

California School News Weekly Update

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# California schoolnews



weekly update



March 11, 2015

## Upcoming Events

**Board Presidents Workshop**  
[March 14 - San Diego](#)

**Institute for New and First-Term Board Members**  
[March 13-14 - San Diego](#)  
[April 17-18 - Redding](#)

**The Brown Act**  
[March 13 - San Diego](#)

**MIG Course 1: Foundations of Effective Governance/Setting Direction**  
[March 13 - San Diego](#)

**MIG Course 2: Student Learning/Policy**  
[March 14 - San Diego](#)  
[March 21 - San Bernardino](#)

**MIG Course 3: School Finance**  
[March 13 - San Diego](#)  
[April 18 - Rancho Cucamonga](#)

**MIG Course 4: Human Resources/Collective Bargaining**  
[March 14 - San Diego](#)  
[May 2 - Riverside](#)

**MIG Course 5: Community Relations & Advocacy/Gov. Integration**  
[March 14 - San Diego](#)  
[May 15 - San Diego](#)

**Board Self-Evaluation and Superintendent Evaluation**  
[April 28 - Sacramento](#)  
[May 4 - San Jose](#)

## News

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REALIZE THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP.

### Legislative Action Day brings CSBA members to Sacramento to advocate for education

**Gov. Brown receives resolutions and letters urging repeal of SB 858 reserve cap**



CSBA members deliver resolutions and letters to Gov. Brown during Legislative Action Day.

More than 150 CSBA members from districts large and small walked the halls of the state Capitol March 10, meeting with their Assembly and Senate representatives to advocate for public education. Meanwhile, at noon, CSBA President Jesús M. Holguín and CEO & Executive Director Vernon M. Billy personally delivered more than 800 letters and resolutions urging the **repeal of a reserve cap** on school district savings to Gov. Jerry Brown's office. Both Holguín and Billy

stressed that repealing the cap on school district reserve funds contained in Senate Bill 858 is CSBA's top legislative priority in 2015, as it undermines local control and limits school districts ability to save. "There is no sound policy reason for the reserve cap," Billy said in remarks to members at a morning briefing at the Capitol. School board members and educational leaders shared that message with their representatives. They also advocated for budget and funding adequacy, state support on transportation, the importance of a state partnership in school facilities bonds and other education policy issues. "Education is the rising tide that lifts all boats," Susan Walsh of the Merced City School District said in a meeting at Sen. Anthony

## CSBA Training for Executive Assistants

April 28 - Sacramento  
May 4 - San Jose

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Cannella's office. [Legislative Action Day](#) included morning briefings at the Capitol, talking points, advocacy tips and other resources for members. To view more photos, visit CSBA's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages.

## Two recent court decisions favor districts

***CSBA's Education Legal Alliance filed amicus briefs in both cases***

Last week, two appellate court decisions were announced favoring school districts. The first case, Berkeley Hillside Preservation v. City of Berkeley, addressed the "significant effects" exception to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) categorical exemptions. Districts commonly use the categorical exemption because it permits building up to 10 classrooms without a CEQA review. A ruling strengthening the "significant effects" exception would have made it more difficult and expensive to use the categorical exemptions. In this case, a local preservation group had challenged a city's failure to apply the "significant effects" exception with respect to the construction of a large residence. In January 2013, the ELA filed an amicus brief in this matter that was joined by the UC Board Regents and the CSU Board of Trustees. On March 2, 2015, the California Supreme Court ruled in favor of the district and the ELA by finding that a public agency does not have to use the "significant effects" exception when relatively routine projects are at issue.

The second case, C.W. v. Capistrano USD, addressed attorney's fees to a district due to a special education lawsuit that was found to be frivolous, unreasonable and without foundation and pursued for the improper purpose of harassment, unnecessary delay, and needlessly increasing litigation costs. The plaintiff brought the lawsuit under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), section 1983 of title 42 of the United States Code, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The lawsuit was brought despite the district having identified five "unique needs" and fourteen "accommodations" to assist the student in the classroom under the IEP. Moreover, the parent/guardian had further objected to an assessment that was done to determine what more the district could do for the student. The ELA filed an amicus in support of the district in August 2013. On March 2, 2015, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed attorney fees to the district for the ADA and Section 1983 claims as being frivolous, but also ruled that the IDEA and Section 504 claims were not frivolous so no fees should have been awarded on those claims. [Click here](#) for more on these decisions.

