs are attended to, it is important to know most schools may only serve few Indigenous or Black children.

This suggests that there are schools where Black and/or Indigenous students are overrepresented when compared against the mean across the districts, but that most schools will fall toward the lower end of the spectrum. In other words, there will be many schools where Indigenous and Black students comprise a lower percentage and some schools where Black and Indigenous students will be more plentiful comparatively speaking.

There is an expectation that districts will *increase or improve* services for children identified as unduplicated students (children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, children placed in the foster care system, and plural lingual children) in their schools under the LCFF. As most Black and Indigenous students fall into the unduplicated student category because their caretakers are paid poverty wages and/or they have been placed in the foster care system, there is

an importance to keep track of all of the schools which serve Indigenous and Black children.[103] Across both LBUSD and LAUSD for 2018-2019, the mean of children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages is 81.21% (standard deviation = 20.84%, n schools = 1,093). Whereas the mean of children in the foster care system is 1.06% (standard deviation = 3.27%, n schools = 898). And the mean students designated as plural lingual learners across the districts is 23.36% (standard deviation = 14.87%, n schools = 1,092).

[103] While the LCFF also calls for attention to plural lingual learners , there are relatively few Black or Indigenous students categorized as plural lingual learners. Given this there is certainly reason to have heightened attention to those Indigenous and Black children who are identified as plural lingual learners, this study chooses not to provide an in-depth focus on the plural lingual learner category.

Appendix LL: Basic Approach to Racial Mentions in District LCAPs

In its 2018-19 LCAP, LAUSD explicitly mentions race primarily in three sections: *2017-20 Plan Summary*, *Annual Update*, and *Goals, Actions and Services* with one mention in *Stakeholder Engagement*. Most mentions of race simply provide numeric data about metrics and indicators for the LCAP period years in relation to baseline data. This shows that LAUSD is aware of, and attentive to, data that categorizes some students according to their racial subgroup. The only subgroups that merit this distinction, however, are Latin* and, primarily, Black students.

On the other hand, LBUSD mentions race at least twice in all five LCAP sections: *2017-20 Plan Summary*, *Annual Update*, *Stakeholder Engagement*, *Goals, Actions, and Services*, and *Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services*. Though LBUSD does not only refer to race when categorizing numerical data in the 2018-19 LCAP. The LBUSD also makes multiple references to other racial groups, including students who are Indigenous, Asian, Pacific Islander, Filipino, and White. In this sense, LBUSD appears to acknowledge differentiations within racial groups. For instance, LBUSD refers to Indigenous students while describing the district population and refers to both "American Indian" and "Alaskan Native" students. However, all other references to Indigenous students in its LCAP only refer to the "American Indian" group at large.

Across both districts, most direct race mentions occur in the *Goals, Actions and Services* section and *Annual Update* section, where LEAs verbatim copies the previous year LCAP with

an added analysis to reflect on its previous years' goals, actions, and services, and actual expenditures.

In the *Annual Update* and the *Goals, Actions, and Services* sections, both districts track outcomes among student subgroups across grade level and/or school year. This tracking results in each LEA repetitively listing student subgroups multiple times in the two sections. LBUSD mentions tracking mathematics Smarter Balanced Assessments projected and actual averages for Black students for the 2017-18 school year and then in the goals, actions, and services section; LBUSD refer to the same assessment along with projections for individual school years between 2017-20, mentioning Black students each time. In such cases, each of these types of mentions were consolidated as one unique mention, as they refer to the same measurement. For example, the lexical chain results of this process, considering the location of mentions while tracing racial lexical chains across each district LCAP, can be seen in Appendix Table LL.1.

Appendix Table LL.1Outcomes of Lexical Chain Analysis by District

	2018-19 Local Control and Accountability Plan by section					
	2017-20 Plan Summary	Annual Update	Stakeholder Engagement	Goals, Actions, and Services	Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services	Total
Long Beach Unified						
Black students	8	14	1	(3)+	1	24
Indigenous students	3	1				4
Black parents and families			1			1
Asian students	2					2
Filipino students	1					1
Latin* students	6	12	1	(4)+		19
Latin* families		1				1
Pacific Islander students	2	2				4
White students	2	2				4
Los Angeles Unified						
Black students	1	14		(13)+		15
Indigenous students	1	1		(1)+		2
Asian/Pacific Islander students	1					1
Hawaiian students		1		(1)+		1
Latin* students	1	3		(3)+		4
Latin* parents & students			1			1
Mexican American students		1		(1)+		1
White students	1					1

Note. Frequency of unique mentions by racial group within each section of the Local Control and Accountability Plan for the two districts.

