



February 9, 2022

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Legislative update: CSBA urges Legislature and Governor to increase LCFF base

The Budget Act of 2021 saw the overwhelming **majority of funds tied up in categorical programs with eligibility restrictions or in competitive grant programs** that many districts do not have the capacity or resources to access or sustain. And while the 5.33 percent statutory cost-



of-living adjustment (COLA) proposed in Gov. Gavin Newsom's January budget is appreciated, **it is insufficient to meet the needs of local educational agencies as inflation and fixed costs continue to rise** and schools are stretched thin keeping day-to-day operations running.

As negotiations develop, **CSBA is pushing for the Governor and Legislature to focus on increasing funding for the LCFF base beyond**

the statutorily required COLA so districts can allocate those funds in ways that best meet the needs of their specific students and communities. As local governance leaders communicate with their state representatives, here are a few key talking points to stress:

- Recommitment to the LCFF is vital for the day-to-day operation of schools.
- The rising costs of inflation, declining enrollment, pension rate increases, school unemployment fund rate increases, staffing challenges and other cost pressures are leading schools statewide towards troubling fiscal times.
- Despite the perception that education received a great deal of new revenue in the last budget, the vast majority of funds were tied up in new categorical or competitive grant programs; **many of which are one-time funding.**
- Schools simply cannot do more with new programs if they are already stretched thin trying to conduct basic day-to-day operations.
- The Legislature and Governor should **invest heavily in the LCFF base to ensure that schools can meet rising costs, remain competitive in attracting and retaining high-quality personnel, and most importantly, help improve student academic outcomes and provide for their well-being.**

CSBA Delegate Assembly election: Ballots due March 15



Ballots for this year's CSBA Delegate Assembly, in subregions that have elections, were mailed to school districts and county offices of education by Feb. 1. **Completed ballots should be returned to CSBA's West Sacramento office and must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service no later than Tuesday, March 15,** to be valid. All districts, county offices of education and candidates will be **notified of the results by April**

1. Run-off elections will be conducted in the case of tie votes. All new and re-elected Delegates are eligible to attend the May 21–22 Delegate Assembly meeting. [Learn more about CSBA's Delegate Assembly and candidates for election »](#)

California school board members don't have surety bonds: a new CPRA request explained



Multiple school districts and county offices of education have recently received **California Public Records Act or Freedom of Information Act requests for copies of board members' "surety bonds."** The request may claim that all public officials, including elected board members, are required to obtain a surety bond and may state that the district or COE is obligated to send a copy of the bond to the requestor. This has

understandably raised questions for local educational agencies, that likely did not find any such requirement in their policies or practices.

While some states appear to have surety bond requirements for governing board members, **California has no requirement for LEA board members to file a surety bond.** As noted in CSBA's model Board Bylaw 9260, school districts in California must have a liability insurance policy to provide coverage in the event of a claim against a board member, instead of individual bonds for board members. **There appear to be ongoing campaigns in multiple states to influence school board decisions by claiming school board members will be personally liable and forced to pay complainants money from surety bonds for decisions the complainants object to.** The threat to hold board members personally liable and recover funds against a "surety bond" is **not a valid legal claim**, and board members do not need to alter board decisions based on this novel method of public comment. Board members should review Board Bylaw 9260 for information regarding personal liability for their actions as board members. [Learn more »](#)

CCEE debuts new organizational structure



The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence convened on Feb. 3 to reveal the agency's new organizational structure, which was highlighted by new Executive Director Matt Navo. Through public engagement efforts since he took the helm in summer 2021, Navo and his team determined that more clarity was needed from the CCEE amid the pandemic, and refined focus areas were developed. The new focus areas

correspond with three "centers":

- **Teaching, learning and leading:** Build capacity and support for local educational agencies currently receiving and in need of targeted assistance to effectively address the systemic and instructional needs of students historically underserved.
- **Innovation, instruction and impact:** Implement a statewide approach to LEA capacity by collaboratively developing, delivering, sharing and spotlighting research-based practices that demonstrate the power to improve outcomes.
- **Transformative systems:** Facilitate the development of a shared vision for implementation of the Statewide System of Support that develops coordinated actions resulting in equitable educational student outcomes.

