Chapter 14
California, USA: "The California Way": The Golden State's Promise to Empower Principals and De-emphasize Testing

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Abstract This chapter describes an ambitious reform by the most populous state in the U.S.; a reform that has the potential to be a pivotal point in the nation's school accountability movement. For the past 30 years, the U.S. has been hyper-focused on standardized testing, and all major school reforms introduced since the 1980s have utilize test scores as the primary measure of success--or failure. Initiated in 2013 and foreshadowing a similar but less ambitious national reform, "The California Way" attempts to de-emphasize testing as well as place more power and responsibility on local authorities, specifically school principals. A discussion of the political/ideological background for the reform attempts to underline the importance of its continuance and its potential impact on school reform across the U.S. The California Way and its components are examined regarding their efficacy in meeting their goals as, despite their good intentions and the reform's great promise, these aims and the entire reform itself may prove to be too complex for effective implementation. Finally, the chapter examines possible adjustments to the role of the school leader as a result of the reform, specifically in the school leader's ability to enact necessary change as state policies dictate.

14.1 Control of Schooling in the Golden State

Before examining The California Way, an ambitious and promising education reform instituted in 2013, it is important to first understand how schooling in California is structured. Knowing the complexities of this structure may allow for a better comprehension of the plan's implementation and the possibilities for its success.

California, the fifth largest economy in the world and by far the most populous state in the U.S., is just one of 50 state systems in the nation (51 if including the

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District of Columbia). As public education is not specified in the U.S. Constitution or in any of the 27 subsequent amendments, it is in the purview of the states to provide schooling for children and adolescents. The U.S. has over 14,000 community school districts ranging from Texas with about 1200 and Hawaii with one. The U.S. Department of Education has a limited scope, mainly to monitor the dissemination of federal funds from Title I "Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged" (U.S. Department of Education 2004, September 15) and Title IX (discrimination based on gender in education programs) (U.S. Department of Education 2015, April 29). On average, school districts receive only 9% of their funds from the federal government; the remainder is usually split fairly evenly between local and state tax sources, depending on the given state's funding formula (Spring 2016).

With a land mass equaling that of Sweden, France, or Spain and with a population of nearly 40 million, California is geographically large as well as populous; and this great area can hinder its ability to enact systemic change such as The California Way. Unlike other states, it has a two-pronged district system with county offices of education (found in 58 of the 68 counties) and community districts (560 elementary, 87 high school, and 330 combined or "unified" districts; 977 in total). The county offices' main functions are to (1) support the community districts within their boundaries in providing professional development opportunities for all district employees and (2) provide financial oversight for schools and districts (California Department of Education 2017b, September 26).

The California Department of Education, located in the capital of Sacramento, enforces education laws and regulations as well as manages reforms (California Department of Education 2017c, October 13). With the advent of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), a main component of The California Way, a three-branched system of school support exists in the state: (1) California Collaborative in Educational Excellence, (2) county offices of education, and (3) the Department of Education (California Collaborative on Educational Excellence n.d.). The Superintendent of Public Instruction, elected to office every four years, provides supervision of the Department of Education.

The State Board of Education has numerous responsibilities both by statute and by state constitution. It is the governing and policy-making body of the Department of Education and must appoint one deputy and three associate superintendents of public instruction. It also adopts textbooks through grade 8, and oversees curriculum, assessment, and charter school[1] authorization among several other responsibilities (California State Board of Education 2017, October 6).

In California, teachers, school counselors and psychologists, as well as administrators (principals, vice/assistant principals, directors) must be "credentialed" in order to work at a public school or school system.[2] Unique to the state is that the

[1] Charter schools are publicly-funded private schools. Oftentimes, they are under the umbrella of a school district, but they can also exist as a single entity or as part of a group of schools. In the 2016–2017 school year, California had 1232 charter schools housing approximately 10% of the public-school population (California Department of Education 2017e, 25 October).

[2] The term licensed or certified are used in place of credentialed in many U.S. states.

Department of Education does not control credentialing; it is the function of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing which has its own board and structure and is governed by the state legislature, separate from the Department of Education. The school districts (both county and local) work much more closely with the Department of Education on almost every matter than with the Commission (Commission on Teacher Credentialing 2017, May 9).