+ Not included in total. Figures in parentheses represent unique topic yet, duplicative mentions, in a new section. These types of mentions occur exclusively in *Goals, Actions, and Services*.

Appendix Table LL.1 shows, there are eighty-eight mentions of race in the LAUSD LCAP and twenty-six in the LAUSD LCAP when removing the duplicate responses in the Annual Update and the Goals, Actions, and Services sections. Black students and Black parents and families account for 58% of all LBUSD racial mentions and Indigenous students account for 8%.

Appendix MM: Understanding Other Racial Mentions in the 2018-19 LCAPs

LAUSD mentions four subgroups of students in relation to a targeted program the district has developed (as seen in Appendix Table MM.1). In LAUSD, Indigenous and Black students are mentioned for a program that the district has developed. The district's *standard English* learner support program, the Academic English Mastery Program (AEMP) is directed toward students who are "African American," "Mexican American," "Hawaiian American," and "American Indian."

> As an aside: I acknowledge the violent overthrow of Queen Liliu'okalani and the overtaking of the Hawaiian Kingdom by the United States followed by the kingdoms annexation into a territory, and later a state, by the United States; Many (Native) Hawaiians did not willingly relinquish their rights to be autonomous. Further, I point out that the term Hawaiian refers to a specific group of people, not someone who lives in Hawai'i or was even born there. However, today all Hawaiian residents have the right to be, and many are, United States citizens and thus the term Hawaiian American is redundant and confusing. If, as suspected, the district is referring to the people native to Hawai'i, the term Hawaiian or Native Hawaiian would be more appropriate.

This is LAUSD's only program that is principally directed toward students of specific race groups. Considering the non-outcome related mentions, the only other instances of race in the LAUSD LCAP are related to the district describing their student population where Indigenous students are not represented (as shown in Appendix Table MM.1). The Appraisal analysis of the text referring to the AEMP program was shared as a textual example in Chapter 3.3.5.3 and covered the linguistic choices and valuations.

Appendix Table MM.2 Lexical Chain Findings of Race Mentions Across Topics

	Race mentions in 2018-19 Local Control and Accountability Plan by topic						
	Population Figure	Budget Expenditure	Comparison to Peers	"Achievement Gaps"	Targeted Program	SAT Prep Program	Parents' Meeting
Long Beach Unified							
Black students	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Indigenous students	✓	✓					
Black parents and families							✓
Asian students	✓						
Filipino students	✓						
Latin* students	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Latin* families					✓		
Pacific Islander students	✓						
White students	✓			✓			
Los Angeles Unified							
Black students	✓				✓		
Indigenous students					✓		
Asian/Pacific Islander students	✓						
Hawaiian students					✓		
Latin* students	✓						
Latin* parents & students	✓						
Mexican American students					✓		
White students	✓						

Note. LCAP race mentions in relation to topics.

As displayed in Appendix Table MM.1, the LBUSD again mirrors its attention toward Black and Latin* students. Only White students are mentioned alongside Black and Latin* students and these mentions are related to the notion of an "achievement gap" where White students are positively positioned against Black and Latin* students when considering the completion of A-G requirements by high school graduates. These types of mentions contribute to an idea that LBUSD may negatively position Black and Latin* students.

Indigenous children are mentioned in relation to funding. In LBUSD's budget subsection of *The Story*, the LEA outlines money ($9,585) received via "Indian Education." This is an acknowledgement by the LBUSD that tribal money is provided by the U.S. government for the education of Indigenous students. The paltry figure also gives an idea of how little money the federal government provides for the education of Indigenous students which is meant for the

entire school year. However, this also highlights, that the LBUSD should be using the funds to specifically target Indigenous children.

Appendix NN: Analyzing the Performance of Schools which have Indigenous Students

The only opportunity afforded in the data is to analyze school data related to the schools which have Indigenous children and consider the average percentage for all students. Across the forty-seven LBUSD schools which have Indigenous test score data for ELA, the schools have mean score of 55.25% (standard deviation = 20.19%, minimum = 0%, maximum = 93.2%). Across the forty-seven with Math scores for Indigenous students the schools have a mean average of meeting or exceeding the state standard of 47.65% (standard deviation = 20.89%, minimum = 0%, maximum = 95.14%). Again, the analysis does not provide insight into the ELA and Math performance of Indigenous students within these schools. However, these findings do inform that, in general, most children across these schools are not meeting the state standard and that, given the wide minimum and maximum ranges and standard deviation, there is considerable differences in performance between children depending on the school attended.

