

# California schoolnews

Weekly Update

June 15, 2022

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CSBA to release report documenting school use of COVID relief funding



CSBA today released a **preview** of the



**association's intensive research project on how school districts and county offices of education are spending COVID relief funds.**

This initial data was shared with CSBA's Delegate Assembly in May, as well as with members of Congress, the Vice President's Office and top staffers at Cabinet-level departments including the

Departments of Education and Agriculture. The report will reveal answers to hotly debated questions, specifically: 1) Is COVID relief funding being spent at an acceptable pace? 2) How are the relief funds being spent? 3) What are the challenges to allocation and implementation of COVID relief funds? 4) What advocacy can CSBA undertake to facilitate implementation?

**While there have been concerns in the media about local educational agencies not spending COVID relief funds, the federal expenditure reports and responses from a CSBA survey of superintendents present a clear rebuke of that assessment. The full report for federal COVID relief fund spending will be released in early July.** It will be followed in August by a COVID relief spending report, and finally, a comprehensive report by late summer. [View the report preview »](#)

## Legislative update: Legislature approves budget bill; Major issues still up for negotiation



In advance of the June 15 budget deadline, **the Senate and Assembly on June 13 voted to approve initial budget legislation. Senate Bill 154** passed the Assembly on a vote of 57 to 16 and was approved by the Senate on a vote of 28 to 8. While this action satisfies the Legislature's constitutional duty to pass a budget bill by June 15, **many topics — particularly for schools — have been left unresolved and more action is**

**expected in the coming weeks via further budget legislation and budget trailer bills.**

**Of particular significance in the joint legislative budget plan announced earlier this month was the rejection of the CSBA-ACSA proposal for COVID ADA relief**, which Gov. Gavin Newsom adopted in his May Budget Revision, and of CSBA's request to **adequately fund home-to-school transportation** as proposed in **AB 2933** (O'Donnell, D-Long Beach). **SB 154 ultimately took action on neither, leaving room for further bargaining between Gov. Newsom and the Legislature. CSBA expects to see movement on these and other priority issues for schools in follow-up budget legislation and budget trailer bills.** While many top education issues were not included in SB 154, it does include \$611.8 million in funding to increase reimbursement rates for school meals under the state's new universal school meals program.

**Gov. Newsom has until June 30 to sign or veto the bill.** With major points of disagreement remaining between the Legislature and Governor, renewed negotiations will be the focus in the weeks ahead. **The Legislature is expected to take up follow-up legislation before they recess for the summer during the month of July.** Hundreds of

CSBA members have already reached out to urge their legislators and Gov. Newsom to ensure the final budget includes COVID ADA relief and adequate school transportation funding. As negotiations continue, CSBA will continue to provide updates and **we urge members to keep those conversations going to make sure Sacramento hears from as many local education leaders as possible about how the final budget can meet the true needs of schools.**

## Legal: Attorney General opinion clarifies closed session attendance under the Brown Act



On May 26, 2022, **the U.S. Attorney General issued an opinion finding that individual legislative staffers of city councilmembers generally may not attend closed sessions of city councils and may not receive confidential information from those closed sessions.**

(Opinion No. 21-1102 (2022); 2022 WL 1814322.)

**While this opinion does not specifically refer to local educational agencies, it provides useful**

**information about the individuals who may attend closed sessions of school district and county board of education meetings under the Brown Act.** Importantly, the opinion provides a reminder that only individuals with a “qualifying role in the meeting” may attend closed sessions. Further, individuals without a qualifying role may not attend because “their presence would undermine the Act’s rationale and transform the meeting into an unlawful semi-closed session.” Semi-closed sessions are not authorized by the Brown Act.

