

# California schoolnews

Weekly Update

April 14, 2021

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## COVID-19 update: California granted assessment flexibility; criteria questions remain



California has been **granted some assessment flexibility** by the U.S. Department of Education. The state's **waiver requests regarding accountability, school identification and related reporting requirements for the 2020–21 school year was approved April 6.** In a **separate letter**, the department advised the state that it **does not have to submit a waiver**

**application to use alternate local assessments**, which may only be used “where the state concludes it is not viable to administer the assessment because of the pandemic.”

A footnote to the letter states that “**viability refers to the ability to administer the statewide summative assessment given a district's specific circumstances in the context of the pandemic. It does not provide an opportunity for states or school districts to choose to administer local assessments in place of the statewide summative assessment.**” It is not clear what factors will determine if a local educational agency's administration of the summative assessments is not viable, though the level of in-person instruction is likely to be a consideration. **CSBA will update members as further clarification is made available** from the California Department of Education. [Read more on the CSBA blog](#) »

### In other COVID-19 developments:

- Volume two of the U.S. Department of Education's “**ED COVID-19 Handbook: Roadmap to Reopening Safely and Meeting All Students' Needs**” was published on April 9. The document **provides additional strategies for reopening schools safely and focuses on addressing the social, emotional, mental and academic effects of the pandemic on students and educators.** The document lays out strategies that states, districts, schools and communities can use when implementing funding they have received from the American Rescue Plan.
- President Joe Biden's **requested budget** of \$1.5 trillion for fiscal year 2022 was made public on April 9. It **includes \$102.8 billion for the Department of Education — an increase of 41 percent — with a \$36.5 billion investment in Title I grants.** Besides doubling federal spending on the program, other education-related allocations include \$7.4 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, an \$11.9 billion investment in Head Start, a \$15.5 billion investment in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and a Pell Grant maximum proposed increase of \$400.
- **Responses to the California Department of Education's Device Survey Follow-up are due by close of business this Friday, April 16.** Input from local educational agencies will be used to reassess ongoing device needs among

students and evaluate if additional funding is still needed. **Responses to last year's survey helped secure \$5.2 billion in the last budget, according to CDE. Over \$2 billion went specifically to technology needs.** [Fill out the survey](#) »

## Expanded Learning Opportunity Grant Plans due June 1



The California Department of Education on March 26 released a [template for the Expanded Learning Opportunities Grant Plan](#) that local educational agencies must complete and adopt at a public meeting on or before June 1, 2021, as a condition for receiving the grant.

Approved plans must be submitted to the county office of education, the California Department of Education or the LEA's chartering authority within five days of adoption, as applicable.

Of the \$6.6 billion provided to LEAs in [Assembly Bill 86](#), \$4.6 billion is allocated in the form of ELO Grants, which **can only be spent on extending instructional learning time, accelerating progress to close learning gaps, integrated pupil supports, community learning hubs, additional academic services, training for school staff, and supports for credit-deficient pupils.**

The ELO Grant plan will explain how the LEA will use funds to implement a learning recovery program that, at a minimum, provides supplemental instruction, support for social and emotional well-being, and, to the maximum extent permissible under federal guidelines, meals and snacks to students — particularly those in groups most impacted by the pandemic and school closures. [Read more on the CSBA blog](#) »

## Pension rates on the rise, despite state buy-downs



The California Public Employment and Retirement System (CalPERS) board will meet next week to set the employer contribution rate for schools for the 2021–22 fiscal year. The system's staff has **recommended the board adopt a rate of 22.91 percent** for the period of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. This amount represents an increase of nearly 11 percent over

the current year rate of 20.7 percent. **Due to advocacy by CSBA and board members, the rates for school employers have seen modest drops in the current year and for 2021–22** that have helped bring the rate down 2.9 percentage points and 2.16 percentage points, respectively. However, **if the state does not continue to provide some relief after 2021–22, the rate for 2022–23 will jump 13 percent.** Currently, the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS) estimates are just as stark, taking current year from 16.15 percent to 15.92 percent July 1, and then to 18.1 percent come July 1, 2022 for the 2022–23 fiscal year. [Read more on the CSBA blog](#) »

## Legislative update: CSBA positions



As the legislative season kicks into high gear a number of important bills affecting K-12 education are making their way through the committee process:

