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# California schoolnews

Weekly Update

September 30, 2020

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COVID-19 update: U.S. Education Department releases Q&A in response to widespread special ed concerns



State and local educational agencies are facing **new and unexpected challenges in providing meaningful instruction to children, including children with disabilities, for the 2020–21 school year.** The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, within the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs released a [Q&A](#)

[guidance document Sept. 28](#) in response to inquiries concerning **implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part B provision of services in the current COVID-19 environment.**

While maintaining public health is critical, the document highlights that **no matter how special education and related services are provided** – whether in person, online or other type of telecommunication – **LEAs remain responsible for ensuring that a free and appropriate public education is provided to all students with disabilities.** [Learn more »](#)

The Education Department’s Office for Civil Rights also released a **Q&A guidance document Sept. 28 providing information predominantly surrounding the phasing in of use of physical facilities and in-person instruction** for select student groups, such as those with special needs or English learners. [Read the Q&A »](#)

#### **In other COVID-19 developments:**

- National health experts testifying before the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions on Sept. 23 sought to convince Congress, as well as the public, that when a vaccine or a treatment for COVID-19 is released, it can be trusted. Officials also announced that **150 million rapid tests would be deployed to aid in the reopening of schools.** **“In the coming weeks, we will begin shipping millions of tests per week in support of our teachers and students to open and keep open our K-12 schools,”** Admiral Brett Giroir, Assistant Secretary for Health in the United States Department of Health and Human Services, told the committee. [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)
- During this public health crisis, **school nurses are needed more than ever to help develop protocols for handwashing, temperature checks and mask-wearing to prevent the spread of the coronavirus,** as well as regular duties that help keep students and staff healthy. Some districts don’t have a nurse at all, and in others a single nurse may be responsible for several thousand students across multiple schools. **California has received approximately \$335 million in Governor’s Emergency Educational Relief Funds as part of the CARES Act, which LEAs can use to support student achievement and reduce learning loss. Schools resuming in-person instruction may use this money to recruit and retain more nurses, with the goal of keeping students learning on campus.** [Read more »](#)

Legislative update: AB 992 amends Brown Act to address social media use



**Gov. Gavin Newsom signed [Assembly Bill 992](#) on Sept. 18, amending the Brown Act's prohibition on serial meetings to address social media use.** Under the revised law, board members may communicate with their communities via social media, but they may not communicate directly with other members of their board on any issue of board business. Even simply

“liking” another board member’s post has the potential to create a violation of the Brown Act.

Under [Government Code section 54952.2](#), a majority of members of a governing board shall not, outside of a noticed meeting, use a series of communications to discuss, deliberate or take action on any item of board business. **AB 992 amends this and allows a board member to communicate via social media with community members to answer questions, provide information to the public, or solicit information from the public regarding a matter within the subject matter jurisdiction of the board.** However, AB 992 prohibits a board member from responding directly to another board member’s social media communication regarding a matter within the subject matter jurisdiction of their board. [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

CSBA leadership supports repeal of affirmative action ban



**CSBA’s Board of Directors voted on Sept. 26 to support Proposition 16 on the November 2020 statewide ballot. Proposition 16 would repeal provisions of Proposition 209, which amended the California Constitution in 1996 to prohibit the State of California from discriminating against, or granting preferential treatment to, “any individual or group on the basis**

**of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting.”**

In 1994, before Prop 209, the admissions rate for Black applicants was only 6 percentage points under the overall admissions rate, whereas Latino applicants were admitted at a higher than average rate. In contrast, in 2019, the UCs admitted Black and Latino students at a rate 16 percentage points lower and 6 percentage points lower than the overall rate, respectively. **The challenges posed by Prop 209 on K-12 institutions leave an impact on students as they make their way from pre-kindergarten to higher education.** Students of color are more likely to attend poorly

resourced local schools, while facing an admission policy at the state's institutions that do not take these circumstances into full consideration.

Register for AEC preconference Board President workshop; preview the new CSBA Executive Assistant program



Presiding over a school board requires **strong leadership, strategic vision and the ability to bring people together to build a strong cohesive team.** CSBA's **Board Presidents Workshop prepares leaders for this new role.** Board members will receive tips, tactics and techniques to build effective governance teams, conduct productive meetings and fulfill governance responsibilities, while staying focused on

efforts to improve learning and achievement for all students. The **Board Presidents Workshop will take place Tuesday, Dec. 1, 9 a.m.– 3:30 p.m.** [Register »](#)

The **Executive Assistant Program is designed to meet the needs of both new and experienced executive assistants serving school districts and county offices of education.** Engaging sessions designed for executive assistants, by executive assistants, provide important professional learning and include **a special preview of the new CSBA Executive Assistant Certification program, debuting in 2021.** The Executive Assistant Program will be **Wednesday, Dec. 2, 12:30– 4:30 p.m.** [Learn more »](#)

Rethink Adult Ed Challenge launched to grow pre-apprenticeship opportunities



U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced Sept. 24 **the Rethink Adult Ed Challenge, which will expand career opportunities for adult learners through pre-apprenticeship programs.** These educational opportunities help **ensure students seeking apprenticeships are prepared with the skills they need for success.** The Rethink Adult Ed Challenge

will help Adult Education and Family Literacy Act-funded adult education providers create innovative and high-quality pre-apprenticeship programs.

Community colleges, correctional facilities, libraries, community-based organizations and **other eligible providers interested in entering the challenge — including public high schools that partner with community colleges and other institutions**

to support adult learners — should [complete a Stage 1 submission](#) by Nov. 25, 2020. To learn more, adult education providers can join a [virtual information session](#) on Oct. 15.

Over 30 California schools recognized as 2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools



State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond announced Sept. 25 that **33 public schools in California were chosen as 2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools.** This award honors public and private K-12 schools that close achievement and opportunity gaps and where students achieve high learning standards. **Schools are recognized based on schoolwide**

**student scores, academic performance of specific student groups and graduation rates, and are among their state's highest-performing schools** as measured by state assessments or national tests. [See the list of recognized schools »](#)

Maintain good governance standards with SI&A



As districts work to navigate this school year, they can count on the compliance experts at SI&A. While districts focus on learning continuity and meeting COVID-19 guidelines, SI&A continues to provide essential services to help meet the challenges of health, safety and funding. Their **compliance experts provide guidance and resources for updating school safety plans, mitigating**

**risk and COVID-19 response activity tracking.** Let SI&A be your back-office support team. [Learn more »](#)

COVID-19 resources

Stay up to date with the latest news and resources related to COVID-19 on [CSBA's dedicated webpage](#) and with articles frequently posted on the newly redesigned [CSBA blog](#).

Business Services

Virtual events

**Masters in Governance Course 2**  
Oct. 8 & 14 | **Sold out**

**2020 CCSA Virtual Fall Workshop**  
Oct. 9 | [Register here](#)  
(Registration closes Oct. 1)

**Masters in Governance Course 3**  
Oct. 27-28 | **Sold out**

**2020 Annual Education Conference**  
Dec. 3-4 | [Register here](#)

\*All October in-person events have been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

\*All Masters in Governance courses through Nov. 14, 2020 are sold out.

[View complete calendar](#)



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