14.1.1 Teachers Unions

Unions have had a strong influence on P-12 schooling in California and must be included in any discussion of the state’s schooling’s structure. Across the U.S., however, teachers unions have varying influence, depending on the political climate and subsequent labor laws. For instance, many states have “right to work” laws where union dues are not automatically taken out of a teacher’s salary, curtailing union membership rates (Long 2013, March 19). These states (e.g., Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Texas) have very weak unions and, consequently, lower salaries in comparison to highly unionized states such as California (as well as most states in the Northeast and Upper Midwest) (National Education Association 2016, May; Winkler et al. 2012, October). The most powerful teacher unions in the U.S. are the National Education Association (NEA) with approximately 3 million members, and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) with 1.7 million members (American Federation of Teachers n.d.). The California Teachers Association (CTA), an affiliate of the NEA, has 325,000 members, the largest state teacher’s union in the state and in the U.S. (California Teachers Association n.d.)

It is the stated desire of the CTA to improve the welfare of teachers as well as the schools they serve (California Teachers Association n.d.). Given their large membership, the CTA’s influence on schooling in California is great with their leadership in collective bargaining and their ability to strike, not to mention their ability to influence school quality, student achievement, standards, and community engagement. In some states (e.g., Florida) it is illegal for public school teachers to strike, thereby, severely limiting their ability to influence policy.

14.2 Recent Changes in U.S. and California Public Schooling

Each of the 50 U.S. states’ constitution requires it to provide public education; but the U.S. federal government still has much influence in how schooling is conducted across the 100,000 public schools in the nation. Federal policy pertaining to increasing student achievement has impacted all U.S. states over the past few decades, and California is no exception. Arguably, the most significant of these was the so-called “No Child Left Behind” Act (NCLB) implemented at the beginning of 2002 (Spring 2016; Schneider 2017). This law, officially known as the Elementary

and Secondary Education Act of 2001, was a bipartisan endeavor led by Republican president George W. Bush and the powerful Democrat Senator Edward "Ted" Kennedy of Massachusetts. Ostensibly, this law was enacted with the purpose of closing the so-called "Achievement Gap" between whites and some Asian-Americans on the one side, and blacks and Hispanics on the other. Kennedy and other Democrats certainly wished this to be so, but it is speculated by some in 2001 and throughout its implementation, that this was actually a move by conservatives to increase privatization of U.S. schooling (Ravitch 2010, 2013; Tienken and Orlich 2013; Verger et al. 2016).

Even if the intent of all supporters of NCLB was truly to close the Achievement Gap, the results were clear: it paved the way for increased numbers of privatization schemes in U.S. public education and did little, if anything, to close the racial achievement gap (Ravitch 2013; Wolk 2011). The number of charter schools and their enrollment increased dramatically as did influence of test publishers (Koretz 2017; Schneider 2017). As the NCLB results were published, criticism of the law increased, but due to a lack of an alternative was reauthorized in 2009. NCLB was finally replaced in 2015 by the "Every Student Succeeds Act" (ESSA) of 2015, signed into law by Democrat President Barack Obama. The ESSA and NCLB were reauthorizations of 1965's Elementary and Secondary Education Act which focused on ensuring equitable funds to schools and districts serving poor children, and a part of Democrat President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty" (Koretz 2017; Spring 2016). As education is a state matter, California had to create its own path to meet requirements of NCLB in 2001 (as well as ESSA in 2015) in order to have full access to federal funds. The California Way seemingly foreshadowed ESSA of 2015, embracing the law's encouragement to use multiple measures in its accountability system, and even surpassing it in this respect.

To understand California's current condition, as well as its response to ESSA, it is imperative to examine a 1978 law that has severely impacted school funding these past four decades and threatens to do so into the foreseeable future (Montes 2017, December 21). A zealous anti-tax movement arose in the 1970s was spurred by rising property taxes, leading to a highly publicized ballot initiative: Proposition 13 (officially, People's Initiative to Limit Taxation, but widely referred to as "Prop 13"). The impact of reductions to property taxes is obviously impactful given that nearly half of local districts' operating expenses are derived from these, at least on a national average. The California Supreme Court rulings of *Serrano v. Priest* (1971 and 1976) ordered the redistribution of funds from wealthy districts to poorer ones based on the court's findings that marginalized populations were not receiving equitable education as measured by school funding. These rulings were the catalyst to Prop 13 which, in turn, may have led the way for other anti-tax revolts during the '70s and '80s helping Ronald Reagan and other anti-government, anti-tax advocates to power (Verger et al. 2016; Weiss 2012).

