

California School News Weekly Update  
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# California schoolnews

weekly update



September 9, 2015

## Upcoming Events

**2015 Back-to-School Webcast**  
[Sept. 15 - Online](#)

**2015 CCSA Fall Workshop**  
[Sept. 18 - Emeryville](#)

**One System: Reforming Education to Serve All Students Webinar**  
[Sept. 22 - Online](#)

**MIG Course 1: Foundations of Effective Governance / Setting Direction**  
[Sept. 11 - Hayward](#)  
[Sept. 19 - Visalia](#)  
[Sept. 25 - Anaheim](#)

**MIG Course 2: Student Learning & Achievement / Policy & Judicial Review**  
[Sept. 26 - Anaheim](#)  
[Oct. 10 - Visalia](#)  
[Oct. 16 - Hayward](#)

**MIG Course 3: School Finance**  
[Sept. 25 - Anaheim](#)  
[Nov. 7 - Visalia](#)  
[Nov. 13 - Sacramento](#)

**MIG Course 4: Collective Bargaining / Human Resources**  
[Sept. 26 - Anaheim](#)  
[Nov. 14 - Sacramento](#)

**MIG Course 5: Community Relations & Advocacy / Governance Integration**  
[Sept. 26 - Anaheim](#)  
[Nov. 14 - Sacramento](#)

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## News

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### CAASPP first year scores released

***SPI calls results "starting point toward goal of career and college readiness"***

On Sept. 9, the California Department of Education released results from the first year of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, known as CAASPP, administered to approximately 3.2 million students last spring. The release of the scores had been planned for mid-to-late August, but was delayed pending final results of the Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy assessments. The initial results show that, statewide in all grades, 44 percent of students met or exceeded the English language arts/literacy standard and 34 percent met or exceeded the mathematics standard. Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson commented that, "California's new standards and tests are challenging for schools to teach and for students to learn, so I am encouraged that many students are at or near achievement standards. However, just as we expected, many students need to make more progress." [Read the press release](#) from today's announcement. The full results of the CAASPP are available [online](#).

### SB 172 passes Assembly floor

***Bill would suspend CAHSEE as a graduation requirement through 2018, following exemption for class of 2015***

On Tuesday, Sept. 9, Senate Bill 172 (Liu, D-Flintridge) passed the Assembly and was returned to the Senate for a concurrence vote, which will likely come later this week. The bill would suspend the California High School Exit Exam as a requirement for graduation through the 2017-18 school year, so that the test can be reevaluated. The bill was amended to address years prior to 2015. Specifically, local educational agencies will be authorized through July 31, 2018, to grant diplomas to any student who has completed all state and local graduation requirements other than passing the exit exam. The amendment is silent with regard to when the student completed grade 12. If signed by the Gov., the provisions of this bill would go into effect Jan. 1, 2016. Pursuant to the passage of Senate Bill 725 (Hancock, D-Oakland) in August the class of 2015 has been exempted from the CAHSEE as a requirement for graduation. Districts and county offices



of education should be immediately issuing diplomas to students who have met all other requirements for graduation in 2015, but have not passed the CAHSEE. At present, no offerings of the CAHSEE are scheduled for the 2015-16 school year or beyond. If you have questions, [email Erika Hoffman](#), CSBA legislative advocate.

### **SB 799 remains in Legislature during final week of session**

***Sept. 11 deadline to send reserve cap legislation to Governor***

Senate Bill 799 (Hill, D-San Mateo), the CSBA-sponsored bill to fix the reserve cap remains active in the Assembly as the current legislative session draws to a close on Friday, Sept. 11. SB 799 would fix the reserve cap by reforming several key elements of the original budget trailer bill Senate Bill 858. These reforms include exempting small school districts of less than 2,501 Average Daily Attendance, applying the reserve cap only to unassigned general fund and special reserve fund balances, and significantly raising the level of the cap. Recent press on SB 799 includes an opinion piece in the [San Diego Union-Tribune](#), as well as articles in [EdSource](#) and [Capitol Weekly](#). In these final three days of the legislative session, CSBA is encouraging members to continue making phone calls and sending emails to Legislators, urging their support of fixing the reserve cap. Please visit [www.fixthecap.com](http://www.fixthecap.com) and use the form provided to contact your representatives to urge their "Aye" vote on SB 799. Please continue to monitor communications from CSBA with important updates and "next steps" on SB 799 and the reserve cap as they become available.

### **California State Auditor releases SMAA report**

***Includes actions to be completed within six months***

On Aug. 20, 2015, the California State Auditor released its audit report concerning School-Based Medi-Cal Administrative Activities and found that the program should be streamlined in order to improve it. The SMAA, run by the Department of Health Care Services, helps to ensure that children are enrolled and retained in the Medi-Cal program, and able to access health services through their schools. 50 percent of the SMAA program costs are reimbursed to districts by the federal Medicaid program. The DHCS was given the directive by the California State Auditor to take the following actions within six months regarding the SMAA program. These actions include revising the reimbursement rates so that claiming units can receive the 75 percent reimbursement rate for translation activities that federal law allows, and determining the extent to which claiming units can claim the unreimbursed difference between the 50 percent and 75 percent reimbursement rate for translation activities performed in past years and inform claiming units of the findings.

For more information, [read the report](#).

### **Math misplacement subject of new CSBA Governance Brief**

***Brief poses questions for school boards***

In a disturbing practice known as math misplacement, many students in California's K-12 schools are unnecessarily held back in mathematics, despite earning good grades and test scores. A new [CSBA Governance Brief, Math Misplacement](#), published jointly with the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, explains why math misplacement is a problem, whom math misplacement affects, and the

consequences of this harmful practice. For example, hindering student advancement in mathematics creates a “leak in the STEM pipeline.” Furthermore, even unintentional math misplacement poses risks for school districts which — through the disparate impact doctrine — can be held legally liable for harming students. The brief covers Senate Bill 359 (Mitchell, D-Los Angeles) as one of several solutions for fixing math misplacement and closes with questions for board members to consider. [Read the brief.](#)

## Events, Training and Opportunities

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### **Cutting class doesn't cut it for academic success** *September campaign highlights attendance awareness*

With the school year underway, educators are stressing the importance of students attending class. September is [Attendance Awareness Month](#) and the campaign highlights the importance of going to school. According to the advocacy group Attendance Works, “Chronic absenteeism in kindergarten, and even [pre-K], can predict lower test scores, poor attendance and retention in later grades, especially if the problem persists for more than a year.” Meanwhile, the [Atlantic Monthly](#) reports that about 7.5 million students were chronically absent from schools nationwide in 2012. However, resources are available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) to help reduce these numbers. “The good news is that chronic absence is a solvable problem,” writes Hedy Chang, director of Attendance Works. Read the [CSBA blog](#) to learn more.

## Member Services

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### **GASB 45 for districts with fewer than 100 plan members**

Does your school district or county office have fewer than 100 plan members including both employees and retirees? If so, becoming compliant with GASB 45 just got easier through the streamlined approach known as the alternative measurement method. CSBA is pleased to offer a unique online method of obtaining an Alternative Measurement Method that allows districts and county offices to become compliant at a fraction of the cost of getting a full actuarial valuation. Find out if this method is right for you by visiting [CSBA's GASB 45](#) page or contacting [May Saechao](#) at 800-266-3382, ext. 3328.

***CSBA provides unparalleled advocacy, information and support services  
for school districts, county offices of education and ROCs/Ps.***

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