Appendix OO: LCAP Template

Appendix Table OO.1 Template of the LCAP by Section and Subsection for 2018-19

Section	Subsection	Subsection
Cover Page		
2017-20 Plan Summary		
	The Story	
	LCAP Highlights	
	Review of Performance	
		Greatest Progress
		Greatest Needs
		Performance Gaps
		Increased or Imporved Services
	Budget Summary	
		Description
Annual Update		
	Goal	
		Annual Measurable Outcomes
		Actions / Services
		Action
	Analysis	
Stakeholder Engagement		
	Involvement Process for LCAP and Annual Update	
	Impact on LCAP and Annnual Update	
Goals, Actions, & Services		
	Goal	
		State and/or Local Priorities addressed by this goal:
		Identified Need:
		Expected Annual Measureable Outcomes
	Planned Actions / Services	
		Action
		For Actions/Services not included as contributing to meeting the Increased or Improved Services Requirement:
		For Actions/Services included as contributing to meeting the Increased or Improved Services Requirement:
Demonstration of Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Pupils		

Note. Genre analysis results align with the state mandated 2018-2019 LCAP template and are presented by section and subsection(s). Also, the cover page section contains contact information and is not notable for analysis.

The Genre analysis is carried out by segmenting the text of the documents into sections and subsection(s). Stages of the text are identified within and across the sections and subsection(s). Though LEAs have freedom in how they complete their LCAP, there is a formulaic structure to portions of the document.

At this point in the analysis, I compared the stages as outlined in the template with the actual LCAP for LBUSD and LAUSD. I explored the sections and subsections for substantive deviations from the template. However, structurally, outside of formatting differences, there were no major differences between how the two LEAs filled out their LCAP documents. Comparing the moves, that LAUSD and LBUSD choose to make in (sub)sections constitutes the bulk of the difference that occurs within the two LCAPs. In this, the attention to structure under the Genre analysis provided a focus on the discursive choices which is relevant to the Research Questions 1 and 3.

Appendix PP: Refresher to the LCAP and LCFF Grants

One major function of the LCAP is the establishment of goals with accompanying actions and services. LEAs are reminded that "a goal is a broad statement that describes the desired result to which all actions/services are directed. A goal answers the question: What is the LEA seeking to achieve?" (LCAP Addendum, 2018, p. 5). To understand the choices made in the goals, modality analysis provided insight into how much certainty is conveyed. As LEAs receive supplemental/concentration funding and base funding to fulfill their goals, districts have a responsibility to be clear about which funds are used for each action/service. Funding source and the student population served by an action/service are closely tied together, particularly for supplemental or concentration funds, which must be used by LEAs to increase or improve services for English learners, children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, and/or youth placed in the foster care system. Despite the emphasis on Black students, and the acknowledgement of Indigenous students, outlined in Chapter V, there are no goals, actions, or services designed for the purported benefit of Black or Indigenous children in 2018-19 LAUSD and LBUSD LCAP.

Recall that under the LCFF LEAs receive two types of funds: LCFF base grants and LCFF supplemental/concentration grants. Any LEA with at least one unduplicated student will receive supplemental grant funding, but only LEAs whose total population consists of over 55% unduplicated students will receive concentration grant funds. And while LCFF supplemental, multiplied at 20% of the base grant, and concentration, multiplied at 65% of the base grant, have

formulas, districts are not asked to differentiate between these funds. In alignment with expected practice, they are included together when in the analysis, but still distinct from the base grant.

When LEAs allocate funding that comes from its LCFF base funding total, they are prompted to select from "All," "Students with Disabilities," or other "Specific Student Groups" to designate which students will benefit from the action/service. When an LEA allocates funding which comes from LCFF supplemental/concentration funding, they must make a similar determinative choice regarding which students will benefit from the action/service. In this scenario, the LEA must select one, two, or three of the unduplicated student groups as the students being served and outline how select student group(s) benefit from the action/service.

Simply put, base grants can be broadly spent, but supplemental/concentration grants must be spent on students identified as unduplicated students. Both LAUSD and LBUSD spend the majority of their supplemental or concentration funds to target all unduplicated students. So, for most funding goals, both districts name "all" students or all three unduplicated student groups across "all schools" as benefiting from their outlined actions/services.