After Prop 13's passage, school funding in California dropped as compared to other states (National Education Association May 2016). It is estimated that Prop 13 cost the city of San Francisco $450 million in 2015, alone. Further, the overall property tax rates for some affluent California cities are the lowest in the nation

(McLoughlin 2016, November 30). Property tax revenue per $1000 income is roughly one-half of some states and well below the national average (National Education Association 2016, May). As previously, loss of tax revenue has a detrimental effect on school funding when so much of school funds depend on local sources. On average about 45% of U.S. public school revenues come from local property taxes, and 45% from the state (United States Census Bureau 2017, June 14). This was true for California districts prior to Prop 13 but, at present, that percentage is down to between 20% and 25% (Cavanaugh and Faryon 2010, March 29; Montes 2017, December 21).

14.3 Focus on Testing: Californica Reacts to NCLB

What is important to note from the post-*A Nation at Risk* reforms is the hyper focus on student achievement as measured by standardized test scores. The report portrayed the state of U.S. schools as nothing short of disastrous and advocated the need for swift and drastic measures for reform. Although, the report and its intent have been questioned over the years, if not debunked (see Berliner and Biddle 1996; Tienken and Orlich 2013), it has undeniably changed the educational discourse among influential policy makers, leading to NCLB and the seemingly relentless use of test scores to measure school effectiveness (Ravitch 2010). It has resulted in a “battle of ideas” as UCLA professor John Rogers states, a fight between the public good and the private good (Capital and Main 2016, June 2). The changes desired by most policy makers after *A Nation at Risk* were business-oriented, using profit-seeking models in the hopes of making schooling more efficient and effective—effective, that is, as measured by test scores (Schneider 2017; Verger et al. 2016). The business-oriented reforms led to policies and laws that negatively impacted the schools and districts in their efforts to provide a well-rounded education for their students (Wolk 2011). It can be said that the overarching theme to the law’s impact is the aforementioned “battle of ideas” the power struggle between the ideologies surrounding the public good and the private good (see Adamson and Darling-Hammond 2016; Darling-Hammond 2010: Ravitch 2013; Tienken and Orlich 2013).

Although by far the most populous state and seemingly geographically and philosophically detached from the rest of nation (it has a reputation as being a trendsetter due, in part, to its being home to the film industry), California is certainly not immune to federal policies emanating from the neoliberal reforms and the dominant narrative that was created. With test scores linked to school districts’ ability to garner Title I funds for poor and disadvantaged students, California school districts have spent the past three decades focused on increasing test scores to ensure they can at least begin to attend to the needs of their students living in poverty. Changes were made to how schools were measured, focused almost entirely on test scores, resulting in teach-to-the-test pressures that, in turn, led to counterproductive stress on school leaders and teachers (EdSource 2004, January). And, perhaps, to teacher and principal shortages—especially in rural and urban schools (Latterman and Staffes 2017, October).

Accountability as it was enacted, with its emphasis on testing, and the negative media reports of test results have reduced the public's perception of schools both in the nation and in California (Koretz 2017). This caused great turmoil in many districts across the nation, California included. For instance, in San Diego, the state's second largest city and school district, Diane Ravitch (2010) chronicled the tumultuous tenure of a charismatic superintendent (former prosecutor, Alan Bersin) who was backed by a business-dominated school board. His agenda was to privatize the schools, opening them to the marketplace all-the-while running the district in an extreme, autocratic manner (Magee 2013, April 16). A no-nonsense business approach to schooling was reflected in Bersin's desire to measure all that could be measured in an attempt emulate business executives (Verger et al. 2016). After 6 years, the superintendent was forced out by pro-union school board members, and a moderate leader took his place; thereby, improving the relationship between teachers, staff, parents, and administration (Magee 2013, April 16). Yet, the emphasis on testing did not leave along with Bersin's departure.

14.4 The Current State of California Schools and "The California Way"

The battle of ideas was being won nationwide by the neoliberal faction, and this faction's membership included both powerful Republicans and Democrats who are typically at odds on most every issue (Adamson and Darling-Hammond 2016: Tienken and Orlich 2013; Verger et al. 2016). The subsequent federal policies led to state policies, as California and other states were fearful of losing much-needed federal funds and of possible decreased test scores (Ravitch 2010, 2013). California, perhaps emboldened by a rejuvenated economy and its distance from the populous and politically powerful East Coast, endeavored to create a more flexible system of school accountability, one that would empower local authorities *and* did not simply use test scores as its only measure: Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP).

