

California schoolnews

Weekly Update

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Legislative update: US Secretary of Education confirmation hearing on Feb. 13



The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee will hold the **confirmation hearing for Linda McMahon, President Donald Trump's nominee for Education Secretary, on Feb. 13 at 10 a.m. EST.** Her past experience includes an appointment to the Connecticut State Board of Education in 2009 where she served for one year prior to two unsuccessful runs to represent Connecticut in the U.S. Senate in 2010 and 2012. In addition to her political background, she is a former small business owner and CEO for World Wrestling Entertainment.

Notably, it will be **President Trump's order to eliminate the U.S. Department of Education that will likely become the main focus of McMahon's confirmation hearing**. However, it is unclear whether Congress, especially the U.S. Senate, will have the necessary votes to fully eliminate the Department of Education. Established by President Carter in 1980, **it would take an act of Congress to abolish the department**. To do that would require 60 of the 100 senators voting to eliminate the department, which has been characterized as politically difficult, if not impossible, to accomplish. This is due to the Senate's procedural rule requiring 60 votes to overcome a filibuster to achieve a final vote, which would require Democratic support. Currently, the Republican majority holds a 54-seat majority.

If approved by the Senate HELP Committee, nominee McMahon's appointment to be the next Secretary of Education will be heard by the full U.S. Senate for final confirmation. If approved, she will then take her oath of office to become the 13th U.S. Secretary of Education in United States. Watch or listen to the hearing [here](#).

2024 NAEP results show poor performance overall, achievement gaps widening



The 2024 **National Assessment of Educational Progress** (NAEP) results, released on Jan. 28, covering mathematics and reading scores for students in grades 4 and 8 show that **while California has made some progress in catching up to the national average, more work remains. Over the past 25 years, California has made noteworthy progress in closing the gap between state and national averages.** For

instance, in 2003, there was a 10-point gap between California's average fourth-grade reading score (206) and the nation's average (216). In 2024, that gap closed to 2 points. That same year, the gap between California and the nation's eighth-grade average math score was 12 points; in 2024, the gap closed to 3. **Though the state is catching up, California's average still trails national averages in every tested NAEP domain.**

Similar to this year's state test scores, **racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps in California persist, showing that historically disadvantaged students are not being adequately served by the state.** For instance, in math, there was a 33 percent gap between Black and white students who scored at or above Basic, the lowest-performing category, in fourth-grade mathematics and a 7-point gap in eighth grade. In fourth-grade math, there is a 30-point average score disparity between economically disadvantaged students and those who are not (222 vs. 252). In eighth-grade math, the two groups have a 39-point average score disparity (254 vs. 293). These results are similar in reading.

[Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

Trustees can strengthen their governance skills with

CSBA trainings



CSBA offers a host of virtual and in-person trainings for board members to sharpen their skills, whether its their first of fifth term! **On Feb. 26, CSBA's Legal Services team will debut an in-person course in West Sacramento focused on Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP).** **This course** is designed for school district administrators, compliance officers, complaint coordinators and board members seeking to

enhance their understanding of UCP requirements and ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.

New trustees shouldn't miss [Fiscal Responsibility: Key Financial Concepts for New Board Members](#), held virtually on March 10, or the in-person [Orientation for New Trustees](#) in West Sacramento on March 13. **Two more virtual opportunities to learn round out March with the [Board Presidents Workshop](#) on March 19 and [The Brown Act training](#) on March 21. [Discover all of CSBA's training opportunities, including the signature Masters in Governance® series »](#)**

Commission on Teacher Credentialing continues work to reform teacher assessments



The Feb. 6-7 meeting of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) continued discussion of several long-term initiatives, including a review of initial recommendations for improving Teacher Performance Assessments (TPAs). The Workgroup to Review the Design and Implementation of the Teaching Performance Assessments **presented its initial**

recommendations, along with staff-recommended interim actions to address issues identified by the workgroup to provide immediate or near-term support to current teacher candidates. The workgroup was formed to provide an analysis of any modifications needed to current assessments to ensure they are valid and authentic to the work of teaching, reasonable to implement in the wide range of classroom settings across the state, and appropriate for beginning teachers. [Learn more »](#)

BuyBoard Spotlight: Grounds maintenance equipment, parts and supplies



This month, CSBA is highlighting grounds maintenance equipment, parts and supplies available from BuyBoard Purchasing Cooperative



vendors used by local educational and public agencies across California. The rigorous criteria of both CSBA and BuyBoard ensure that these vendors meet high expectations for quality and service. **Grounds maintenance equipment,**

parts and supplies products have been competitively procured by BuyBoard, saving districts valuable time and resources. BuyBoard school district members can purchase a wide variety of grounds maintenance equipment such as turf equipment, tractors, mowers, utility vehicles and supplies from awarded vendors Trimax Mowing Systems Inc. and ATMAX Equipment Co. For more information about the procurement of grounds maintenance equipment, parts and supplies, as well as over 90 other competitively procured contract categories, contact Doug Williams at douglas.williams@buyboard.com or 425-260-4423. [Learn more »](#)

Districts can diversify investments with OPEB Solutions Program



The OPEB Solutions Program is a full-service Government Accountability Standards Board-compliant, Internal Revenue Service-approved **trust program designed to help local educational agencies safely and securely set aside funds to address and lower their Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability.**

This program gives districts local control of assets, providing LEAs with the flexibility to make contributions as deemed appropriate and the ability to access and withdraw funds to pay for OPEB expenses at any time. [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

Sponsors



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](#)

Small School District Financial Workshop

March 15 | Tuolumne | [Register](#)

MIG Course 3: School Finance Part 1 & 2

March 22 | Tulare | [Register](#)

[View complete calendar](#)