- [Assembly Bill 22](#) (McCarty, D-Sacramento) **would establish universal preschool for all 3-year-old children and phase in universal transitional kindergarten beginning in the 2024–25 school year through the 2032–33 school year.** This bill was passed by the Assembly Education Committee on April 8 and is currently in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. *CSBA Position: Support if amended.*
- [AB 388](#) (Medina, D-Riverside) would **expand permanent status for certificated employees** after two-year probationary period for all small school districts and regional occupational programs. This bill was passed by the Assembly Education Committee on March 4 and is currently in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. *CSBA Position: Oppose.*
- [AB 438](#) (Reyes, D-San Bernardino) would **provide the same layoff notices and rights as those afforded to certified employees to classified staff.** Specifically, it would require school districts to issue a layoff notice to classified

staff every March 15. It would also provide that any future layoff notice or hearing rights adopted by statute to certified staff in future years would automatically extend to classified staff. This bill is scheduled to be heard by the Assembly Public Employment and Retirement Committee on April 15. *CSBA Position: Oppose.*

- **Senate Bill 70** (Rubio, D-Baldwin Park) would, **beginning with the 2021–22 school year, require a child to have completed one year of kindergarten before that child may be admitted to the first grade, thereby imposing a state-mandated local program.** This bill was passed by the Senate Education Committee on March 17 and is currently in the Senate Appropriations Committee. *CSBA Position: Disapprove.*

*This is the first of regular legislative updates that will appear in the weekly member eblast.*

## Register for CSBA’s webinar on broadband for California



Join CSBA CEO & Executive Director Vernon M. Billy on **Tuesday, April 20 from 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.** as he leads a discussion on **the critical importance of universal broadband access to California’s K-12 schools** and the state’s economic future. **“Broadband for California: Connecting to Our Promise”** will feature **panelists including Sen. Lena Gonzalez (D-**

**Long Beach), Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi (D-Torrance), East Side Union SD Trustee Lorena Chavez, Earlimart ESD Trustee Abigail Solis, Monterey Peninsula USD Assoc. Supt., Business Services Ryan Altemeyer** and other advocates for closing the digital divide. [Learn more and register »](#)

## ACSA-CSBA Federal Partnership urges local control for FCC Emergency Connectivity Fund



The CSBA–Association of California School Administrator’s Federal Partnership submitted feedback to the Federal Communications Commission’s **\$7.1 Emergency Connectivity Fund** in a letter submitted April 9. The Federal Partnership asked that that agency adopt an equitable, effective and accessible structure for implementing the ECF and **provide a low**

**burden application for school districts to facilitate equitable and rapid distribution of funding.** It also **emphasized the importance of local control in decisions regarding the best methods and technologies for connecting their students in need.** “School district leaders best understand their students’ connectivity and device needs for remote learning.” The letter closes with an eye to the future, stating, “Our districts expect remote learning to be a core part of public education on an ongoing basis, so we urge you to adopt an approach that not only meets students’ immediate needs but also sets the stage for achieving schools’ longer-term home connectivity goals.” [Read the letter »](#)

## Have you started your 2021 GASB report?



The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) establishes accounting reporting standards. **GASB 68 reports are required for pensions that are provided to the employees of state and local governmental employers** through pension plans that are administered through trusts. **GASB 75 reports are required**

**for other postemployment benefits** that are provided to the employees of state and local governmental employers. CSBA offers actuarial services through our partner DFA, LLC. **DFA, LLC provides GASB compliant reports to state and local governmental employers with under 100 participants.** By teaming up with DFA, LLC, we are able to provide the full actuarial valuation for a flat fee of \$2,500 and interim year reports, commonly referred to as disclosure or roll forward reports, for \$1,500. [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

**Webinar: Broadband for California: Connecting to Our Promise**  
April 20 | [Register here](#)

**2021 CCSA Virtual Spring Workshop**  
May 21 | [Register here](#)

**MIG Course 5: Community Relations & Advocacy/Governance Integration**  
June 11-12 | [Registration closed](#)

**2021 Executive Assistants Certification Program (Gamma Cohort)**  
July 30 - Nov. 5 | [Registration closed](#)

**2021 Executive Assistants Certification Program (Delta Cohort)**  
Aug. 13 - Nov. 19 | [Registration closed](#)

[View complete calendar](#)

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