



FCMAT

FISCAL CRISIS &
MANAGEMENT
ASSISTANCE TEAM

About FCMAT

The Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) was created by Assembly Bill 1200 in 1991 as an independent and external state agency. FCMAT's mission is to support California's transitional kindergarten through grade 14 (TK-14) local educational agencies (LEAs) with meeting their financial and management responsibilities. FCMAT services help LEAs identify, prevent and resolve financial, operational and data management challenges. They also build capacity in school business leadership by providing school personnel with comprehensive support, including fiscal advice, management assistance, training, and other related school business services.

FCMAT's support has continuously grown and evolved in response to the changing needs of TK-14 LEAs and the implementation of major educational reforms. Its services are used to prevent fiscal crises, enhance organizational efficiency, promote sound financial practices, and facilitate the training and development of school personnel. Additionally, FCMAT's data management services play a crucial role in helping LEAs improve data quality so they can make well-informed decisions regarding instructional programs and fulfill state reporting responsibilities.

Since its inception, FCMAT has performed more than 1,400 reviews for LEAs, including TK-12 school districts, county offices of education, community colleges and charter schools. Eighty percent of FCMAT's work is the result of an LEA inviting FCMAT to provide management assistance services or professional learning. The remaining 20% comes from the state Legislature and other oversight agencies, which task FCMAT with conducting fiscal crisis interventions, including fiscal health risk analyses (FHRAs) and extraordinary audits.

FCMAT is funded through appropriations in the state budget and modest fees from requesting agencies.

Management Assistance and Crisis Intervention

County offices of education, school districts, charter schools and community colleges may request that FCMAT provide management assistance related to fiscal health or operations, on-site technical assistance, or professional learning. County superintendents of schools, the superintendent of public instruction, the California Community Colleges Board of Governors or the state Legislature can also assign FCMAT to provide assistance with fiscal crises or management challenges.

Since 2018, FCMAT has been conducting FHRAs to assess the level of risk for insolvency for LEAs that have any of the following: a disapproved budget; a negative interim report certification; three consecutive qualified interim report certifications; a downgrade of an interim certification by the county superintendent; or a lack of going concern designation by the county superintendent.

When FCMAT receives a request or assignment, it collaborates closely with the requestor to establish the scope of work. It then assembles a team to conduct on-site fieldwork. After completing the fieldwork, the team develops a report that includes findings and recommendations to help the LEA identify and resolve issues, overcome challenges and plan for the future.

FCMAT Resources

Projection-Pro Software

FCMAT's online multiyear financial and cash flow projection software is specifically designed for LEAs and available at no cost. This software is used by oversight agencies and multiple types of LEAs, including school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools.

Projection-Pro builds a foundational multiyear and cash flow projection based on best practices and statewide economic assumptions. LEAs can customize these foundational projections with local information, resulting in comprehensive projections that can be used to help prepare budgets, interim reports and year-end financial reports. Moreover, these projections can also be used to conduct analyses and evaluate various "what if" scenarios pertaining to collective bargaining, Local Control and Accountability Plan planning and more.

Special Education Efficiency Tool

FCMAT developed an Efficiency Tool for Special Education to analyze various areas related to special education. The intent is that the tool will foster collaboration between fiscal and special education staff and facilitate discussions about how to provide the best services for students in the most efficient manner and the least restrictive environment. The tool has 21 questions designed to help LEAs identify areas that may need additional attention, such as special education identification rates, staffing/caseloads and nonpublic school/nonpublic agency costs.

Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Calculators for County Offices, School Districts and Charter Schools

FCMAT developed Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) calculators to help LEAs compute their LCFF entitlements. Two calculators are available, with each one specifically designed for either county offices of education or school districts and charter schools. They are updated twice a year, in the second quarter (May) and the third quarter (July), to align with the latest state budget proposal or enactment, and the latest data certified by the California Department of Education (CDE). Additional updates may be necessary in the event of legislative changes or material errors.

Fiscally Accountable/Independent Risk Analysis

FCMAT developed the Fiscally Accountable/Independent Risk Analysis management tool to help county superintendents of schools determine whether fiscally accountable or fiscally independent school districts, as defined by Education Codes 42647 and 42650, have the internal controls required to maintain their fiscally accountable or fiscally independent status.

Online Help Desk

The FCMAT help desk provides guidance related to a variety of school business and operations in California. Responses are intended to share FCMAT's opinions and expertise, and FCMAT staff usually respond to requests within 48 hours. An archive of past questions and responses is also available online.

