

# California schoolnews

Weekly Update

February 19, 2025

## *In this Issue*

- [Legislative update: California congressman introduces Secure Rural Schools Act](#)
- [Federal update: Secretary of Education confirmation hearing](#)
- [State updates: Summer Food Service Program applications open](#)
- [Black History Month spotlight: Resources to support Black student achievement](#)
- [Raise funds needed for real property acquisitions and capital improvements](#)

## Legislative update: California congressman introduces Secure Rural Schools Act



Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-California) introduced the **Secure Rural Schools (SRS) Reauthorization Act** in the U.S. House of Representatives on Feb. 14. The bill provides critical revenue — about \$250 million a year — for local educational agencies whose boundaries include tax-exempt national forest land. Failure to renew the Secure Rural Schools Act would reduce the funding rural communities

receive for schools and also cut payments to county governments for roads and other local programs.

**CSBA has advocated for the Secure Rural Schools Act since its inception** and aggressively pursued renewal every time it neared expiration. CSBA has even proposed

extending the period between renewals to provide greater transparency and stability for the funding of local schools. **This advocacy has resulted in growing appreciation for the value of SRS, which is a focal point of the upcoming [Coast2Coast federal advocacy event](#). From April 28-30, attendees will have the opportunity to express their support for this issue directly to policymakers in Washington, D.C.**

Members who can't make it to D.C. should keep their eyes peeled for **CSBA action alerts and other efforts to mobilize support for renewing the Secure Rural Schools Act**. [Learn more »](#)

## Federal update: Secretary of Education confirmation hearing



The U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions held a **confirmation hearing for Secretary of Education nominee Linda McMahon on Feb. 13**. Members asked about the Administration's goal of dismantling the Department of Education, how McMahon will enforce civil rights laws, the basis for the recent firing of department employees by Elon Musk and more. **The committee plans to hold a vote on**

**her nomination on Feb. 20 with a floor vote likely to be scheduled for the end of the month.**

Throughout her opening statement and in response to questions from committee members, McMahon emphasized her commitment to expanding school choice via education savings accounts and vouchers; expounded on the potential of special education oversight moving to the Department of Health and Human Services; and discussed what elimination of the Education Department may entail. [View a recording of the hearing »](#)

## State updates: Summer Food Service Program applications open



Applications are now available for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) — federally funded, state-administered programs that serve free meals to children when school is out of session.

**Applications are due by May 15, 2025. Summer meal sites can be established in communities in which at least 50 percent of the children qualify for free or reduced-price school meals.**

In the summer of 2024, SFSP and SSO operators served more than 15 million meals to children throughout the state.

**Sites in rural areas where no congregate meal service is available may apply to operate a non-congregate service.** The permanent non-congregate meal service option helps alleviate rural children’s common barriers to meal access such as transportation during the summer months. Organizations operating in rural communities can deliver meals directly to homes or along bus routes, provide multiple days’ worth of meals at a time, and allow parents or guardians to pick up meals on their children’s behalf. For more information about Summer Meal Programs, visit the California Department of Education [Summer Meal Programs web page](#).

**In other state news:**

- On Feb. 13, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony **Thurmond announced that nine schools had been selected as Model Community Day Schools (MCDSs) for 2025.** Community day schools serve students who have been expelled from their traditional school or who have had problems with attendance or behavior. [The complete list of honorees is available here »](#)

## Black History Month spotlight: Resources to support Black student achievement



The **California Department of Education held a webinar focused on supporting academic achievement among Black students with state- and district-level leaders sharing their successful initiatives and available resources.**

Educational consultant and member of the California Association of African American Superintendents and Administrators Kenneth Wesson shared the organization’s “Seven-Step

Blueprint to Create a 5-Year CA Plan to Fulfill the Promise of Brown” document, which includes **prompts on identifying action steps and timelines and highlights the importance of student engagement.**

Officials from **Fresno Unified School District discussed how participation in the African American Student Success Network has advanced local efforts, including a goal of increasing graduation and A-G completion rates for African American students.** “Our learning network has provided us with a collaborative network of local educational agencies that **focus on closing the achievement gap for African American students utilizing data-driven, equity-focused initiatives,**” said Principal on Special Assignment Kimberly Hendricks-Brown. [Learn more »](#)

## Raise funds needed for real property acquisitions and capital improvements

**CERTIFICATES OF**

CSBA's Certificates of Participation program  
assists California school districts, county

## CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION Program

offices of education and community college districts in their efforts to raise funds for capital equipment or real property acquisitions and improvements and allows capital project finance or loan refinancing without voter approval. Finance construction, renovations, equipment, energy projects and more with fast and efficient financing. [Learn more »](#)

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

## Virtual events

**Uniform Complaint Procedures University**  
Feb. 26 | [Register](#)

**Student Board Member Networking Call**  
March 3 | [Register](#)

**Masters In Governance Course 5:  
Community Relations & Advocacy/  
Governance Integration**  
March 6-7 | [Register](#)

**Fiscal Responsibility: Key Financial  
Concepts for New Board Members**  
March 10 | [Register](#)

**2025 Legislative Action Week**  
March 11-13 | [Register](#)

**MIG Course 3: School Finance Part 1 & 2**  
March 12-13 | [Register](#)

## In-person events

**Masters In Governance Course 2: Student  
Learning & Achievement/Policy & Judicial  
Review**  
March 8 | Hayward | [Register](#)

**MIG Course 2: Student Learning &  
Achievement/Policy & Judicial Review**  
March 8 | Riverside | [Register](#)

**Orientation for New Trustees**  
March 13 | West Sacramento | [Register](#)

## Sponsors



The logo for NGS consists of the letters "NGS" in a large, bold, blue, sans-serif font.



**Small School District Financial Workshop**

March 15 | Tuolumne | [Register](#)

**MIG Course 3: School Finance Part 1 & 2**

March 22 | Tulare | [Register](#)

[View complete calendar](#)



California School Boards Association | 3251 Beacon Blvd., West Sacramento, CA 95691

Phone: (800) 266-3382 | Fax: (916) 371-3407

[Website](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)