While The California Way is the state's response to the ESSA, LCAP is its key planning feature. This reform, the most significant change in California education policy in the several decades, also resulted in some structural alterations in the state's oversight of public education. The California Way is designed to bolster three aspects of schooling: (1) student performance as measured by tests, (2) equity, and (3) general improvement. Its intent also is to empower local entities (districts and schools) to create their own accountability plans and to share these with others throughout the state, creating a large-scale learning community (California Department of Education 2018a, April 17).

Democrat Governor Jerry Brown signed Assembly Bill (AB) 97 on July 1, 2013, a law that includes LCFF, as part of an overall movement to change the way California school districts are funded; and, presumably, to give more control to those closest to where students learn--an ESSA requirement (U.S. Department of

Education 2004, September 15). According to the California Department of Education, LCFF is meant to

> …simplify how state funding is provided to local educational agencies… Under the old funding system, each school district was funded based on a unique revenue limit, multiplied by its average daily attendance… In addition, districts received restricted funding for over 50 categorical programs which were designed to provide targeted services based on the demographics and needs of the students in each district.

Further:

> Under the LCFF funding system, revenue limits and most state categorical programs have been eliminated.[3] The LCFF creates funding targets based on student characteristics and provides greater flexibility to use these funds to improve student outcomes. For school districts and charter schools, the LCFF funding targets consist of grade span-specific base grants plus supplemental and concentration grants that are calculated based on student demographics factors. For county offices of education (COEs), the LCFF funding targets consist of an amount for COE oversight activities and instructional programs. (California Department of Education 2018b, March 23).

Over the past few years, school districts across the state struggled to respond to LCAP's many requirements (Fensterwald 2018, February 12). For example, the plan mandates that each school has a "site council" comprised of the following:

- the principal; teachers selected by teachers at the school, and
- other school personnel selected by other school personnel at the school,
- parents of students attending the school and/or community members selected by such parents, and
- in secondary schools, students selected by students attending the school (California Department of Education 2018c, January 11).

As can be imagined, this requirement alone, would be quite a challenge for most schools to meet. Challenges created by LCFF were many. University of Toronto's Michael Fullan led a team to examine the design and possible implementation of the initiative beginning in 2015 (Fullan 2015b). They found three main concerns with this initiative:

1. Making complexity complicated
2. Overdoing front-end process
3. Making the plan the goal.

It was indeed complex and quite lengthy at 114 pages which Fullan and his team deemed to be "difficult for implementers to decipher" (Fullan 2015a, January, p. 3). By overdoing the process, they meant that there were too many goals (ironically, the main goal of LCAP was to establish a replicable "process" one that would be less onerous) a complication that limited the implementers' ability to reasonably meet all of them. The final critique stems from the first two in that complexity will lead to simply trying to get the plan finished rather than actually accomplishing something of value. As Fullan notes:

[3] Thirty-two were eliminated and 13 were retained (Cabral and Chu 2013).

> LCAP, in its present form, is a massive distractor eating up resources of time and money in counterproductive activities that seem based on getting the plan done to meet compliance requirements rather than one that serves implementation. The result is that plans will be produced, but they will not satisfy school districts or their critics. The plans will be a combination of a mile wide and an inch deep, and/or will be mired in detail (Fullan 2015a, January, p.4).

With the LCAP and LCFF, came some significant structural changes in the state's oversight. The California Collaborative on Educational Excellence was formed to assist county offices of education in their support of local school districts, specifically in the implementation of LCFF. The Collaborative is a state government agency that coordinates district support with the county offices and state department of education and is governed by a five-person board that includes the Superintendent of Public Instruction and one member from the State Board of Education (California Collaborative on Educational Excellence n.d.). Fullan's team suggested that the Collaboration would best support the success of LCAP if it:

1. successfully identifies key areas of need in districts with regards to capacity building for improvement of teaching practice and student learning
2. establishes a valued repository of current, proven expertise and resources available to develop those capacities
3. effectively brokers capacity building resources adequate to the context and learning needs of districts, to increase their ability to improve from within
4. monitors progress, identifies and builds success around district improvement and makes it visible across the state (Fullan 2015a, January).

Fullan and his team are not alone in criticizing the LCAP. Two non-profit groups published a policy brief in 2017 based on the input of "end users" (school-site personnel) finding that complexity is indeed a major concern but so is the fact that it is a top-down, centrally-designed policy (ironic, given the desire to empower the local education agencies) (Knudson et al. 2017). The groups' solution for making LCAP successful was to

1. Promote better and more equitable outcomes for kids;
2. Promote local control;
3. Be easily understandable, actionable, and consumable to a layperson;
4. Promote focus and prioritization;
5. Be feasible; and
6. Be scalable (Knudson et al. 2017, p. 5).

