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Legislative update: CSBA's response to state budget proposal



Last week, **CSBA submitted its formal response to Gov. Gavin Newsom's January Budget Proposal to the Governor and Legislature.** Overall, **CSBA appreciates that the proposal is largely focused on maintaining transformational programs and fulfilling past commitments.** This keeps with CSBA's position that ongoing programs must be prioritized over the formation of new unfunded or underfunded mandates. **However, there are some significant proposals that raise concern. The**

letter is [available here](#). Highlights include:

- **Honoring Proposition 98:** Included in the Governor’s January proposal is a maneuver to withhold \$1.6 billion in Prop 98 funding for the coming fiscal year. CSBA is urging the Legislature to reject any proposal to underfund Prop 98.
- **Fully funding the COLA:** Estimated to be 2.43 percent, CSBA is urging that the cost-of-living adjustment be fully funded.
- **A fully discretionary block grant:** Also included in the Governor’s proposal is a \$1.8 billion Student Support and Professional Development Discretionary Block Grant. CSBA is asking that this block grant be fully discretionary to cover operational costs.
- **Protecting local educational agency solvency:** A growing number of LEAs are facing existential funding threats due to the renewal of the statute of limitations for child sexual assault and molestation claims resulting from 2019’s Assembly Bill 218. CSBA is requesting additional resources to help LEAs facing AB 218 claims.
- **Providing operational stability:** To address the fluctuations in student attendance and enrollment due to concerns over expanded immigration actions, CSBA is asking that the current school year be funded using fall/winter 2024 attendance data.

Legal update: U.S. Department of Education releases FAQs regarding stance on racial discrimination



On Feb. 28, the **U.S. Department of Education** released a **“Frequently Asked Questions About Racial Preferences and Stereotypes Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act”** (FAQ) document in an effort to answer questions about a dear colleague letter released Feb. 14. The “Dear Colleague Letter: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act in Light of *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*” (*SFFA*), outlines

the department’s interpretation of the legal standards related to racial discrimination in schools. The **letter** raised concerns and confusion due to statements that schools had 14 days to comply with these newly articulated interpretations or risk losing federal funding.

The FAQ answers 15 questions aimed at explaining the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *SFFA* and how it interacts with Title VI, a federal law prohibiting racial discrimination in schools. The **FAQ describes the department’s intended broad application of the *SFFA* decision to all instances of racial discrimination in the educational context, not just those in admissions processes.** Exactly how the plans detailed in the FAQ will be implemented is not clear, but **several pieces of the FAQ provide insight into how the department will address allegations of racial discrimination in public education linked to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) practices.** It is important to note the third footnote of the FAQ, which states that “[t]he

contents of this [FAQ] document do not have the force and effect of law and do not bind the public or impose new legal requirements; nor do they bind the Department of Education in the exercise of its discretionary enforcement authority.” This footnote **acknowledges that the FAQ does not create new law — it simply explains the department’s interpretation of existing law.** [Learn more on the CSBA blog »](#)

State Board moves forward on Student Score Reports, a Dashboard science indicator and more



The **California State Board of Education’s (SBE) March 5 meeting** saw action on items related to **Student Score Reports (SSRs), the California School Dashboard Science Indicator and its potential use for accountability,** and more.

The board **approved proposed revisions to the SSRs** with amendments for the **California**

Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), also known as Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments, for English language arts and mathematics, **California Science Test (CAST), and Initial English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC)**. The SSR is **used to describe and report student test results from the CAASPP**, with a student’s scores falling within one of four achievement levels that provide context on how the student performed on the tests.

The board also **took further action to integrate science into the California School Dashboard** by adopting Science Indicator status cut points, change cut points and a color scheme for the five-by-five balanced color grid. **Additional action may be taken at the July SBE meeting to include science in either state or federal accountability.** [Read the full meeting recap on the CSBA blog »](#)

State update: Instructional Continuity Plans



The California Department of Education (CDE) posted new **guidance for local educational agencies to consider as they develop Instructional Continuity Plans (ICPs), which must be included in an LEA’s Comprehensive School Safety Plan (CSSP) by July 1, 2025,** and will be **required to obtain approval of a Form J-13A waiver request** beginning in fiscal year 2026–27. **ICPs**

are meant to ensure all students can access instruction during an emergency or natural disaster.

The latest guidance from CDE includes an overview of the statutory requirements, practical considerations and best practices for drafting an ICP and access to planning

resources to ensure LEAs are prepared to comply with the requirements. [Learn more](#) »

CSBA March Policy Update Packet webinar



Join **CSBA's District and County Office of Education Legal Services and Policy and Governance Technology Services departments on March 26** for a quarterly policy update webinar — An Inside Look at the March Policy Update Packet — **highlighting sample policies related to mobile communication devices and response to immigration enforcement.** The CSBA Policy team will provide **essential insights**

into the process and rationale behind the updates **as well as how they may impact districts or county offices of education.** A Q&A session will follow the presentation with CSBA's policy experts. [Register](#) »

LexisNexis can help LEAs navigate legal issues board members face



CSBA's District and County Office of Education Legal Services team has partnered with LexisNexis® to publish the updated *California Education Laws and Regulations* — a go-to legal reference for CSBA members, school administrators, education attorneys and K-12 educational professionals throughout California. From a legal perspective, the world of education is complicated and

governing boards deal with everything from curriculum, special education, facilities and finance to torts, discrimination and the Family Medical Leave Act. **LexisNexis can help LEAs navigate the entire range of legal issues that board members face.** [Learn more](#) »

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

Virtual events

Ethics Assembly Bill 2158
March 19 | [Register](#)

Fiscal Responsibility: Key Financial Concepts for New Board Members

Sponsors



March 31 | [Register](#)

Masters In Governance Course 4: Human Resources/ Collective Bargaining

April 2-3 | [Register](#)

Executive Assistant (EA) Pi: Governance Integration

April 4 | [Register](#)

Ethics Assembly Bill 2158

April 7 | [Register](#)

SBM Advancing Budget Priorities and Advocacy

April 7 | [Register](#)

Fiscal Responsibility: Key Financial Concepts for New Board Members

April 14 | [Register](#)

In-person events

MIG Course 3: School Finance Part 1 & 2

March 22 | Tulare | [Register](#)

Small School District Financial Workshop

March 29 | Camino | [Register](#)

MIG Course 3: School Finance Part 1 & 2

April 5 | [Hayward](#)

2025 CSBA County Board Governance Workshop

April 11-12 | [Sacramento](#)

Small School District Financial Workshop

April 12 | Redding | [Register](#)

Ethics Assembly Bill 2158

April 14 | [Register](#)

[View complete calendar](#)





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