

California schoolnews

Weekly Update

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Legislative update: Sponsored bills advance as Legislature takes up suspense file



CSBA's sponsored legislation is moving ahead during the final month of the 2021–22 legislative session. The first of two **CSBA bills to reform school board special elections and recalls**, [Senate Bill 1061](#) (Laird, D-Santa Cruz), has been approved by its policy and fiscal committees and now moves to consideration by the full Assembly. Likewise, [Assembly Bill 2295](#)

(Bloom, D-Santa Monica), **a bill that would remove bureaucratic hurdles and increase incentives for districts to develop education workforce housing on vacant school property**, will also move to the Senate floor.

A **second elections reform bill**, **AB 2584** (Berman, D-Menlo Park), will come before the Senate Appropriations Committee this week as the fiscal committees in each house consider their “suspense file”: bills with a price tag of over \$150,000 that are considered in bulk in order to weigh their overall fiscal impact. Suspense hearings are conducted without a public vote, providing a convenient place to discard politically difficult bills.

Less fortunate legislation may be “held on suspense,” meaning the bill will die in the Appropriations Committee. AB 2584 will face the suspense process on Aug. 11, with the hope of joining the successful bills moving on to floor votes as the Legislature races to consider all remaining legislation before the session ends at midnight on Aug. 31.

School Boards in Action: 5 Questions with Downey USD trustee Linda Salomon Saldana



In CSBA’s continuing effort to **highlight the hard work and effective practices of boards during these challenging times**, the association’s 5 Questions blog series shares the experiences of board members around the state. **Downey Unified School District trustee Linda Salomon Saldana highlights the district’s expansion of social-emotional resources**, which included training for staff, onboarding 17 full-time clinical

school therapists and increasing hours of service provided through partnerships with several community agencies. [Read the interview »](#)

Legal update: California Supreme Court holds that Unruh Civil Rights Act does not apply to public school districts



On Aug. 4, in the case of ***Brennon B. v. Superior Court***, the California Supreme Court held that **public school districts are not “business establishments” under the Unruh Civil Rights Act and, thus, the act does not apply to them.** **CSBA’s Education Legal Alliance filed an amicus brief on behalf of the West Contra Costa Unified School District** because the application of the Unruh Civil Rights Act could

subject school districts statewide to significant costs the Legislature did not intend to impose on them. Critically, **school districts are already subject to several other antidiscrimination laws (including Government Code section 11135) that protect students like Brennon B. The Supreme Court ultimately ruled in favor of the district.**

Brennon B. was a special education student in West Contra Costa USD who sued the

district, alleging that he was subject to sexual assault on numerous occasions by both students and a staff member. Among other claims, Brennon sued under the Unruh Civil Rights Act. The Act (Civil Code section 51) provides that all persons in California are “entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business establishments of every kind whatsoever” regardless of disability or other protected classifications. It also provides for civil penalties and attorney fees awards to plaintiffs, remedies that are not available under the other antidiscrimination statutes that apply to school districts.

The Court held that the plain language of the statute, legislative history, and its own precedent led to the conclusion that **school districts are not “business establishments” as defined in the Unruh Civil Rights Act. This applies to county offices of education, as well.** Rather, the Legislature did not intend to make public school districts subject to the Act and, instead, made the Act applicable only to private businesses that exist for commercial purposes. [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

Register for CSBA webinar: Collective Bargaining in Divisive Times



Negotiating labor contracts is never easy, but the unprecedented scrutiny of school operations brought on by the pandemic means that collective bargaining is more public and more complicated than ever before. The perception that schools are flush with money **has created difficult terrain for labor negotiations.**

Join CSBA Aug. 18 at 2 p.m. to learn how to navigate deep disagreements about how best to allocate funds to strengthen schools and improve student outcomes. CSBA's expert panel — including CSBA Chief Legal Counsel Robert Tuerck, William S. Hart Union High School District Trustee Cherise Moore, San Juan Unified School District Senior Director of Labor and Employee Relations Daniel Thigpen and more — **will provide multifaceted strategies for collective bargaining in this new paradigm.** [Learn more and register »](#)

Federal update: National-level data on schools' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic



The **National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) on Aug. 4 released its June 2022 School Pulse Panel results** highlighting **local educational agencies' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.** Among the key findings:

- School leaders estimate that half of their students began the 2021–22 school year behind grade level in at least one academic subject

- About three-quarters of schools reported that student quarantines or chronic absences disrupted learning during the 2021–22 school year
- High-dosage tutoring (one-on-one or small group instruction offered at least three times a week) was either “extremely” or “very” effective in aiding student learning, according to 43 percent of respondents
- Seventy-five percent of public schools are offering summer learning and enrichment programs — 33 percent of these schools reported increasing offerings
- Nearly three-quarters of public schools are offering mental health supports

In response to the data release, U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona issued a [statement](#) including a list of initiatives and investments made by the Biden-Harris Administration to support LEAs in boosting student learning, expanding mental health resources and more.

CDE expanding school mental health recruitment efforts



The California Department of Education is **kickstarting efforts to recruit 10,000 new school-based mental health clinicians**, announced State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond during an Aug. 4 press conference. The latest **state budget provides for new and expanded grant opportunities for aspiring mental health clinicians who want to work in K-12 schools**. The CDE is partnering

with colleges, universities, community-based organizations, the California Student Aid Commission and others to raise awareness of this statewide recruitment effort.

The **CDE is also working with state and private partners to provide mental health programs and tools to educators in real time, as well as tools to support district efforts to expand access to mental health resources**. For example, Thurmond said CDE “is putting together a training program to train school districts on how to utilize Medi-Cal to address many of the mental health needs that students may have.” [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

MIG for County Offices of Education registration now open



CSBA is excited to offer **in-person Masters in Governance® for County Offices of Education** this fall. Registration for the course is open now. The **MIG for COE program consists of five courses catered to county office leaders covering topics such as school finance, community relations and advocacy, student learning and achievement and more**, equipping

local educational agencies with the knowledge and skills to build and support an effective governance structure. [Learn more and register »](#)

Let Total School Solutions help with your Facilities Master Plan



Do 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 »](#)

Stay up to date with the latest news and resources on the [CSBA blog](#).

Virtual events

MIG Course 1: Foundations of Effective Governance/Setting Direction

Aug. 23-24 | [Register](#)

Student Board Member Summer Training Session

Aug. 24 | [Register](#)

Equity Network: Governance with an Equity Lens

Aug. 27-Oct. 22 | [Register](#)

MIG Course 2: Student Learning & Achievement/Policy & Judicial Review

Sept. 20-21 | [Register](#)

In-person events

Sponsors



**California County Boards of Education
(CCBE) Annual Conference**

Sept. 9-11 | Monterey | [Register](#)

**Executive Assistants Certification
Program**

Sept. 12-13 | Santa Clara | [Register](#)

MIG 3: School Finance Part 1 & 2

Sept. 23 | Rancho Cucamonga | [Register](#)

**MIG 4: Human Resources/Collective
Bargaining**

Sept. 24 | Rancho Cucamonga | [Register](#)

**MIG COE COURSE 1 Foundations of
Effective Governance/Setting Direction**

Sept. 24 | Santa Clara | [Register](#)

[View complete calendar](#)