Teachers and principals were not the only concerns: district superintendents were at odds with LCAP as Joel Fensterwald reporting for *EdSource* summarizes

> Since the passage of the funding law in 2013, school districts have written three LCAPs. School boards and administrators have complained that the template that districts must follow is disjointed, constraining, and, particularly for small districts with a limited staff, burdensome. Parent groups complained that some districts' LCAPs mushroomed in length to hundreds of pages and that it was difficult to track expenditures. (Fensterwald 2016, July 11)

In summary, the LCAP is a highly ambitious reform movement that has valuable aims, notably the empowerment of local authorities, such as principals, to customize schooling to meet the needs of their individual contexts. Its intent seems to be to uncomplicate what was once extremely complicated; namely, funding schools and school districts. However, it has been criticized for being far too cumbersome and complex. The main problem with LCAP, however, may not be its byzantine requirements, but its lack of providing principals and superintendents the flexibility they need; ironically, one of its main goals.

14.5 The California Way Provides Hope for the State and the Nation

The state's enormous education reform, enacted 2 years prior to ESSA 2015, appears to be a proactive move toward what the Obama Administration had been signaling it wanted to include in its signature education policy: namely, to offer more than test scores to determine school quality. ESSA encourages states to use at least one measure other than standardized tests and gives the states much leeway in determining what that is (Koretz 2017). However, can simply adding one measure beyond often dubious tests results (see Schneider 2017; Verger et al. 2016) really reform what so many critics have determined to be a broken national system (that is, the combined state systems)? For its part, California opted to use not one, but two standardized tests in its new system:

- English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics Summative Assessments
  - Administered grades 3–8 and 11.
- California Next Generation Science Standards (CA NGSS) Summative Assessments
  - Administered grades 5–8.

For those whose Individual Education Plan calls for assistance in English language learning the following was added:

- California English Language Development Test (CELDT) (to be replaced by the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) in 2018–2019)
  - Administered grades 1–12 (California Department of Education 2017a, August 14).

The LCFF uses an accountability system consisting of three parts:

1. LCAP and its Annual Update
2. LCFF evaluation rubrics
3. Assistance and support system (California Department of Education 2017a, August 14).

Each school must submit an LCAP to its community district office who, in turn, must develop its own plan based on the needs and desires of its schools. If the community district is under the domain of a county office, then the district must submit its LCAP and its schools' LCAPs to the county office. As would be expected, the county office considers the contents of schools' and districts' plans, then develop its own LCAP. All plans are submitted to the California Department of Education on an annual basis. The Department provides each school and district with an approved template found on its website, updated and/or revised, as deemed necessary.

Although each school district has some flexibility in determining on what it will be evaluated, the plans tend to look the same, given the strict guidelines. They can have more than 20 data elements that must be annually analyzed by the local school districts and reported in an Annual Update. These must include eight "priority areas" with a multitude of data to be collected for each, as found in Fig. 14.1. These requirements, obviously, lead to a complicated and perhaps unwieldy plan, against which Fullan had warned.

Along with the density and homogeneity of the plans, the instruments within the plans could lead to further complexity. For instance, the evaluation rubrics would appear to create a complicated report for stakeholders and the media to digest and, therefore, both may choose the relatively easily understood test scores as their focus. After all, percentages tied to tests have become accepted and expected from the public (Koretz 2017; Schneider 2017). These lengthy reports may actually exacerbate the gap between classes and races in educational achievement, as "(w)hite and higher-income families…tend to belong to social networks that traffic in educational data more comfortably than do families of color and lower-income families" (Koretz 2017, p. 73).

Despite the concerns discussed above, The California Way provides hope that the simple reliance on test scores will be replaced by more robust and nuanced accountability systems across the nation. If it can work in California with its diverse[4]school-age population of 6.2 million (California Department of Education 2017d, October 19), then it may work elsewhere (Fullan 2015b, July). California schools and districts are the largest actor in the revised accountability game, but hardly alone. Spots of similar schemes can be found elsewhere in the U.S. such as Somerville, Massachusetts. Schneider (2017) chronicles the path taken by this small district to develop a more expansive and meaningful system, one that includes three "essential inputs"

- teachers and the teaching environment,
- school culture,
- and resources which includes community support)

and two "key outcomes"

- academic learning
- and character and well-being).