However, each district does set some action/services which target only one or two of the unduplicated students' groups rather than all three. As was reported in Chapter IV, the 2008 Bersin, Kirst, and Liu brief suggested that the children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages and plural lingual children be treated differently in setting goals for what they need to thrive. Identifying for whom LEAs take the opportunity offered in the LCAP to develop more targeted actions/services by focusing on a particular student group shows what their priorities are and whether the district makes a concerted attempt to target student needs more effectively.

Appendix QQ: The Ten LCFF Priorities

There are ten total LCFF Priorities. However, LCFF Priority 9 and LCFF Priority 10 are only applicable to COEs.

LCFF Priority 1: Basic Services (conditions of learning).

LCFF Priority 2: Implementation of State Standards (conditions of learning).

LCFF Priority 3: Parent Involvement (engagement).

LCFF Priority 4: Student Achievement (pupil outcomes).

LCFF Priority 5: Student Engagement (engagement).

LCFF Priority 6: School Climate (engagement).

LCFF Priority 7: Course Access (conditions of learning).

LCFF Priority 8: Student Outcomes (pupil outcomes).

LCFF Priority 9: Expelled Youth (conditions of learning).

LCFF Priority 10: Foster Youth (conditions of learning).

Appendix RR: Further Analysis of the LAUSD Goals

As shown in Table 5.6, in their 2018-2019 LCAP, the LAUSD sets six goals with thirty-five actions/services. The district addresses all eight state priorities including addressing State Priority 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 two times each. The LAUSD fails to use its local control power by identifying any local priorities of importance to the district and its stakeholders.

Of the thirty-five actions/services presented in Table 6.1, thirteen are funded through LCFF base funding, with twelve focused on all students, and twenty-two are funded through LCFF supplemental or concentration funding. LAUSD makes one notable differentiation when noting students to be served by the action/services that it sets to fulfill its goals and does not target all students with base grant funding.[104] This move demonstrates that this LEA understands that it has the option to dedicate actions/services towards student groups that it identifies as deserving of targeted support.

The remaining twenty-two actions are allocated using supplemental/concentration grants and the outlined services are all dedicated toward serving the needs of some or all three groups comprising the unduplicated pupil category. These twenty-two actions/services are targeted as potentially beneficial for Black and Indigenous students because they target students identified as unduplicated students. While most of the action/services are directed at all unduplicated students, ten are devoted to addressing one or two groups of the category. There are five actions for plural

[104] Goal 2, Action 7 is the only action/service that does not direct services towards all students or unduplicated students. Here, the LAUSD makes a choice to dedicate services for students with disabilities, a student group that it is not legally required to under the LCFF law.

lingual children and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, four for children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, and one for youth placed in the foster care system and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. Despite a sizeable numerical population, LAUSD chooses to not set any goals which are solely targeted towards plural lingual children or youth placed in the foster care system. With plural lingual children and youth placed in the foster care system, the LAUSD conflates them both with children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. Again, this type of action removes any potential nuance to differentiate between and effectively target the broad needs that these (sub)groups have.

The analysis shows that the LAUSD does not set clearly defined goals that are attainable within the school year or any reasonable period. For instance, LAUSD's Goal 1 of "100% Graduation" is not attainable as it sets the bar at perfection. Further, the LAUSD's performance metrics designed to measure the goal progress suggest that the district does not believe the goal will be reached during the 2018-19 school year or within the 2017-20 three-year LCAP period. In the LCAP *Annual Update* recap, the LAUSD reports that 80% of all students graduated for the 2017-18 school year, less than their expected outcome goal of 81% for the school year. For the 2018-2019 LCAP, the LAUSD expected that 87% of all students graduated for that school year. These figures, while getting close to the set goal, still fall short of the declared goal of 100% graduation. In fact, the district may be confusing a goal with an outcome, as an increased graduation rate is more likely an outcome rather than a goal. Regardless, a 100% completion goal is unrealistic. And a failure to set realistic goals means that the district cannot claim to effectively target students most deserving of support. Further, the district fails to include any rationale for the 2018-19 goals as required in the LCFF template.[105]

[105] LEAs are prompted to discuss an "identified need" for each goal, but LAUSD curiously leaves this box blank for the 2018-19 school year.

