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California schoolnews

Weekly Update

March 24, 2021

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Broadband for All Bond Act of 2022 announced



In an effort to address the digital divide, **Assemblymembers Al Muratsuchi (D-Torrance), Miguel Santiago (D-Los Angeles) and Eduardo Garcia (D-Coachella)** announced in a [press conference](#) on **March 23 Assembly Bill 34**, the **Broadband for All Bond Act of 2022**. The \$10 billion general obligation bond, which may appear on the **November 2022 ballot**, would expand public

broadband infrastructure to address the digital divide and provide access to high-speed, affordable, reliable internet for Californians — especially those in unserved and underserved communities. The bond funds would go to support school districts and other institutions.

CSBA President-elect Dr. Susan Heredia shared at the virtual press conference the **personal stories of families throughout the state who have to sit in school or shopping center parking lots to get internet — and even those don't have enough broadband service for children and parents to complete their work at the same time.** “When you think about the 1 million students in California who lack this reliable internet, we’re depriving them of their constitutional right to a fair and equal education,” Heredia said. “In California, where we’re the fifth-largest economy in the world and the center of the global technology industry, it’s unconscionable that one in five students in this state can’t get online.” **Assemblymember Muratsuchi thanked CSBA for its consistent advocacy and support for universal broadband since the earliest days of the COVID-19 pandemic.** When schools closed across California last March, CSBA leapt into action proposing a \$2 billion bond to address the broadband access issues that students were facing. [Read more on the CSBA blog](#) »

SB 95 creates new supplemental leave for COVID-19 related purposes



On March 19, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed **Senate Bill 95** into law. **Effective March 29, 2021, SB 95 creates a new bank of leave for COVID-19 related purposes — called supplemental paid sick leave — for employees, including employees of local educational agencies.** This is a new bank of leave that is in addition to any leave

employees may have received under the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act before Dec. 31, 2020.

Under SB 95, **full-time employees are entitled to 80 hours of paid leave while part-time employees are entitled to a proportionate amount of leave.** An employee may **only take supplemental paid sick leave if they are:** subject to a quarantine or isolation order; advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine; attending an appointment to receive a COVID-19 vaccine or experiencing symptoms related to a COVID-19 vaccine that prevent the employee from working or teleworking; experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis; caring for a family member subject to quarantine; or caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed or unavailable due to COVID-19.

LEA's may not require employees to use other accrued leaves before using supplemental paid sick leave under SB 95. **SB 95 goes into effect on March 29 and is retroactive to Jan. 1, 2021. Upon verbal request by an employee,** LEAs must retroactively pay the employee for leave taken after Jan. 1, 2021 for which the LEA did not compensate them as required by SB 95. **SB 95's requirements expire on Sept. 30, 2021.**

COVID update: CDPH, CDC announce new distancing guidance for schools



The California Department of Public Health on March 20 updated **its operational guidance** for K-12 schools. The update **recommends a new spacing standard for K-12 schools of 3 feet between student seats**, following the lead of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and addressing part of the **Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) issued by Judge Cynthia Freeland of the San**

Diego County Superior Court on March 17. The CDC on **March 19 updated its physical distancing recommendations for K-12 students in classrooms** to reflect the latest science, which **reduces recommended distancing between students to 3 feet.** In line with this change, the updated **CDPH guidance strongly recommends 3 feet of distance between student chairs**, so long as schools are implementing other mitigation measures. **Both CDC and CDPH maintain that adults should still remain 6 feet from each other and students.** While CDC guidance continues to distinguish between grade levels for these relaxed distancing guidelines (recommending greater distancing between students in grades seven through 12 in high-transmission communities), making such grade-level distinctions is currently unconstitutional in California.

An additional update stating that **all schools at all grade levels are eligible to open if located in counties with positive case rates below 25 per 100,000 population also addresses part of the TRO.** Regardless of their tier, schools must post their COVID safety plans online at least five days before reopening. The updated CDPH Framework did not revise the definition of "reopened schools," though part of Judge Freeland's order prohibited the state from enforcing that provision. Judge Freeland will likely address this in her order on the preliminary injunction on April 1, 2021. [Learn more »](#)

In other COVID-19 developments:

- A partnership between the state's COVID-19 Testing Task Force and the California Department of Education announced March 18 will distribute **up to 3 million rapid COVID-19 antigen tests to school districts in regions most affected by the pandemic and those who serve large numbers of high-risk students and families free of cost.** The effort to support a safe return to campuses is an expansion of the existing Safely Opening Schools pilot program that launched in January and currently includes 11 districts. The **tests provide results within 15 minutes and can assist in identifying asymptomatic or presymptomatic individuals.** The CDE is helping to coordinate and reach out to high-need districts using the [Healthy Places Index](#). Districts that aren't part of the partnership can find resources on how to provide COVID-19 testing on the California COVID-19 Testing Task Force [website](#). [Learn more »](#)

