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### Legislative update: CSBA co-sponsors bill to streamline education workforce housing development



On Feb. 20, Assemblymembers Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland) and Al Muratsuchi (D-Torrance) introduced **Assembly Bill 1021**, which offers a unique opportunity to increase the scope and quality of housing that school employees can afford statewide. CSBA, along with cityLAB-UCLA and TRiO Plus, are sponsoring the legislation.

**Every county in California has school-owned land suitable for education workforce housing** and, collectively, local educational agencies own 10,900 properties on more than

150,000 acres of land, roughly half of which could support workforce housing projects for school employees. Crucially, 61 percent of these properties are located where entry-level teachers face housing affordability challenges, but regulations and red tape are preventing or slowing efforts to convert unused or underutilized property for education workforce housing. **By easing the administrative and bureaucratic hurdles, AB 1021 will help LEAs more readily construct housing to address the educator shortage crisis and better serve California's students.**

"If we have the means to retain more high-quality employees — and change lives — by better utilizing assets we already control, it only makes sense for the state to facilitate this approach," said CSBA President Dr. Bettye Lusk. [Learn more about AB 1021 »](#)

## CDE responds to federal letter on discrimination



On Feb. 21, the California Department of Education (CDE) published [clarifications](#) regarding a Feb. 14 [dear colleague letter](#) the U.S. Department of Education sent to schools asserting that the "racial discrimination that has become widespread in this nation's educational institutions," such as **initiatives around diversity, equity and social justice, were illegal under Supreme Court precedent and could result in**

**loss of federal funding if changes to comply with the law weren't made by the end of February.**

The CDE's response states that the letter cannot serve as an enforcement mechanism and that it is not a legally mandated way to "attempt to revoke federal funds," nor had the federal Education Department taken specific actions related to the letter. Additionally, it outlines how existing laws already prohibit discrimination or preferential treatment in public schools on the basis of race, ethnicity, region, gender, sexual orientation and other factors. [Read the CDE letter »](#)

### In federal Education Department news:

- The U.S. Department of Education on Feb. 19 [announced changes to its COVID relief policy](#). Effective immediately, all payments under the American Rescue Plan; Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security; and Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations acts used for allowable expenditures are to be paid for by states and then submitted to the federal Education Department for reimbursement.

## Be a champion for schools at Coast2Coast

With the **recent shifts in educational priorities and federal funding cuts impacting programs and underserved students, school leaders have the opportunity to be a much-needed voice for local education.** Without assertive



advocacy, change is not assured. The **CSBA-ACSA Coast2Coast Federal Advocacy Trip from April 28-30** allows trustees to come together and unite under common issues impacting schools and students. Several key issues are the focus of this year's program, including technology and students, school finance and workforce challenges.

**School board members and superintendents can help secure funding, resources, policy and legislation that make a difference for California student success.** During scheduled meetings on Capitol Hill, program attendees will engage with federal representatives on a variety of topics. Special trainings and sessions will be conducted prior to these meetings to ensure trustees are fully prepared. This is a critical time for education, and strong advocates play a vital role in shaping the future of California's schools. **A discounted registration rate is available through Feb. 27.** [View the program agenda](#) | [Register](#)

## Upcoming opportunities to fulfill ethics training requirements



Still need to satisfy the ethics training required by Assembly Bill 2158? CSBA has you covered. Under the legislation passed in 2022, **members of school district and county office of education governing boards who were serving as of Jan. 1, 2025, must complete ethics training by Jan. 1, 2026, and every two years thereafter** (unless their term ends prior to 2026).

CSBA's **Ethics Assembly Bill 2158** course, which provides a certificate of completion to participants, offers a comprehensive overview of the conflict-of-interest laws applicable to trustees, including hypothetical situations for deeper learning experiences and resources for additional knowledge. **Upcoming virtual dates include March 19, April 7, June 4, Aug. 4 and Sept. 3.** Sessions will be held **in person on April 14 in Rocklin and May 12 in Camarillo.** **Don't wait until the last minute to comply with this new, legally mandated training!** [Register today »](#)

## Read the February edition of *California Schools News*

The February issue of ***California School News*** includes information about recent CSBA offerings, including a study on the effects of later start times and webinars covering new federal immigration directives and the governance team's role in ensuring strong math instruction, as well as recaps of the latest State Board of Education meeting, a recent court decision that may affect special education student placement, and policy updates impacting California's youngest learners.



The newsletter also highlights **strategies implemented in Emery Unified School District that have boosted rates of achievement among African American youth, and how the Butte County Office of Education's use of trauma-informed arts educators following the Camp Fire has benefitted students.** [Check out the full issue »](#)

## Resources on adopting instructional materials



**Whether you're a new or experienced trustee, selecting instructional materials is a huge responsibility that may feel daunting without the right resources.** Instructional materials are central to students' academic success and governance team members play a critical role in ensuring the adoption process goes smoothly and that materials reflect the diversity of local communities.

CSBA's Research and Education Policy Development Department has **created an online suite of resources on this topic, featuring briefs, fact sheets and webinars that can help guide school board members and clarify their roles and responsibilities throughout the process as well as those of the state.** Recent additions include the **brief** "High-Quality Professional Development to Support Instructional Materials Adoption Aligned with the New Math Framework," a joint publication of CSBA and the Learning Policy Institute, and the **webinar** "High-Quality Professional Development for Mathematics Instruction." [View all related resources »](#)

## Convert property ownership into an active asset

**Property  
Planning**  
Solutions



Property Planning Solutions by DCG Strategies aims to **help school leaders explore the ways in which their real estate assets can be leveraged** to secure additional funding for district initiatives, equip students with the education and experiences they need to be successful, invest in deferred facilities maintenance and capital improvements, reduce cost and liability from holding closed or grossly underutilized sites,

bolster general fund reserves and even attract new staff. School leaders and board members can gain access to real estate experts that work to align a local educational agency's priorities with the realities of the real estate market. Services include **real estate consulting, property planning, strategic asset management, educator housing development and real property brokerage services.** [Learn more »](#)

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

## Virtual events

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

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

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

**Executive Assistant Pi: Job Mechanics 3A/3B**  
March 13-14 | [Register](#)

**MIG Course 2: Student Learning & Achievement/Policy & Judicial Review**  
March 17-April 29 | [Register](#)

**Board Presidents**  
March 19 | [Register](#)

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

**The Brown Act**  
March 21 | [Register](#)

**Fiscal Responsibility: Key Financial Concepts for New Board Members**  
March 31 | [Register](#)

## In-person events

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

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

**MIG Course 3: School Finance Part 1 & 2**  
March 22 | Tulare | [Register](#)

## Sponsors



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



The logo for ENGIE features a blue gradient arc above the word "ENGIE" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

**Small School District Financial Workshop**

March 29 | Camino | [Register](#)

[View complete calendar](#)