For the 2018-19 school year, the LAUSD also includes a "grant set-aside" program to Goal 1, Action 5 with budgeted expenditures of up to $12,608,616. The LAUSD fails to provide any additional information regarding the grant set-aside program with respect to how schools could be eligible for the funds or how the district planned to carry out the program.

The LAUSD's funding allocation positions Goal 2 as having a disproportionate impact for unduplicated students. LAUSD allocates $89,538,828[106] (7.3% of all supplemental/concentration grant funding) towards Action 6, which solely targets children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. In Goal 2, Action 6, the LAUSD provides services aimed at addressing early childhood education and provides a transitional kindergarten expansion plan. The LAUSD provides details explaining the nature of the transitional kindergarten (TK) expansion plan.

> The TK Expansion program is a full day, 180 school day program following the same time schedule as other elementary classrooms. The program is a transitional kindergarten program that prepares children for Kindergarten. Kindergarten skills and benchmarks are inappropriate measures in this program. Only students who qualify for the Free/ Reduced Meal program are eligible to enroll in the program. The District is planning to increase expanded transitional kindergarten program in the 2018-19 school year to reflect a growth of 20 sites. (LAUSD LCAP, 2018, pp. 114-115)

The LAUSD asserts that the plan will "provide quality preschool seats for low income children who turn 5 after December 2" (LAUSD LCAP, 2018, p. 114). Further, the LAUSD expects that TK expansion plan "lower the dropout rate and increase high school graduation rates by cultivating at a very young age, personal qualities that improve children's resilience, confidence and persistence to a task" and "improve student success in A-G requirements by

[106] This figure accounts for the most allocated supplemental/concentration grant funds in Goal 2 and 39.4% of the supplemental/concentration grant funds allocated in Goal 2.

setting a strong language and literacy foundation for our youngest students" (LAUSD LCAP, 2018, p. 114). The LAUSD positions the importance of this transitional kindergarten expansion plan as pivotal for children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages given the influence on providing a foundation to achieve proficiency for all as stated in Goal 2, but also high school graduation as outlined in Goal 1. Therefore Goal 2, Action 6, may provide a lasting impact for all children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages, and therefore most Black and Indigenous children in LAUSD. Again, the LAUSD dedicates a sizeable proportion (7.3%) of its supplemental/concentration grant funds towards Goal 2, Action 6 of all, the district seems to suggest that not all children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages are able to benefit from the expansion as the district is only expanding to 20 sites for the 2018-19 school year. Therefore, there are likely many children who turn five years old after December 5 who will not benefit from this program and will therefore not reap the benefits that the LAUSD asserts are so vital to future academic success in high school.

This analysis uncovered a concerted effort to divert funds to a program which might provide benefit for children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages broadly, and thus Indigenous and Black children, but failed to ensure the program was widely available.

Appendix SS: An LBUSD Example of Unaligned Funding Allocation for a Goal Positioned as Important and Language use which Dismisses Alternative Viewpoints

LBUSD Goal 3 also mentions college and career in a vein that is like Goals 2 and 6, but the document communicates a strong certainty about the connection. In Goal 3, the LBUSD declares that "students will succeed in Algebra *to ensure* high school graduation and *expand* college and career opportunities." In this Goal, the LBUSD is unwavering in the idea that Algebra is a pivotal benchmark for students to reach. Successfully completing Algebra, defined as completing with Grade C or better, will *ensure* high school graduation, which is important to all district goals focused on postsecondary endeavors, and it will *expand* those very same college and career opportunities. However, considering the CAASPP figures reported in Chapter V, most students in LBUSD, and especially most Black students, are not succeeding in mathematics broadly according to state standards. Therefore Goal 3 appears to have a heightened importance and LBUSD is committed to addressing this issue with a dedicated goal.

However, despite the seeming importance of this goal, the LBUSD only dedicates 1.3% of the supplemental/concentration grant and zero dollars from the base grant to achieving it. As only supplemental/concentration funds are dedicated to this goal, LBUSD indicates that attaining success in Algebra is a concern for its unduplicated students, who are mostly Students of Color and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages. The allocation of funds towards Goal 3, in total ($1,600,000) and in percentage of supplemental/concentration grants (1.3%) does not indicate that the LBUSD is committed to ensuring that the district *provides* Algebra to all students, despite that their discourse maintains that students *will* succeed in Algebra.