[4]California's public schools were 54% Latino, 9% Asian, 6% Black, and 23% white in 2016–2017 school year (California Department of Education 2017d, 19 October).

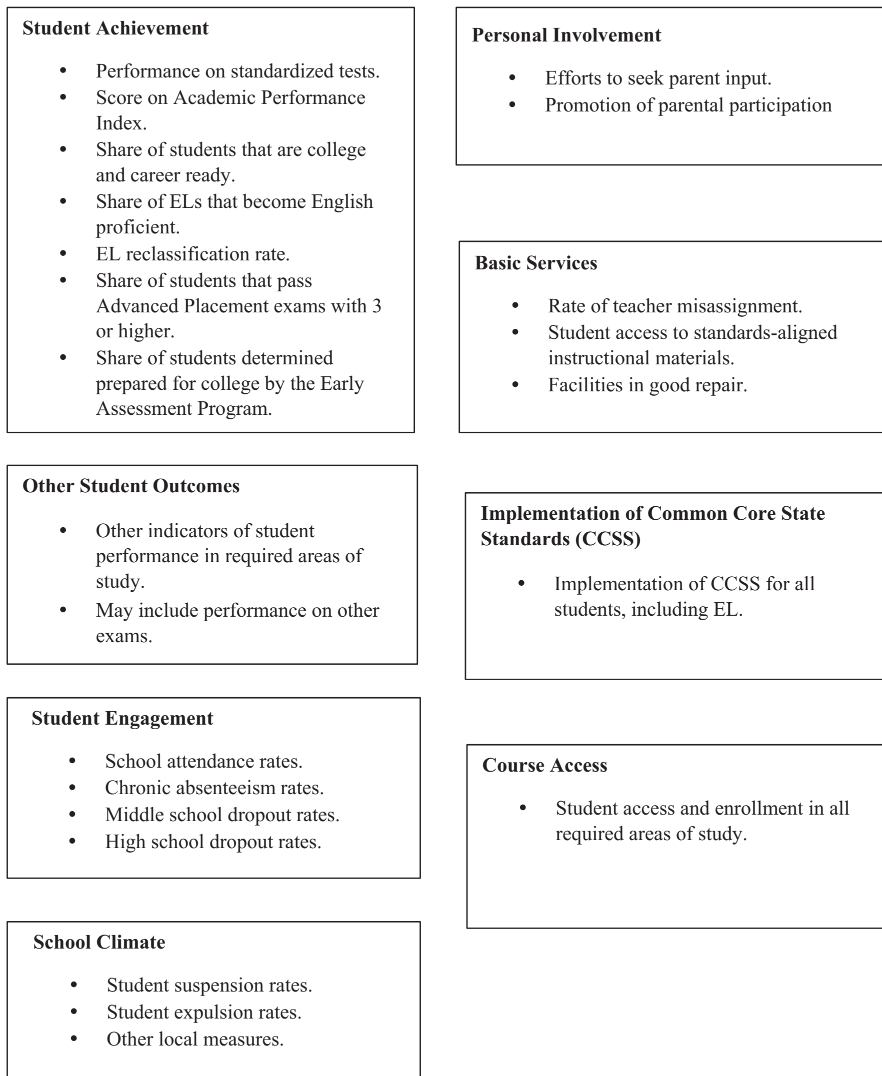

Fig. 14.1 Required data for each of eight state priority areas. (Source: Cabral and Chu (2013, December, p. 12)

To their credit, this district includes such items under academic learning as the student's engagement in school, graduation rates, critical thinking skills, and college and career readiness—the latter longitudinally measured by persistence as well as placement and acceptance (see Schneider 2017, p. 102). The reliance on standardized tests, however, remains a central feature of the vast majority of school, school district, and states' accountability plans (Koretz 2017; Schneider 2017).

14.6 The Battle of Ideas

When discussing The California Way and the possibility of its being a model for other states, it is important to examine the reform's underlying political and ideological assumptions. The state is controlled by the Democratic party which, within California, was not only quick to embrace Obama's ESSA but, as noted, seemingly anticipated it with their own expansive reform. ESSA and The California Way are a more politically progressive way to hold schools accountable, looking beyond the easy-to-obtain and, seemingly, easier for the public to comprehend test data. This may be a pivotal departure from the NCLB and the wave of neoliberal approaches taken to schooling since the 1980s, approaches which rely on the use of business practices in controlling schools, teachers, and principals (Ravitch 2010; Sahlberg 2012; Tienken and Orlich 2013; Verger et al. 2016; Wolk 2011).