Each center has three initiatives associated with it that can be viewed [in the report](#) and the Transformative systems center was discussed further at the meeting. [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

Summer meals applications available



State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond announced on Jan. 31 that **applications for the Summer Food Service Program and the Seamless Summer Option are both available.** The programs, which serve meals to Californians 18 and younger when school is out of session, are federally funded and state administered. Giving more than 967 million meals to children throughout the state between January

and November 2021, nutrition programs including these have provided an essential meal service amid the pandemic. **“Our summer meal sponsors were critical in allowing us to meet the demands brought on by the COVID crisis, and I commend our school districts and other organizations that made these meals possible,”** Thurmond said. “The ability to feed the most vulnerable kids throughout the state, in multiple locations, would not be possible if these organizations did not participate.” **Applications for summer meal programs are due by May 15.** [Learn more »](#)

USDA issues transitional school nutrition standards



The U.S. Department of Agriculture on Feb. 4 **announced updates to the school nutrition standards** that will begin in school year 2022–23 and that USDA intends to run through 2023–24, giving schools time to transition from current, pandemic operations, toward more nutritious meals. The updated standards **allow schools to gradually transition from the extraordinary circumstances caused by the pandemic to**

normal program operations and meal standards that are consistent with the latest nutrition science, as required by law. The new final rule, **Child Nutrition Programs: Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium**, establishes the following requirements beginning in the 2022–23 academic year: schools and child care providers serving participants ages 6 and older may offer flavored low-fat milk in addition to nonfat flavored milk and nonfat or low-fat unflavored milk; and at least 80 percent of the grains served in school lunch and breakfast each week must be whole grain-rich.

“These transitional standards are step one of a longer-term strategy to lean into the school meal programs as a crucial part of improving child health. **Over the coming months and years, USDA will work closely with its school meal partners to develop the next iteration of nutrition requirements,**” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

Register for webinar to support well-being of Asian American and Pacific Islander students



The Asian Pacific Islander School Boards Association is hosting a **panel event on Monday, Feb. 14, "The Health & Well-Being of AAPI Students."** In this time of pandemic and anti-Asian hate, this panel of experts, moderated by State Assemblymember Alex Lee (D-San Jose), will **discuss the specific mental health challenges of AAPI students and how to best address them** with culturally relevant prevention, intervention and treatment services. [Register »](#)

Let Total School Solutions help with your Facilities Master Plan



Does your facilities support your educational and programmatic goals? A **Facilities Master Plan provides a district with vital information regarding current and future needs for student housing, quality of existing facilities, and facilities renovation and expansion requirements to meet the district's educational and programmatic goals.** The master plan also assists the district in identifying funding needs for capital improvement and developing financing options. Total School Solutions facilities master plans include accurate projections regarding enrollment, careful determination of school site capacity, educational specifications to ensure programmatic needs are served, a detailed need assessment, and conclusions and recommendations about the availability and timing of financing and funding. [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 [CSBA blog](#).

Virtual events

MIG Course 1: Foundations of Effective Governance

Feb. 18-19 | [Register](#)

Board Presidents Workshop

Feb. 19 | [Register](#)

Board Presidents Workshop

Feb. 23 | [Register](#)

MIG Course 1: Foundations of Effective Governance/Setting Direction

March 2-3 | [Register](#)

In-person events

2022 CCBE County Board Governance Workshop

March 11-12 | Sacramento | [Register](#)

2022 Leadership Institute

July 22-23 | Los Angeles | [Register](#)

External event

Save the date: 2nd Annual California Association of Black School Educators Institute: Implicit Bias & the Systematic De-Education of Black Boys

July 10-13 | Napa