As discussed earlier with the modal process will, the LBUSD fails to allow for an alternative outcome other than what the goal states. The district also links success in Algebra to high school graduation. For Goal 3, the LBUSD LCAP identifies the need for this goal as "Algebra is a "gatekeeper" to future success. Early exposure to and immediate success in this course increases the likelihood of high school graduation and college and career readiness" (LBUSD LCAP, 2018, p. 122).

In this explanation in the identified need section there is greater clarity provided to understanding the goal. The LBUSD acknowledges that Algebra does not "ensure" high school graduation, but rather *increases the likelihood*. For the LBUSD's expected outcomes, the district set a goal for only 48% of eighth grade students to enroll in Algebra for the 2018-2019 school year with 90% of those earning at least a C grade. The LBUSD's expected outcomes suggest that the district does not believe that all students will meet Goal 3 as the total is not 100%.

Curiously, throughout the *Annual Update* section under the *Annual Measurable Outcomes* subsection, when considering all seven 2017-18 Goals, which remained unchanged for the 2018-2019 school year, the LBUSD concludes that:

> Upon careful review of the services and the progress of all students, especially unduplicated pupils, and upon careful review of the specific services and actions described under this goal, in harmony with the other services and actions described in the LCAP, the Board finds that the specific actions and services have been effective in meeting the results described herein and in advancing the District's progress on the goals stated in the LCAP. (LBUSD LCAP, p. 9, p. 23, p. 41, p. 45, p. 50, p. 58, p. 71)[107]

[107] Review of 2017-18 LCAP Year and reflection on "actual" annual measurable outcomes Goal 1 = p. 9, Goal 2 = p. 23, Goal 3 = p. 41, Goal 4 = p. 45, Goal 5 = p. 50, Goal 6 = p. 58, Goal 7 = p. 71

This conclusion, no matter the goal, action, or service developed aims to shut down communication and suggests that the LBUSD believes that the path it has chosen is correct, no matter what the results may show or what others may conclude. This type of commentary does closes collaborative doors and fails make space to honor the understanding that Black and Indigenous children and caregivers bring to the table.

Appendix TT: Additional Analysis to understand the LBUSD Mentions

This appendix covers additional information which helps understand the nature of McKinsey & Company report and Battelle for Kids' authorized study which the LBUSD uses to amplify their aura of success.

TT.1 Understanding the McKinsey & Company Criteria

Mourshed et al. (2010) authored the McKinsey & Company report and shared the criteria for selecting schools.

> In selecting school systems, we sought to meet two objectives: 1) to select systems that have achieved clear improvement in student outcomes, and 2) to compile a diverse sample of systems so that we could learn what was unique versus what was universal, thereby ensuring our insights have wide-ranging relevance. We defined diversity along several dimensions – by size of system, location (representing five continents), starting performance levels (on student assessments), and system type (centralized and decentralized; private and public systems). (Mourshed et al., 2010, p. 128)

The authors trace LBUSD's reform efforts back to the 1990s.[108] Mourshed et al. defined LBUSD as a "sustained improver" as a school system with a long history of education reform and have consistency to improvement for its improvements between 2002-2009. Data use, test scores, high performance expectations[109], principal coaching programs, long tenures of

[108] The LBUSD notably instituted mandatory K-8 school unforms in the 1990s as a reform effort under Superintendent Carl Cohn.

[109] Mourshed et al. (2010) noted that Anglo-American school systems like LBUSD, and school systems deemed to be poor but improving, expressed expectations through achievement targets for schools and students, but that Asian and Eastern European school systems tended to avoid targets and encouraged improvement behind the scenes.

leadership, and new teacher inculcations are key markers to the LBUSD's sustained improvement. Mourshed et al. notes LBUSD provided improved math scores on California STAR examinations between 2004-2009 for Grades 2-5. LBUSD, and the other school systems, was noted as proactively and regularly using data to promote understanding of schools and students which are falling behind academically or to access the impacts of reform efforts (Mourshed et al., 2010). The McKinsey & Company report tends to not be attentive to race or income status. However, the report does acknowledge that "urban" districts tend to have overrepresented numbers of Students of Color, plural lingual learners, and children whose caretakers are paid poverty wages.