## Special Education Task Force releases report

***Report recommends establishing one education system for all students***

In a [report](#) issued on Friday, March 6, the Statewide Special Education Task Force called for a unified education system in which all children, including students with disabilities, are considered general education students, above all. "One System: Reforming Education to Serve ALL Students" proposes that general education and special education work together to address the needs of students as soon as they become apparent — from birth until the age of 22. The Task Force, commissioned by State Board of Education President Michael Kirst and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing Chair Linda Darling-Hammond, is composed of more than 30 parents, advocates, teachers, administrators and other education stakeholders. Between December 2013 and January 2015, the stakeholders met through Task Force and subcommittee meetings that were organized into

focus areas. Additionally, public forums were held throughout the state in order to collect a broad range of input. This work culminated in final recommendations in seven areas: early learning; evidence-based school and classroom practices; educator preparation and professional learning; assessment; accountability; family and student engagement; and special education financing. The Task Force will present its report at the [SBE meeting](#) on Wednesday, March 11.

### **Now is the time to plan a summer meals program** *CDE-administered program helps schools provide healthy meals to students*

In California, of the 2.5 million children who eat a free or reduced-price lunch during the school year, only about 18 percent eat a similar meal over the summer. The California Department of Education administers two programs to help school districts and community leaders provide quality meals to children during the summer months. The federally funded Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) reimburses schools and private nonprofit agencies for the administrative and operational costs of providing meals to children ages 18 and younger during periods when students are out of school for 15 or more consecutive days. The Seamless Summer Feeding Option (SSFO) lets public schools combine features of the School Nutrition Programs and the SFSP, while reducing paperwork requirements. Besides sponsoring summer meal programs, other ways that schools can help include (1) coordinating with community organizations to provide meals in safe off-school sites, (2) encouraging education leaders and youth to volunteer their assistance with summer learning programs in conjunction with summer meal programs, (3) partnering with local libraries to promote meal programs, and (4) contacting parents in June informing them of the locations and dates of area [summer meal sites](#). Find more information about SFSP and SSFO on the CDE's [Summer Meals Programs Web page](#). Also read [CSBA's February newsletter article](#) on why it's important to start planning a summer meals program now.

### **New California State PTA website** *CSBA's Immediate Past President Josephine Lucey featured in video*

The California State PTA has updated its website. While it may look different, the most frequently visited pages still have the same direct links. [Capta.org's](#) new design targets [family engagement](#), [Common Core State Standards](#), [LCFF](#) and [LCAP](#). The website also has information about advocacy, student health and safety, education, anti-bullying, and more. Spread the word about the valuable resources on the California State PTA site and don't forget to watch CSBA's Immediate Past President Josephine Lucey in a recent [Family Engagement Roundtable](#). Together with the National PTA's Take Your Family to School Week in February, the webinar discussed meaningful ways families and schools can work together. Other panelists included Otha Thornton, National PTA President; Dr. Arturo Delgado, Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools; Justine Fischer, California State PTA President-Elect; and Dr. Ramona Bishop, California Association of African-American Superintendents and Administrators President-Elect and Vallejo Unified School District Superintendent.

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## Events, Training and Opportunities



### IRS accepting applications for renewable energy bonds to fund solar projects

**Register for CSBA webinar to take advantage of bond program to start saving money**

Learn how your district can take advantage of new, clean, renewable bonds to fund solar projects. The IRS is accepting applications now for self-funding solar projects, so register for the CSBA webinar to hear about case studies on the following school districts: Mt. Diablo USD, Antioch USD and San Ramon USD. Presenters include Neal Skiver, senior vice president, George K. Baum & Company; and Bruce Dickinson, director, public & education, SunPower Corporation. The webinar, "Use Low-Interest Bond Programs to Fund Solar Projects," will air Thursday, March 19, 2015, from noon to 1 p.m.

[Registration](#) closes Tuesday, March 17 at 5 p.m.

## Member Services

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### Boost your general fund with solar from SunPower

Did you know that CSBA partners with SunPower Corporation to deliver and install the world's most efficient solar solutions for California's school districts and county offices of education? Solar can help you reduce energy costs and demonstrate environmental leadership in your schools. SunPower also offers a Solar Science Academy, professional development for teachers, student-work based learning experiences, and nationally acclaimed STEM curriculum programs in collaboration with Project Lead the Way. Find out how the new financing and government programs can drive immediate and significant savings to your general operating fund. Visit our [Solar Schools Program Web page](#) or call 512-735-0328 today to learn more.

***CSBA provides unparalleled advocacy, information and support services for school districts, county offices of education and ROCs/Ps.***

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