The overuse of standardized testing has been linked to the "neoliberalization" of schooling in that it provides an easily-reported measure of productivity such as sales reports in business. They are the main tool used by those who wish to make schools more like businesses, a movement that really began in the 1980s after the publication of *A Nation at Risk* and picked up momentum during the Clinton Administration, Bush II's NCLB (Ravitch 2013; Verger et al. 2016), and to some critics, even Obama's Race to the Top initiative where he advocated using test scores hold schools accountable (Schneider 2017; Tienken and Orlich 2013). As previously noted, California has not been invulnerable to this neoliberalization as it, too, embraced the testing frenzy; nor is the state immune to powerful entities wishing to open up education funds to the marketplace. Recently, the Walton Foundation (operated by the family that started the world's largest private employer, Wal-Mart) spent $365 million toward increasing the number of charter schools across the nation, with plans to spend as much as $1 billion for the cause (Capital and Main 2 June 2016). While all U.S. charter schools are publicly funded, they often operate outside local government control and are viewed by advocates and critics alike as a way to privatize public education (Abrams 2016; Tienken and Orlich 2013; Verger et al. 2016). California has the most charter schools with 630,000 serving roughly 10% of public school students (Zynshteyn 2017 July 20).

As would be expected, many entrepreneurs and established companies would like a share of the $634 billion spent annually on education in the U.S. (National Center for Education Statistics n.d.) and the explosion in the number of charters is one such way to get at some of this (Adamson and Darling-Hammond 2016; Ravitch 2013; Verger et al. 2016). Beyond profit, there is an ideological element at play. Kevin Welner, director of the National Education Policy Center at the University of Colorado-Boulder, states "[Those who promote the proliferation of charters] like charters in part because they decrease the publicness of public schools. They want a

system much more based on the market forces because they don't trust democracy" (Capital and Main 2016, June 2). As UCLA's Rogers states:

> If funders like Eli Broad or the Walton Family Foundation were truly committed to education equality," says John Rogers, an education professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, "they could have taken steps to simply support reducing class size or after-school [activities] or summer programs that would provide more educational opportunity, rather than try to invest in strategies to undermine the capacities of a school district. The primary aim is to dismantle the school district as a whole and replace it with a new way of doing public education (Capital and Main 2016, June 2).

Jason Mandell, CCSA's director of Advocacy Communications, says that the charter lobby's political action arm gives money in an effort to ensure that charter schools get a fair hearing on school boards.

> We hope for school board members who understand charter schools and are supportive of their growth, or at least the high performing ones," he says. "There are folks who are opposed to charter schools, period, regardless of their impact on students. We think the communities are better served by having school board members not so ideologically extreme and who are happy to support charters when they are performing well and helping kids. School boards make real decisions on charter schools (Capital and Main 2016, June 2).

The Eli Broad foundation has a plan to increase charter schools in Los Angeles Unified, the state's largest and the nation's second largest school district. The foundation is a stark critic of public education and champions the use of business-like practices, specifically entrepreneurship, and profit-seeking in education (Heilig 2013, October 4). As an example, for many years it awarded school districts for raising test scores (Rich 2015, February 9). It has an endowment of $2.5 billion much of it earmarked for their neoliberal education goals (Heilig 2013, October 4).

In short, California is one of the many battlegrounds (and, certainly, the biggest) of the struggle between the public and private in U.S. education. Still, state politics in California are dominated by the Democratic party which, one would assume, is more prone to supporting the public good rather than the private given their history, from Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal" to Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" and Bill Clinton's and Barack Obama's attempts to provide healthcare for all. However, when it comes to education, the powers of the marketplace, supported by heavy lobbying in order to expose the hundreds of billions of dollars to be gained from various levels of government's funding of public education (Verger et al. 2016). The allure of simply relying on test scores as compared to, for example, The California Way or the Somerville system, is difficult to resist for cash-strapped and time-sapped school and district administrators. The California Way's support of a more nuanced and inclusive system (and, thus, more robust and meaningful (see Koretz 2017; Schneider 2017)) is needed to ensure that school administrators and, especially, policy makers do not succumb to the seductions of the relatively simplistic testing regimens.

14.7 The California Way's Impact on School Leaders

Given the increased responsibility and flexibility this expansive reform may offer to schools, the principal should become even more of a key to her building's success—and failure. NCLB brought with it sanctions for what was deemed systematic ineffectiveness; that is, lack of increases in test scores. These sanctions were in the following sequence:

1. the removal of the principal
2. a reconstitution of the faculty
3. a shut down of the school (Klein 2015, April 10).

