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Legislative Action Week in full swing



CSBA's virtual Legislative Action Week is happening now, as **nearly 400 education leaders from across the state meet with their legislators and staff to shine light on the most important issues facing California's schools.**

The lived experience and advocacy local educational agency board members bring to Legislative Action Week is critical to the success of CSBA's ability to shape policy for public

schools.

Participants are **rallying to support CSBA's budget priorities and sponsored legislation**, including:

- Urging the Legislature to fully fund the Local Control Funding Formula cost-of-living adjustment without retroactively reducing the Arts, Music & Instructional Materials Discretionary Block Grant.
- Urging the Legislature to remain focused on ensuring successful implementation of the large programs undertaken in recent years, rather than creating new categorical programs.
- Asking for “Aye” votes on:
 - **Assembly Bill 1023 (Papan, D-San Mateo): Increased cybersecurity support for school districts** – Would authorize LEAs to use existing funding for cybersecurity purposes and expand state support for school districts.
 - **Senate Bill 645 (Ochoa-Bogh, R-Yucaipa): Addressing the small school district administrator-to-teacher ratio caps** – Would allow small school districts to hire the appropriate number of administrators based upon school size, helping small districts better meet the needs of their students, teachers, staff and the greater school community.
 - **AB 906 (Gipson, D-Carson): Increased and stabilized funding for county office of education (COE) court and community schools** – Would ensure sufficient and predictable resources for these high-quality programs and the students they serve by including funding for juvenile court and community schools in a COE’s base grant, providing a standardized funding level based on countywide factors.

Follow along on social media!

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 LinkedIn: [@California School Boards Association](#)

Federal budget proposal includes \$90 billion for Education Department



The administration released President Biden’s Fiscal Year 2024 **Budget of the United States Government** on March 9. The \$6.8 trillion proposal includes \$90 billion for the U.S. Department of Education, an increase of nearly 14 percent from 2023. Some highlights of the budget include \$20.5 billion for the **Title I program to address opportunity and achievement gaps** and \$500 million toward a

new demonstration initiative to help local educational agencies expand public preschool and community school efforts for students eligible to attend Title I schools. Other major investments include Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs, addressing student mental health, supporting English learners, strengthening college and career pathways and eliminating the educator shortage. Also included in the proposal is a new program that would require states to make high-quality preschool available to all 4-year-olds through a mandatory federal-state partnership. [Learn more »](#)

Update on COVID-19 relief aid spending in California



Last year, CSBA began an ambitious project to track how California local educational agencies are spending COVID relief funding in a [series of reports](#) and **continues to monitor spending for all California school districts and county offices of education, bringing members occasional updates.** The spending data for all packages reflect what local educational agencies have already spent, not what they have

earmarked for use. This is particularly important for Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II and III, as LEAs still have time to spend these funds.

Since CSBA's [December update](#), ESSER II and III have seen gains in spending progress. ESSER II's first set of deadlines to reserve funding is in 2024, and ESSER III's is in 2025. **LEAs have spent around 77 percent of the \$6 billion ESSER II fund allocation, 31 percent of the largest ESSER III fund, and 24 percent of the set-aside portion of ESSER III meant to address the academic impact of lost instructional time.** LEAs are continuing to spend **significant portions of ESSER funding in broader, legislatively allowed categories such as "resources for schools" and "other activities necessary to maintain operations,"** as well as expenses specific to learning recovery, resources for individual schools and technology-related expenses. **Governance teams should regularly evaluate federal COVID relief deadlines and programs to make sure the money is being spent on areas of greatest need in their districts.**

[Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

Legal update: New pay-to-play law challenged in court



As of Jan. 1, 2023, **school and county office of education board members are subject to "pay-to-play" campaign contribution restrictions** due to the passage of Senate Bill 1439 and the changes it made to the Political Reform Act (PRA). On Feb. 22, 2023, **eight business groups and two local officials sued the Fair Political Practice Commission (FPPC), the agency responsible enforcing the PRA** and any new

regulations.