The Attorney General based his analysis on a test developed in prior Attorney General opinions, which analyzes who may be present in closed session and asks whether the individual has an “official or essential role” in the closed session. **The rationale for the test is that having individuals present without an official or essential role would convert the closed session into a semi-closed session, which is unlawful and undermines the closed session’s purpose of ensuring confidentiality.** An individual has an “official” role if statute provides that the individual’s presence in closed session is necessary. An individual has an “essential” role if their presence is necessary for a board to perform its closed-session duties. [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

## Start planning your Leadership Institute itinerary



**Taking place July 22-23 in Los Angeles,** CSBA’s 2022 Leadership Institute is around the corner! **Attendees can start planning their itinerary now to make the most of the “Leadership in a time of chaos, change and opportunity” event —** and their time in LA with the inclusion of the [LA Perks Pass](#) for all registrants.

In addition to keynote presentations by Dr. Victor Rios, associate dean of Social Sciences and professor of Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Dr. Natalie Stavas, a physician at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. **Breakout session topics include governing effectively in difficult times, prioritizing board member mental health, financing an equitable education and crisis communications.** Special hotel rates are available if booked by June 29 through CSBA's room block at the JW Marriott Los Angeles L.A. LIVE for attendees. [Register and plan your schedule »](#)

## Showcase your district's talented students at AEC 2022



Does your district have a talented group of students you'd like to show off at the 2022 **Annual Education Conference and Trade Show**, Dec. 1-3 in San Diego? The **CSBA Conference Planning Committee is seeking student performers of all ages representing districts across the state.**

AEC welcomes thousands of members from California's diverse education community, offering an excellent opportunity to recognize student successes in the arts and showcase California talent. **Proposals from bands, choral groups, soloists, thespians and other student performers are welcome. Performance time will be approximately 8-10 minutes in front of a full house of California's education leaders. Applications are due by Friday, July 15** and decisions will be announced in the fall. If you have any questions about the student entertainment submissions process, please email [aec@csba.org](mailto:aec@csba.org). Please note that travel and other expenses are the responsibility of the district. [Learn more »](#)

## School Boards in Action: 5 Questions with Hope Bjerke, Junction ESD



CSBA's **School Boards in Action** initiative recognizes the hard work school boards across the state are putting in to ensure students receive the academic and social-emotional supports they need. The 5 Questions series **highlights the ways districts and boards have addressed recent challenges as well as their plans for the future.**

**Junction Elementary School District trustee Hope Bjerke recently participated in our 5 Questions series**, sharing the district's learning recovery strategies; summer programming plans, including a project-based academy utilizing students' math, science, writing and teamwork skills; current staff morale; strategies for communicating with families plus a little on her family and many pets. [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

## Highlights from the spring edition of *California Schools* magazine



The **spring edition** of *California Schools* magazine covers the increasing interest some local educational agencies are seeing in independent study and virtual academies brought on by the pandemic; districts' examination of how traditional grading practices affect equity; and how small districts are partnering with local tribes to support Indigenous youth. Included in the CEO's Note is

a preview of new CSBA research showing that governing boards have allocated federal funds to support student needs despite structural, labor market and regulatory challenges. Also featured are articles on supporting optimal student outcomes and the importance of giving back to one's community by serving on a school board, as well as an interview with Bruce Fuller, professor of education and public policy at the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Education, on implementing universal transitional kindergarten. [Read now »](#)

## Expert MAA and LEA billing assistance



Practi-Cal offers the most comprehensive Medi-Cal and Medicaid Administrative billing services available to local educational agencies. Its broad range of expertise allows it to **identify areas of reimbursement often overlooked by others and simplifies the complicated billing process**, while minimizing your efforts. There are **no up-front costs to the district**. [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

## Sponsors





**MIG Course 5: Community Relations & Advocacy/Governance Integration**

June 23-24 | [Register](#)

**MIG Alumni Association Summer Book Club Series**

July 28-Aug. 25 | [Register](#)

**Governance with an Equity Lens**

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

**In-person events**

**2022 Leadership Institute**

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

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

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

[View complete calendar](#)

