

Strengthening Science Education and Environmental Literacy in California's New Era Of Local Control: The Toolkit

September 2016

For Local Advocates & Community Stakeholders: ASSESSING DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY THROUGH HISTORY-SOCIAL SCIENCE (HSS) EDUCATION

This document provides a series of questions designed to help parents, students, educators, community partners and business leaders quickly assess what the major strengths and challenges are for environmental literacy in your district, identify opportunities for investment, and determine whether your district's existing Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) is, or is not, addressing those opportunities. While the answers to these questions will lead to recommendations you can advocate to your district leadership, they can also be useful as a guide to engage in discussions with district and site leaders to develop robust solutions to improve environmental literacy beyond the LCAP.

District History-Social Science Program	Is it being addressed in the LCAP?
Question 1: Does the district currently have a K-12 HSS program where environmental literacy and learning is happening regularly in all classrooms, at all grade levels?	How is environmental literacy being addressed in the LCAP (e.g., adequate time for incorporation of the Environmental Principles and Concepts)?
Question 2: Are there participation gaps in environmental education across the district and high needs student groups?	If so, how do the LCAP priorities and services address these gaps?
Question 3: Does the district have a comprehensive plan for implementing environmental education and supporting instructional shifts related to the Environmental Principles and Concepts?	How are the supports necessary to implement environmental education addressed in the LCAP? (e.g., curricular resources, professional learning, materials acquisition, resources for environmental/outdoor learning experiences, etc.)
Question 4: What kind of environmental education is happening in HSS classrooms and beyond the classroom? How are data being gathered and how is the data being used?	Are data that assess the quantity and quality of environmental education across the district being used as measures and/or metrics reported in the LCAP?
Question 5: To what extent is the environment used as a context for HSS teaching and learning in the classroom? Are there opportunities for environmental learning activities at off-campus facilities (e.g., state historic parks and working landscapes) to support and reinforce environmental literacy in the history-social sciences?	Does the LCAP contain support for the use of environmental education as a strategy for HSS learning in your district?



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<p>Question 6: What kind of HSS instruction is happening in classrooms? How are data being gathered and used?</p>	<p>Are HSS data that assess the quantity and quality of HSS teaching and learning being used as measures and/or metrics reported in the LCAP?</p>
<p>Question 7: What additional supports will teachers, schools, and district administrators need to implement environmental education (e.g., professional learning opportunities around the inquiry arc and the infusion of Environmental Principles and Concepts into the Framework)?</p>	<p>How is the district investing in additional supports for supporting environmental literacy in the LCAP? (e.g., professional learning, coaching, curricular and instructional support staff, resources for field-based experiences for students, etc.)</p>
<p>Question 8: How is the district integrating environmental literacy with other existing district plans, programs and initiatives to ensure that students are prepared for college and careers upon high school graduation, including history science programs?</p>	<p>Is the integration of environmental education with other district initiatives apparent in the LCAP? (e.g., professional learning for teachers around the convergence of history-social science and environmental literacy, English Language Learner support program, incorporation of Environmental Principles and Concepts, etc.)</p>
<p>Question 9:How is the district building relationships with and accessing partnerships with historians, museums, state historic parks, community-based providers of environmental education, colleges/ universities, and business and civic leadership in the region that can improve the connection of environmental literacy to history-social science?</p>	<p>Are there existing district-community partnerships around environmental literacy and history-social science? Is there support in the LCAP for the development or expansion of district-community partnerships around environmental literacy and history-social science?</p>
<p>Question 10: How are parents and key stakeholders in the community being engaged to support environmental literacy to support shifts that are truly best for students?</p>	<p>Does the LCAP include explicit plans to engage parents and community stakeholders around environmental education?</p>