Fiscal Health Risk Analysis (FHRA)

FCMAT developed the FHRA as a tool to evaluate an LEA's fiscal health and risk of insolvency in the current and two subsequent fiscal years. Each section includes areas that are critical to LEAs' operations and that will result in fiscal insolvency and the loss of local control if not addressed. The tool has three versions, each one specific to TK-12 school districts, charter schools, or community colleges. It may also be used by LEAs for self-assessment.

Indicators of Risk or Potential Insolvency

FCMAT compiled a list of Indicators of Risk or Potential Insolvency based on more than 30 years of experience with LEAs. Each indicator signifies a lack of function, commitment or attention to one or more elements that are critical to LEAs' operations. The existence of any one of these indicators increases the risk of insolvency and the need for assistance from outside agencies and will result in fiscal insolvency and the loss of local control if not addressed. The list has three versions, each one specific to TK-12 school districts, charter schools and community college districts. County superintendents of schools can also use this tool to identify a need for progressive intervention as well as to develop their basis of determination for a lack of going concern.

Charter School Annual Oversight Checklist

FCMAT developed the Charter School Annual Oversight Checklist to help charter schools and their authorizers address their annual oversight responsibilities. This checklist is based on best practices for operation and oversight to help users determine whether an authorized charter school needs support. It is intended to serve as both an internal review document and a communication tool.

Professional Learning Services

FCMAT's professional learning services support its mission to help LEAs identify, prevent and resolve financial, operational and data management challenges by building capacity in school business leadership.

FCMAT delivers and partners with other organizations to deliver quality professional learning for personnel in county offices, TK-12 school districts, charter schools and community colleges. Offered in both in-person and virtual formats, professional learning includes regional and LEA-specific programs designed to foster professional growth in four distinct ways: (1) workshops developed and presented by FCMAT; (2) leadership preparation programs; (3) partnerships with other agencies and private organizations; and (4) speaking engagements.

FCMAT continues to develop and expand its publications, software, tools, resources, workshops, and professional learning opportunities that help LEAs operate more effectively and fulfill their fiscal oversight and data management responsibilities.

Chief Business Official (CBO) Mentor Program

The FCMAT Chief Business Officials (CBO) Mentor Program is designed to help meet the need for qualified and well-trained California LEA CBOs. This yearlong program provides classroom training in 12 two-day sessions. Each participant is assigned a mentor who is a qualified and experienced CBO or recognized expert in their field, and who is available to support and assist the participant as needed. The program serves approximately 25-30 participants per year.

Participants submit an application and undergo a nomination and selection process. No fee is required to participate in the program, but participants or their LEAs must cover all travel and lodging expenses. Program completion qualifies the participant to sit for the CASBO CBO certification exam and apply for the certification.

The FCMAT CBO Mentor Program is one of only three recognized CBO preparation programs in California. Approximately 500 program graduates serve in CBO, superintendent, and leadership positions in LEAs across the state. The program was retooled in 2022, including a revised curriculum and the use of FCMAT staff as facilitators.

CBO Coaching and Induction Program (CIP)

The FCMAT CBO Coaching and Induction Program (CIP) is designed for sitting CBOs who are in their first, second or third year in the role. It is ideally suited to those who have already completed a preparation course. This yearlong program provides classroom training in 12 two-day sessions. Participants are paired with a coach and a peer support group, and professional coaching is provided in both individual and small group settings. The program serves approximately 25 participants each year.

Participants submit an application and undergo a nomination and selection process. No fee is required to participate in the program, but participants or their LEAs must cover all travel and lodging expenses. Each participant's LEA is also asked to contribute \$7,500 towards the cost of the stipend for their participant's coach.

The curriculum is aligned with the day-to-day challenges a CBO may face during an LEA's annual cycle. Monthly topics are presented by program facilitators and recognized professional experts and include budget development and planning, collective bargaining, position control, balance sheet and year-end closing and interim reports. The FHRA tool is also a featured component of the curriculum; each participant will complete an FHRA for their LEA by the program's conclusion.

Publications

To assist LEAs in their many responsibilities, FCMAT has developed and continues to update a number of publications, including: [Associated Student Body Accounting Manual](#), [Fraud Prevention Guide and Desk Reference](#); [Fiscal Oversight Guide](#); [COE Fiscal Procedural Manual](#); and [Charter School Accounting and Best Practices Manual](#).

Data Management

FCMAT's California School Information Services (CSIS) division helps the CDE with the implementation and maintenance of the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) and the new Standardized Account Code System (SACS) Software, the state's LEA financial reporting system. CSIS also hosts and maintains [Ed-Data.org](#).

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