

California schoolnews

Weekly Update

October 25, 2023

In this Issue

- Test scores for California K-12 students hold steady and chronic absence rate drops
- Legislative update: Congress chooses new Speaker of the House of Representatives
- Federal update: FCC approves WiFi on school buses for E-Rate funding
- State update: New Mathematics Framework on CDE website
- Read the October edition of *California School News*
- Boards of education are key in achieving universal participation in postsecondary financial aid
- Legal update: Pregnant Workers Fairness Act implementation
- Have you completed your GASB report?

Test scores for California K-12 students hold steady and chronic absence rate drops



New data from the California Department of Education indicates that **students are generally holding steady academically compared to last year and rebounding attendance-wise following years of pandemic disruptions**. On Oct. 18, the department released the latest results of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) and the English Language Proficiency Assessments for

California (ELPAC) — which kept consistent with recent scores or showed slight improvements — as well as updated data on chronic absenteeism.

For **Smarter Balanced English language arts**, the percentage of participating students who met or exceeded the standard dropped just 0.4 percent from 47.1 percent in 2022 to 46.7 percent in 2023. In **Smarter Balanced math**, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the standard increased by 1.2 percent from 33.4 percent in 2022 to 34.6 percent in 2023. In addition, the 2022–23 school year saw the rate of chronic absenteeism fall to 24.9 percent — a significant improvement from 30 percent in 2021–22, though still well above the **pre-pandemic rate** of 10.1 percent. [Read more details on the CSBA blog »](#)

Legislative update: Congress chooses new Speaker of the House of Representatives



After **ousting Rep. Kevin McCarthy** (R-California) on Oct. 3 and multiple rounds of voting, Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives have unified behind **Rep. Mike Johnson** (R-Louisiana) as the new Speaker of the House.

In order to attain the Office of Speaker of the House, a person needs the votes of a majority of those present and voting. After multiple

candidates failed to attain enough votes, Rep. Johnson secured a majority vote of 220 to 209 on Oct. 25.

While the fight to elect a new Speaker is now in the rearview mirror, **the deadline to pass legislation to keep the government funded is rapidly approaching on Nov. 17**. The underlying policy and spending disagreements dividing House Republicans that led to the near government closure remain unresolved. With a new Speaker now elected, action on appropriations bills can begin, but as time passes, the passage of another continuing resolution will only get more difficult.

Federal update: FCC approves WiFi on school buses for E-Rate funding



The **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** recently adopted a **Declaratory Ruling** that clarified that because having WiFi on school buses serves an educational purpose, the service should be eligible for **E-Rate funding**. The ruling “enhances the benefits and the reach of the E-Rate program to ensure that the millions of students caught in the homework gap can more fully engage in their learning,”

[according to](#) an FCC fact sheet.

The **Wireline Competition Bureau** has been directed to publish a supplemental eligible services list for funding year 2024, which will include a public comment period where individuals and organizations can weigh in on the specific services and equipment that should be eligible for E-Rate subsidies to deliver WiFi on school buses. The public comment period is expected to open by Thanksgiving. [Learn more »](#)

State update: New Mathematics Framework on CDE website



The new *Mathematics Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* was adopted at the State Board of Education's **July meeting**, and the revised version that includes the edits requested by the SBE as part of its action is now posted on the **California Department of Education website**. The framework is important guidance designed to help educators align

classroom teaching with California's rigorous math learning standards. The Mathematics Framework reflects input from California parents, educators, students and others who commented during the two 60-day field review periods that were held in 2021 and 2022.

[Read the framework »](#)

Read the October edition of *California School News*



The October issue of *California School News* is here! This month's newsletter includes articles on the benefits of attending AEC and continued professional development, implications of Assembly Bill 1078's signing, how family engagement can reduce political polarization and an overview of CSBA's latest research and policy brief on bullying and cyberbullying. Summaries of recent state

meetings, proposed K-12 nutrition guidance and a new law requiring schools to donate leftover edible food to food recovery organizations are among some additional topics covered. [Read the newsletter »](#)

Boards of education are key in achieving universal participation in postsecondary financial aid



California recently completed the first financial aid cycle since the launch of the **All In for**



FAFSA/CA Dream Act campaign supporting California's universal financial aid participation law. This state law requires local educational agencies to confirm that all graduating high school seniors complete an application for financial aid (or an opt-out waiver). Students

submit either a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or California Dream Act Application (CADAA), depending on their residential status, to access the combination of grants, scholarships, work-study opportunities, student loans and other forms of aid available to help finance postsecondary education or training.

The adoption of a local school board resolution supporting California's All In campaign and site visits to schools conducting financial aid application activities send a powerful message of support to communities about universal access to financial aid. Important to note this year, the U.S. Department of Education is currently revising the financial aid application, calling it the Better FAFSA, with the intention of making the application easier to complete. **The Better FAFSA application window will open two months later than in a typical year. For the graduating class of 2024, the priority deadline for FAFSA and CADAA submission will be April 2, instead of March 2.** [Read more in a CSBA blog post by the California Student Aid Commission](#) »

Legal update: Pregnant Workers Fairness Act implementation



Federal Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, as amended by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, and California Government Code section 12940, prohibit sex discrimination. However, even with the rights afforded workers under Title VII and other federal laws that have requirements governing pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, **certain gaps**

have been identified in the federal legal protections for workers affected by pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, in comparison to state law protections that already exist for such workers. **Recently, a federal law was passed to address those gaps and while Californians already receive these protections (or more), the closing of these gaps is an important advancement for the rights of workers.**

The **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) (42 USC 2000gg)**, came into effect on **June 27, 2023**, and requires an employer to provide reasonable accommodation to workers with known limitations that are related to their pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, unless the employer can show that the accommodation will cause an undue hardship to that employer. As the PWFA requires, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has begun the process for issuing implementing regulations for the law through a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. The EEOC's notice was posted in the Federal Register on Aug. 11, 2023, and the period for

public comment closed on Oct. 10, 2023. [Learn more on the CSBA blog »](#)

Have you completed your 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 no limit to the number of participants.** [Learn more »](#)

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

Sponsors

Virtual events

MIG Course 2: Student Learning & Achievement/Policy & Judicial Review
Nov. 6-Dec. 11 | [Register](#)

Student Board Member Trainings
Advocacy and Engagement | Jan. 29 | [Register](#)
Transition Planning, Legacy Building, and Next steps | April 15 | [Register](#)

Student Board Member Governance Q&A and Networking
Nov. 6 | [Register](#)
Feb. 12 | [Register](#)
March 4 | [Register](#)

Board Presidents Workshop
Jan. 11 | [Register](#)

Executive Assistants Certification Program
Jan. 12-March 15 | [Register](#)

Orientation for New Trustees

Jan. 18 | [Register](#)

The Brown Act

Jan. 22 | [Register](#)

Institute for New and First-Term Board Members

Jan. 30-31 | [Register](#)

In-person events

CSBA Roadshow

Oct. 25 | Shasta/Siskiyou counties | [Register](#)

MIG Course 1: Foundations of Effective Governance/Setting Direction

Jan. 20 | Monterey | [Register](#)

[View complete calendar](#)

aalrr
Atkinson, Andelson
Loya, Ruud & Romo
A Professional Law Corporation

PIPER | SANDLER



PowerSchool