The groups, including the California Restaurants Association and the California Retailers Association, **argue in the suit that SB 1439 is unconstitutional under the California and U.S. constitutions.** The groups argue that the law violates the California Constitution because the amendment made to the PRA through SB 1439 does not further the purpose of the PRA and therefore cannot be done through legislative action. As to the U.S. Constitution, the parties argue that SB1439 and its restrictions unconstitutionally limit free speech by effectively prohibiting campaign contributions. Based on these arguments, **the groups asked the court to issue a preliminary and permanent injunction preventing**

the FPPC from enforcing the new law. [Read more about the lawsuit »](#)

Dashboard changes take shape during State Board of Education meeting



During its [March 8–9 meeting](#), the **State Board of Education** laid the groundwork for updates to the **2023 California School Dashboard**, which will be finalized later this year. The **2022 California School Dashboard**, released in December following a two-year pause prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, **highlighted chronic absenteeism as a particularly troubling indicator**, with 30 percent of students marked as

chronically absent. **There are early indications that chronic absenteeism — which includes both excused and unexcused absences — continues to be a challenge for schools.**

Board Vice President Cynthia Glover Woods called on local educational agencies to **dig into chronic absenteeism data and not simply assume that high rates are the result of the pandemic**. Board leaders raised the possibility of indicating on the Dashboard through disaggregated data whether students missed out on instructional time as a result of COVID precautions or other events outside of their control. The board also **provided guidance** on the proposed 2023 accountability work plan and discussed changes for several indicators and topics ahead of the release of the 2023 Dashboard. [Read a full recap on the CSBA blog »](#)

CSBA's Communications Department wins five CalSPRA awards for storytelling



CSBA is proud to recognize its Communications Department for winning five California School Public Relations Association (CalSPRA) Awards for storytelling. Four original articles produced by the department's editorial team, which appeared in 2022 editions of *California Schools* magazine, were highlighted during CalSPRA's March 3 Awards Gala Banquet in San Diego. The winning stories were

“Supporting educators: New instructional models may be the key to retaining teachers,” “Unprecedented times, unprecedented responses: CSBA research reveals how LEAs are using COVID relief funds,” and “What’s in a grade? Districts examine how traditional grading practices affect equity.” A special honor was presented in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion category for the story, **“Honoring Native culture: Small districts partner with local tribes to support Indigenous youth,”** which also received the President's Award. **CSBA continues to present local educational agencies’ stories of challenges and triumphs as they work to best serve students**

of all backgrounds through publications including its quarterly *California Schools* magazine, [monthly newsletter](#), [weekly updates](#) and [daily blog](#).

Assistance with state eligibility and funding applications

Assistance with **STATE ELIGIBILITY & FUNDING APPLICATIONS**

The State Facilities Funding Programs are complex and ever changing. **Total School Solutions provides assistance with all aspects of the funding process, from the initial establishment of eligibility to the closeout audit process.** TSS professionals meet with agency representatives to determine the needs of specific projects and assist in optimizing benefit from the programs. The expertise of the TSS staff can help secure additional funding for districts that had not previously been identified.

[Learn more »](#)

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

Virtual events

Equity Network Alumni event: Cultural Competence in the Context of America

March 28 | [Register](#)

MIG Course 4: Human Resources/Collective Bargaining

March 28-29 | [Register](#)

MIG Course 5: Community Relations & Advocacy/ Governance Integration

April 11-12 | [Register](#)

The Brown Act

April 13 | [Register](#)

In-person events

MIG 1: Foundations of Effective Governance/Setting Direction

March 23 | Santa Cruz | [Register](#)

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

March 24 | Santa Cruz | [Register](#)

Sponsors



Attorneys at Law



MIG 3: School Finance

April 19| Santa Cruz | [Register](#)

MIG 4: Human Resources/Collective Bargaining

April 20 | Santa Cruz | [Register](#)

2023 Coast2Coast Federal Advocacy Trip

April 24-26 | Washington, D.C. | [Register](#)

MIG Course 5: Community Relations & Advocacy/ Governance Integration

April
May 2 | Santa Cruz | [Register](#)

[View complete calendar](#)



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