TT.2 Understanding the Battelle for Kids' Global Education Study

Beyond this, the LBUSD declines to note when Battelle for Kids suggested the district was "among the five of the world's highest performing school systems." This omission leaves the reader to assume this is a current or ongoing recognition by Battelle for Kids. However, ancillary evidence reveals that this is from a 2012 report[110] where the Global Education Study highlighted five of the twelve school systems that were chosen as examples of "high-performing systems." The LBUSD was one of those chosen to highlight given sustained gains over five years. Information from the Battelle for Kids report helps point to why the LBUSD is profiled. School systems are considered when there is a sense of equality in performance between "low-

[110] Some of the things that the LBUSD are praised for in the Battelle for Kids (2012) report include: "Long Beach's high school pathway programs are closely tied to the needs of business through advisory boards that ensure curricula in the 16 pathways include the elements required for graduates to be ready to enter the workforce" (p. 13); and their teacher selection process which involves "grooming teachers for "The Long Beach Way" by having district employees teach pre-service courses at California State University-Long Beach (p. 19).

performing students" and "top-performing students" and where familial income is not considered a driver of performance results (Battelle, 2012).[111]

[111] Battelle (2012) expresses that "a high-performing system as one in which low-performing students perform not much differently than top-performing students, and where family socioeconomic status is not a significant driver of student performance. High-performing systems are in the top ranks on quality, equity, and productivity and recognize the importance of international benchmarking" (p. 4).

Appendix UU: LAUSD Positively Positions itself and Blames Students

The Appraisal framework of LAUSD's subsection reveals that the district generally positively positions itself and its intention to provide a quality education to its students. Similarly, to LBUSD, when referring to the children under its care, the LAUSD relies on deficit ideology which positions most of its students as needing more assistance given their identities or familial income level. As this system of thought relies on a need to fix the student rather than the system, it aims align with ideals that can be found in white supremacy and assimilation. For example, the LAUSD begins their 2018-19 LCAP:

> The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is a district **FOCUSED** on *ENSURING* **ALL** students are *PREPARED* for college, career and life. We are a district that *SERVES* *over* **587,592** Pre-K thru Adult Education students, of which **APPROXIMATELY 85%** of these students are *either* eligible for free and reduced lunch, an English learner or in the foster youth system.[112] (LAUSD LCAP, 2018, p. 2)

Using Appraisal framework to interrogate a core goal that the LAUSD positions as its focus, further understanding can be established. The analysis reveals the LAUSD relies on a judgement which positions its focus on ensuring all students are prepared for post-secondary endeavors as a positive. This sentiment is bolstered by a leading use of force (graduation) with the word choice **FOCUSED** followed by two coded instances of focus (graduation) with the word choices *ENSURING* and *PREPARED*.

[112] Glossary reminder: Positive Judgement is underlined, Negative Judgement is double underlined, **FORCE** is bold capitals, *FOCUS* is italics capitals, ***heterogloss*** is bold italics, *moderate certainty* is italics and underlined, ***high certainty*** is bold italics and underlined.

The use of force with **FOCUSED** can be understood to intensify the overall goal that is laid out. The notion that the LAUSD is focused can be understood as a high commitment. This conclusion is bolstered by the coding of the terms which highlighted the use of focus to draw the reader's attention to how the LAUSD is focused. The LAUSD notes an attention to *ENSURING* "all" students will be *PREPARED* "for college, career, and life." The identification of terms meant to drive the focus allows for an understanding of the general district focus. Plainly put, the LAUSD purports a general commitment to the preparation of all its students to attend college, have a career, and life. With this, there should be an understandable notion of failure if there is one student who is underprepared for college, career, or life under LAUSD standards. Therefore, it should a larger indicator of a pervasive, systemic problem when large percentages of student (sub)groups like Black and Indigenous students do not meeting the standard set yearly.

The descriptive statistics revealed that of those students remaining in the sample, the data was bleak for Indigenous and Black students. As a reminder, only 34.25% of Black children met or exceeded the 2018-19 CAASPP ELA tests and 22.10% for the CAASPP Math tests. For Indigenous children only 27.92% met or exceeded the CAASPP ELA tests and 28.90% met or exceeded the CAASPP Math tests. Such data should cause the LAUSD to reflect on its services. However, the LAUSD instead shifts the blame to the children. For example:

> *ACKNOWLEDGING* the challenges our ***STUDENTS*** *CONFRONT* **EVERY DAY**, both academically and emotionally, it is **ESSENTIAL** we *ENSURE* resources are **EFFECTIVELY** targeted to our *NEEDIEST* students. ***As such***, our **OBJECTIVE** in *DEVELOPING* equitable practices in LAUSD is *INFORMED* by our diverse population where *NEARLY* **94** languages *OTHER* than English are spoken and **74%** of our student population is Latino, **9.8%** is White, **8.4%** is African American and **6.04%** is Asian/Pacific Islander. The District *EMBRACES* strategies that **FOSTER** opportunities

and *AIM* to **CLOSE** the opportunity gap for students identified by the ***Local Control Funding Formula*** (LCFF).[113] (LAUSD LCAP, 2018, p. 2)

