

Calif.'s investment in needy students not paying off

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California's new system for funding public education has pumped tens of billions of extra dollars into struggling schools, but there's little evidence yet that the investment is helping the most disadvantaged students.

A CalMatters analysis of the biggest districts with the greatest clusters of needy children found limited success with the policy's goal: to close the achievement gap between these students and their more privileged peers. Instead, test scores in most of those districts show the gap is growing.

The test scores echo a broader and growing concern about the Local Control Funding Formula from civil rights groups, researchers and legislators.

That formula sends more money to schools with higher concentrations of foster youth, kids learning English and students from low-income families. But four years after it was adopted, there are few signs the program is working, and questions have arisen about whether the \$31 billion invested so far is being spent effectively.

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