CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT

OF EDUCATION

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TONY THURMOND

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

May 20, 2022

Dear County and District Superintendents and Charter School Administrators:

CALPADS Update and Support

The California Department of Education (CDE) is aware of the challenges that local educational agencies (LEAs) are experiencing due to the recent technical upgrades to the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). As a result, a cross-department team has been formed to prioritize the issue. We are committed to supporting schools and doing everything possible to quickly resolve these issues.

CALPADS Functionality

As detailed in an April 22, 2022, letter to superintendents and charter school administrators, we are working to address the defects resulting from the rollout of the system upgrade. This will allow LEA staff to submit needed data to CALPADS to support test registration and provide quality data that can be used by districts and the state to improve student outcomes. In addition, CDE has continued to tune the system and LEAs should now be experiencing faster processing of data submitted (magnitude of 20x).

While these changes are necessary to improve overall system performance and long-term viability, we understand they have also temporarily resulted in additional workload for LEA staff. We believe these changes will ultimately have a positive impact on LEAs; however, in the meantime, CDE commits to work on further system enhancements to help mitigate the current impact on LEAs.

Status of Student Assessments

CDE understands the current CALPADS issues are having an impact on the ability of LEAs to assess students whose demographic information may have changed within the testing windows and also the potential consequence for accountability and compliance. Under normal circumstances, the CDE testing contractor, Educational Testing Services (ETS), receives the student and organization files from CALPADS on a daily basis; however, due to data issues in the student file, ETS is manually editing the CALPADS files before importing the files into the Test Operations Management System (TOMS) in order to ensure accurate data for test registration. ETS will continue this manual process on a twice-weekly basis until the issues in the file from CALPADS have been resolved, which will allow the ETS automated systems to process CALPADS files on a daily basis. To keep LEAs apprised on when they can expect to see their updates in TOMS, CDE and ETS have provided updates in the Known Issues Log on the California

Assessment of Student Performance and Progress website and the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) website. In addition, to provide LEAs with the latest information and updates about the CALPADS–TOMS issues, a new web page, 2022 CALPADS Updates, has been published.

Impact of Testing on Accountability

CDE recognizes that if LEAs are not able to assess students during their testing window, it may impact accountability metrics and compliance with state and federal statute. The Every Student Succeeds Act requires all states to test at least 95 percent of all students and student groups in English language arts/literacy (ELA), mathematics, and science. It also requires states to factor the participation rate into their accountability systems, which, for California, is the Academic Indicator. In addition, 100 percent of all eligible English learners must be administered either the Summative ELPAC or the Alternate ELPAC operational field test. CDE has received reports that LEAs are concerned that it will be difficult to meet the federal requirement. Our team is also closely monitoring this issue.

The U.S. Department of Education requires CDE to incorporate the Lowest Obtainable Scale Score for each student needed to bring the LEA, school, or student group up to the 95 percent participation rate target. With the requirement to restart accountability for 2021–22, the federal participation rate penalty will be applied for the first time in the 2022 Dashboard in both ELA and mathematics. CDE has prepared a two-page flyer that describes the new participation rate penalty and includes a reminder about participation in other assessments. Additionally, the 2022 California School Dashboard release will include new resources, including separate reports to show the Academic Indicator without the impact of the participation rate penalty and a communications toolkit to assist LEAs with sharing state and local context.

CALPADS End-of-Year Submission

In recognition of the issues that LEAs are currently experiencing with submitting data to CALPADS, the opening of the End-of-Year (EOY) submission window has been shifted to May 26, 2022, to ensure system readiness. In light of the delayed opening, current system issues, and the time required for student information system vendors and LEAs to adjust to the changes made in CALPADS, **the initial certification deadline of July 31, 2022, has been lifted.** CDE fully understands that LEAs will need adequate time to submit and review data for quality, and CDE will continue to assess the need to extend the final August 26, 2022, deadline in the coming weeks.

The CALPADS team continues to test the EOY functionality in the new CALPADS environment and addressing identified issues. When the EOY submission window opens, CALPADS will still have some outstanding known issues and defects; however, the EOY submission window is being opened in order to provide LEAs with as much time as possible to submit data and review reports prior to summer break. As issues are resolved, CDE will clearly communicate to LEAs which tasks to focus on first in order to help LEAs prioritize their work. CDE will continue to monitor the resolution of issues and

defects during the EOY submission window, and evaluate the quality of the data being submitted to CALPADS. The CDE will take this information into consideration as it assesses the status of the EOY final certification deadline of August 26 in order to ensure that LEAs have adequate time to both submit and review their data before certifying.

Impact on LEA Staff

Since its implementation in 2009, the amount of data LEAs submit to CALPADS has increased significantly to meet new state and federal reporting and accountability requirements. In addition, the more recent use of CALPADS data for operational purposes, such as for statewide test registration, has increased the frequency of LEA data submission to CALPADS. While significant technical upgrades have already been made to CALPADS, the process by which data is loaded to the system had not been updated since 2009, resulting in increasingly degraded performance.

The current upgrades were intended to address these ongoing performance issues; however, CDE recognizes that they also have an impact on LEA staff. The CALPADS user experience will improve as CDE implements further enhancements. CDE acknowledges that all these adjustments will take time and requests patience as we work towards a well-functioning system that produces the quality data that will support our collective goal of improving student outcomes.

CDE is committed to ensuring LEAs have the resources to support student success and we encourage LEAs to contact our CALPADS and TOMS support desks. For questions about CALPADS, please contact the CALPADS/CBEDS/CDS Operations Office by phone at 916-324-6738 or by email at calpads@cde.ca.gov. For questions about TOMS, please contact the California Technical Assistance Center by phone at 800-955-2954 or your assessment success agent at Help and Success Agents.

Sincerely,

/s/

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