Legislative Action Week lets board members advocate virtually



More than 370 board members and superintendents representing local educational agencies across the state came together March 15–19 for CSBA’s **Legislative Action Week** to meet with their state senators and assemblymembers — all from the comfort of their own homes and offices. **Board members’ local perspective was especially valuable as the Senate and**

Assembly continue to develop the state budget for 2021–22. Those participating in Legislative Action Week were able to share their feedback on the budget plan Gov. Gavin Newsom proposed in January and **advocate for the needs of their schools and students, including for funding, broadband access and liability relief.** Cupertino Union School District trustee Lori Cunningham summarized the spirit of the event in an interview. “No one will advocate for us unless we are also willing to do the work of advocating for ourselves,” she said. “They need to hear the firsthand stories and real-world implications of the decisions they are making in Sacramento.” The virtual format allowed a record number of participants from across the state. [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

State Board of Education adopts Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

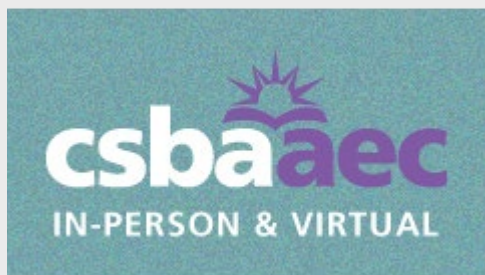


The **State Board of Education met virtually March 16–18** to discuss a number of big-ticket items including the **adoption of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, waivers from federal assessment requirements and more.** It has been a more than four-year-long process to bring the model curriculum forward. CDE staff fielded more than 100,000 comments across three field reviews, which

resulted in more than 200 edits to the draft model curriculum, including the addition of more than two dozen submitted sample lessons. **As the SBE voted to adopt the model curriculum, several members noted it is just that — a model that schools can choose to adopt and that can be adjusted to local demographics and experiences of their communities.**

The **State Board also approved the submission of several waivers regarding assessment accountability to the U.S. Department of Education.** One would relieve any consequences for the state if less than 95 percent of students are tested; another would extend the timeframe an extra two weeks for administering all tests, until July 30, 2021; and a third is seeking relief for the administration of the California Science Tests for the 2020–21 school year. [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

2021 AEC Call for Proposals open through May 20



CSBA is **now accepting workshop proposals for the 2021 Annual Education Conference and Trade Show.** AEC is the place to **showcase your district’s innovative and successful programs and ideas. Submit a proposal by May 20 to present either in person Dec. 2–4 or virtually Dec. 9–10.** [Learn more »](#)

California School News March issue online now



The **March issue of California Schools News** takes a deeper look at the **\$6.6 billion school reopening bill and the additional \$15 billion from the federal American Rescue Plan Act.** Also featured are articles on **President Joe Biden’s executive orders addressing immigration** and how **policies addressing bullying, discrimination, harassment and hate violence can support**

a positive school climate. The issue also **celebrates Arts Education Month** and covers how one district incorporates the arts into its everyday curriculum. [Read the March newsletter »](#)

SI&A offers answers beyond hold harmless



While the extension of average daily attendance hold harmless comes as a relief, it's a short-term solution for a long-term problem. Districts still face many challenges and need a systematic approach to handle declining enrollment and high rates of absenteeism. As you focus on reopening classrooms, let SI&A's

Attention2Attendance (the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support of attendance) help create a much-needed culture of showing up that will improve attendance and find missing students — right now before the end of this school year. [Learn more »](#)

COVID-19 resources

Stay up to date with the latest news and resources related to COVID-19 on [CSBA's dedicated webpage](#) and with articles frequently posted on the newly redesigned [CSBA blog](#).

Virtual events

MIG Course 2: Policy & Judicial Review / Student Learning & Achievement
March 26-27 | **SOLD OUT**

Governance with an Equity Lens: A Systemic Approach to Closing Equity Gaps in Public Education
March 27 | **Registration closed**

MIG Course 4: Human Resources/Collective Bargaining
May 21-22 | **Registration closed**

MIG Course 5: Community Relations & Advocacy/Governance Integration
June 11-12 | **Registration closed**

2021 Executive Assistants Certification Program (Gamma Cohort)
July 30 - Nov. 5 | [Register here](#)

[View complete calendar](#)

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