In this clause, the LAUSD sets the stage for some of its core values with respect to its student population and what they deem to be important in terms of serving their students. The LAUSD continues through an acknowledgement of their assessment of their students' circumstances before reflecting on some essential tasks they as a district work toward. The Appraisal framework reveals here that LAUSD positions their students as having academic and emotional challenges that are a central component to their everyday lives. To address this pervasive circumstance that the LAUSD posits as fact, the district notes the importance of effectively targeted resources on their part to the students who are most in need.

To reach this conclusion, I use the Appraisal framework to bring attention to the words used by the LAUSD. In particular, the Appraisal framework helped uncover the embedded negative judgment (attitude) of the students in terms of their qualities and the positive judgment (attitude) of the district itself. As the district is *ACKNOWLEDGING* the supposed attributes of its students, this word choice was coded as focus (graduation) as it functions to specify the nature of what the focuses on. The sentence was further coded to show the LAUSD using engagement with the phrase our (monogloss) ***STUDENTS*** (heterogloss). These choices display a shift in voice and attention, noting a possession of the students while also bringing in students as an additional voice. However, the students are not given any agency in the sentence and are reduced to a mere object. This is followed by more instances of focus and force (graduation) with the choices *CONFRONT* **EVERY DAY**.

[113] Glossary reminder: Positive Judgement is underlined, Negative Judgement is double underlined, **FORCE** is bold capitals, *FOCUS* is italics capitals, ***heterogloss*** is bold italics, *moderate certainty* is italics and underlined, ***high certainty*** is bold italics and underlined.

There is an instance of focus (graduation) where the LAUSD is *ACKNOWLEDGING* some things about their student population found in a negative judgement (attitude) of their students in contextualizing the daily academic and emotional challenges confronted by their students. This mindset suggests that the LAUSD believes that their students are challenged by life every day which impacts their emotional well-being and their ability to academically perform. Further, this notion suggests that the LAUSD is burdened with this and cannot do anything about it. The LAUSD responds to this notion by inserting positive judgement (attitude) of the district and its mission to *ENSURE* "resources are effectively targeted."

This is followed by an embedded clause "both academically and emotionally" which serves to contextualize the challenges that LAUSD suggests exists for their students. The Appraisal framework of this clause notes the negative judgement of students as the LAUSD positions these purported challenges as things the district must attend to in its planning which is reinforced by the clause that follows. This clause focuses on how the LAUSD deals with the challenges, explaining how it is essential for the district to *ENSURE* their resources are used to **EFFECTIVELY** target those students who the district identifies as *NEEDIEST*.

The LAUSD does not reveal how it determines "neediest" status. However, given the mention of these students within the same sentence, it could be assumed there is some relation between the emotional and academic challenges that students might face, and the district's need to target "neediest students." The LAUSD goes on to suggest that the district is up to the challenge given their approach to serving these students.

In this excerpt, the LAUSD makes an explicit to the children identified by the LCFF as a focus of district strategies. Though it is unclear whether the LAUSD is using strategies to target all children identified as unduplicated students, these are the students of focus in the district's

first sentence. While the district does not explicitly name children identified as unduplicated students, it can be reasonably assumed that the LAUSD is referring to the (sub)group as they are the only student (sub)group that LCFF mentions, and that LEAs are required to attend to.

The LAUSD suggests that their **objective** in *developing* "equitable practices" is *informed* by a "diverse" student population where diverse is defined as the number of languages spoken by the student body population and the different percentages of students by racial groups. In this instance, the LAUSD is making a direct connection to a range of language and racial differences amongst its students. In this sentence, the LAUSD also makes a direct reference to Students of Color by quantifying their presence and suggesting they are part of the reason the LAUSD must develop equitable practices. The LAUSD transitions from *NEEDIEST* students to racial groups and language spoken using the heteroglossic transition ***as such***. Therefore, Appraisal framework helps make a connection between these two sentences to conclude that the LAUSD is also negatively valuing those who speak languages other than English and Students of Color as they force the district to institute equitable practices.

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