These "sticks" were accompanied by the "carrots" of additional funds for improved test scores, and this improvement must have been found across all demographics in the schools in order for the carrots to be awarded (Ravitch 2010). Both the rewards and punishments naturally caused the principals and teachers to go into "test-prep" mode as their jobs literally depended on it (Tienken and Orlich 2013; Wolk 2011). The well-known quote by the late sociologist Donald Campbell known simply as "Campbell's Law" states:

> The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision-making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it was intended to monitor. (Campbell 1976, p. 49).

In the same article where this quote is extracted, Campbell also warned against such distortions as "creaming" (Campbell 1976, p. 51) which critics of charter schools say are often employed (Adamson and Darling-Hammond 2016; Ravitch 2013). That is, the schools will take only those students who will score well on tests, making the schools look successful; and, of course, there were publicized incidents of data manipulation and other devious tactics. Educators in such large school districts as Houston, Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. schools were found and/or accused of changing tests scores during the NCLB era (Ravitch 2013).

By removing the great burden of testing from teachers and principals, schools can direct their attentions to learning beyond what can be measured by tests (see Koretz 2017; Schneider 2017; Tienken and Orlich 2013). California is attempting to do just this. The principal's role is now transforming from that of testing manager/promoter to that of instructional leader or "learning leader" (see Fullan et al. 2018). She can now spend more resources (time and energy as well money) to create a healthy culture that supports the need for improved, holistic learning, one that fosters the emotional and social health of the child. And, under LCAP, can have a better access to funds earmarked for to meet her school's needs. Perhaps, the overused and impersonal term "learner" will be replaced by that of "child" (or "person" when considering college and adult education); thereby, shining light on the needs of the body and soul as well as the brain (see Zhou and Gearin 2018). This type of social-emotional intelligence is promoted in some alternative accountability systems (see Schneider 2017) and are meant be adapted and adopted by the schools and districts in the Golden State.

The principal's role should broaden to embrace her external community, as well as the internal (school). Instead of the principal simply being the key scapegoat of poor test scores, the mandated enlistment of community councils in the LCFF policies would seemingly position her to be more responsive to the needs of the community and to create meaningful relationships with members of that community (see Glaze 2018).

As discussed above, The California Way and ESSA of 2015 acknowledge the need to have alternative measures for school quality besides merely standardized tests. This may be a crucial point in U.S. education as it can use the successes of California's endeavors to move toward a more inclusive, a more well-rounded accountability system to meet the needs of the global economy and society (see Fullan et al. 2018; Sahlberg 2012; Verger et al. 2016; Wagner 2012; Zhao 2018). Psychologists such as Goleman (2005) and Ryan and Deci (2017) as well as a plethora of educators going back to Maria Montessori in the nineteenth century (see Gutek and Gutek 2017) and John Dewey in the early twentieth (Dewey 1900/1990) have advocated the need to teach the *whole child*. This type of education, as many current scholars in various fields (e.g., Chomsky and Macedo 2004; Reich 2016) profess, will allow the children and adolescents of California to be worthwhile contributors to the economy and, more important, to the society, at large (Zhao 2012). These contributions, especially those addressing society's needs, are crucial for the future of the state, the nation, and the *global village* in which all must exist.

14.8 Conclusion

In a foreshadowing of the ESSA of 2015, the Golden State enacted The California Way, a reform that utilizes a multi-faceted accountability system to empower local authorities, specifically the school principal, as well as de-emphasize the use of standardized testing. Through the use of multiple measures of school success, principals (and other local education leaders) must collectively determine needs and solutions to improve student learning and the overall learning environment. This opportunity for a more nuanced approach to creating quality, increases the responsibility which will fall on local units; however, with this responsibility comes more power, including flexibility, to create a culture that meets the explicit needs of their individual schools. The principal's approach must be one in which she collaborates with all stakeholders both inside and outside the school campus, developing and enacting a plan (LCAP) that will seek and, ostensibly, appropriately use funds allowed through the LCFF.

This chapter identifies some challenges to enacting The California Way including its inherent complexity as it has the potential to overwhelm the school principal, causing her to simply write a plan without the necessary inputs and safeguards to successful implementation. The changing role of the school leader is analyzed through the lens of leadership theory, while the various pitfalls that could away the reform are examined using school reform theories. This examination attempts to place The California Way in national and global contexts.

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