

# Monterey County Office of Education

*Leadership, Support, and Service to Prepare All Students for Success*

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County Superintendent of Schools

## Sustainable Programs Serving Court and Community School Students

### Summary

Students served by juvenile court and community schools often face unique barriers to academic achievement and social-emotional well-being. This proposal brings greater equity to these students by ensuring access to robust services and supports.

### Background

Juvenile court schools and county community schools offer alternative education opportunities for students who face unique challenges.

*Juvenile court schools* provide public education for students who are incarcerated in facilities operated by county probation departments.

*Community schools* provide opportunities for students to prepare for post-secondary education, meet graduation requirements, access quality prenatal and parenting education, and receive health and other important services. Most students who attend a county community school have not experienced educational success in their home district for a variety of reasons. Some struggle with attendance, others have experienced bullying, some need a more flexible schedule, some have been expelled from their home school due to severe disciplinary actions, and some are parenting teens. The vast majority of the students we serve in these programs have experienced trauma and have high ACE scores.

Court and Community Schools are operated by county offices of education and are designed to support the achievement of all students through individualized academic, social-emotional, and career-technical education courses of study. Students frequently attend Juvenile Court and Community Schools for a short period of time and ultimately return to a comprehensive school.

Despite serving students with the greatest needs, the existing funding for juvenile court and community schools is both insufficient and unpredictable. County offices fund the annual deficits in their court and community school programs by diverting general operating resources. However, as county offices serve fewer students and as enrollment continues to decline, it is becoming more difficult to stay in the black. Reducing staff as student counts decline is not possible because staff reductions require March 15th notices and cannot be made midyear. Due to the great needs of the students (academic gaps, social and emotional challenges, severe trauma, safety issues, etc.) the services are still needed no matter how many students are served.

Because these programs operate year-round and have highly specialized staffing needs, costs are relatively fixed. But actual funding, based on average daily attendance (ADA), is highly variable since

students enter and exit the schools frequently throughout the calendar year. Attendance is based on referrals from probation departments, school districts, and families. The decline in referrals has outpaced statewide declining enrollment trends, which is positive, but does not change the baseline need for these important programs to continue providing an educational safety net. In addition, several grants such as CTEIG (Career Technical Education Incentive Grant) are designed for comprehensive high schools (requiring continued enrollment of at least 2 years). Alternative education students are in the most need of accessing hands-on projects and opportunities, including but not limited to career technical education pathways.

## Issue

For juvenile court and community schools, the current ADA-based funding model does not work. The volatility and insufficiency of resources creates perennial financial uncertainty for student programs, dedicated teachers, mental health professionals, and other support staff. After COVID, students' academic and socio-emotional needs have increased, requiring more support, and therefore increased staff in place. Additionally, juvenile court schools face new challenges with students returning to local juvenile facilities due to the realignment of the Department of Juvenile Justice.

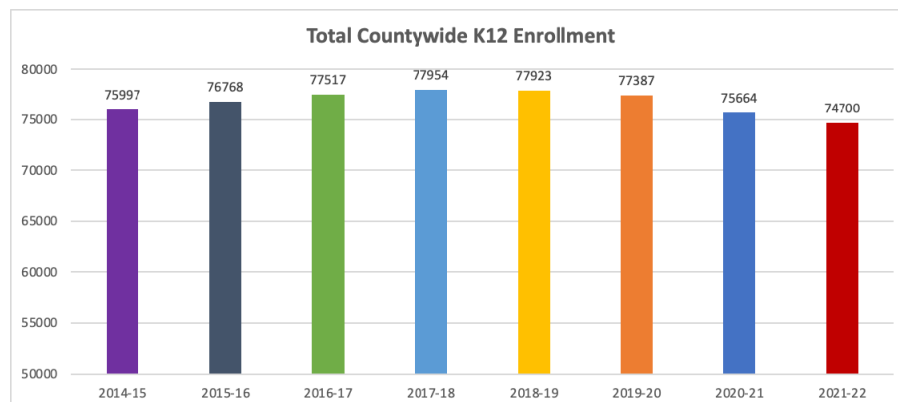
An attendance-based funding model also underserves juvenile court and community school students in two ways. First, funding based on ADA is designed to incentivize keeping students in a program, rather than proactively helping students return to their comprehensive campuses. Second, funding based exclusively on ADA is not appropriate for specialized programs with unpredictable enrollment levels that fluctuate throughout the school year.

## Solution

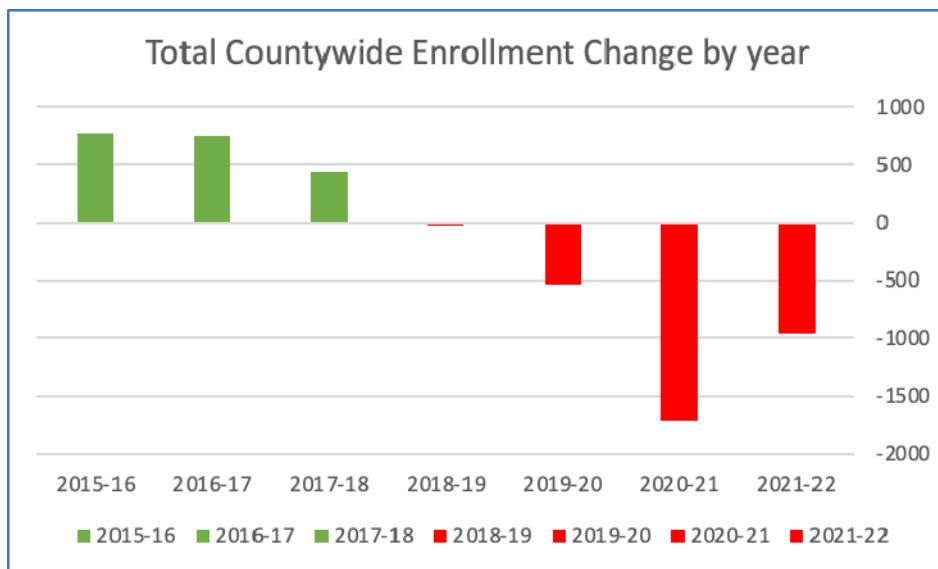
Funding for juvenile court and community schools should be included within a county office's base grant. A standardized funding level based on the countywide factors will protect high-quality programs from annual funding disruptions by providing sufficient and predictable resources. The state should invest in these students so they gain the academic, career readiness and social-emotional skills necessary to succeed.

## Example of Variable Enrollment and Funding

### *Monterey County Enrollment Counts by Year*



K-12 Enrollment	School Year
2014-15	75,997
2015-16	76,768
2016-17	77,517
2017-18	77,954
2018-19	77,923
2019-20	77,387
2020-21	75,664
2021-22	74,700



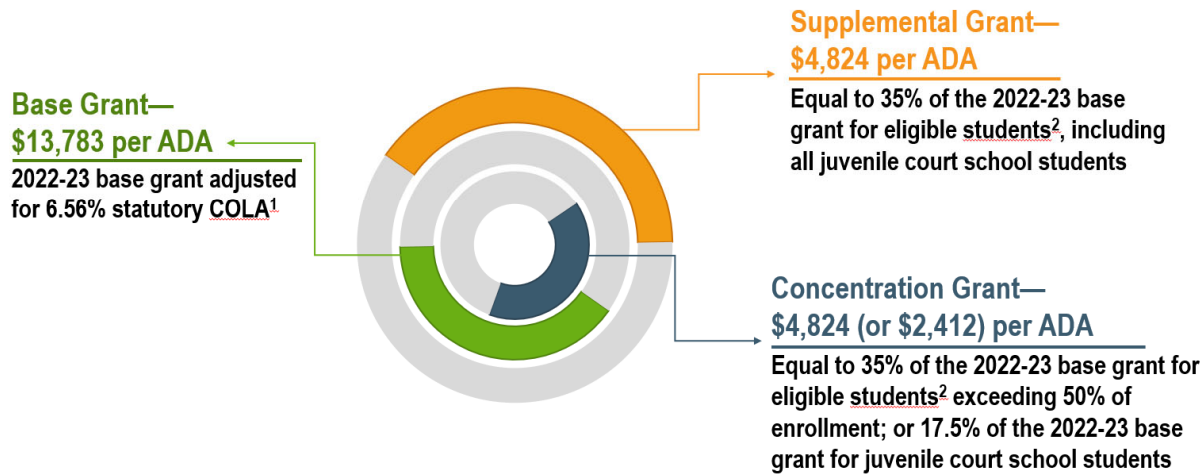
**Key Highlights:** The last two years are the lowest total countywide enrollment over the past eight years, continuing a steady decline since a peak enrollment of 77,954 in the 2017-18 school year. Total enrollment dipped below the 75,000 mark for the first time in eight years for the 2021-22 school year.

**Enrollment Counts for MCOE Alternative Education by Year**

Name	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Open Door							27	44
Salinas Community	238	235	234	190	143	142	128	110
Wellington Smith	70	81	71	56	52	47	45	43

*\*Census Day enrollment counts*

## County Office of Education LCFF—Alternative Education Grant



<sup>1</sup>Note that COEs currently above their LCFF entitlement will not see the benefits of the COLA

<sup>2</sup>UPP is based on eligible students enrolled in COE programs meeting eligibility criteria for supplemental and concentration grants

### Non-Juvenile and Juvenile Court ADA and funding, by County (2021-22, **Annual**)

**Objective:** Demonstrate the COE local contribution for non-juvenile court and juvenile court schools.

**Instruction:** Please input your 2021-22 annual data in columns (E)–(N).

COE	Non-Juvenile Court (21-22 Annual)			Juvenile Court (21-22 Annual)		
	ADA	Total State Grant Revenue	Actual Expenditures	ADA	Total State Grant Revenue	Actual Expenditures
Monterey COE	29.04	\$ 545,627	\$ 1,579,045	48.90	\$ 964,553	\$ 2,547,529

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