

# California schoolnews

Weekly Update

March 31, 2021

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## COVID-19 update: Federal funds released to states



President Joe Biden on March 24 announced that \$81 billion (of a total \$122 billion) of American Rescue Plan funds were released to states to support efforts to get students back in the classroom safely for in-person learning and address their academic, social-emotional and mental health needs. **California will receive about \$10 billion of its total allotment of \$15 billion.** A U.S. Department of Education [press](#)

[release](#) noted that **the remainder of the funds will become available after states submit to the federal department the plans they are developing and implementing for using ARP funds to safely reopen schools and meet the needs of students.**

Also announced on March 24 was the launch of the Education Department's **Summer Learning & Enrichment Collaborative**, a professional learning community in partnership with the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association, that will bring education leaders and experts together as they develop their plans for this summer, with a focus on students who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. The collaborative will **help build capacity for states and school districts, in partnership with other key stakeholders, to use ARP K-12 funds to identify and implement evidence-based summer learning and enrichment strategies** that meet the needs of all students.

### In other COVID-19 developments:

- The California Department of Public Health issued **new [guidance for commencement and graduation ceremonies](#)** March 26 which provides recommendations to help students, teachers, families and school administrators celebrate this academic milestone while also preventing the spread of COVID-19. **Ceremonies must adhere to all California COVID-19 protocols for schools, travel, outdoor events and lodging.**
- Data released March 24 by the U.S. Department of Education shows the **majority of children nationwide were receiving some level of in-person instruction at the beginning of 2021**, though a substantial number, predominantly youth of color, remained entirely in virtual learning. The [survey shows 76 percent of all students in these grades attended public schools that were open for hybrid or in-person instruction](#), while 24 percent attended schools that offered only remote or online instruction. **California, however, had far fewer schools report being open fully for in-person instruction.** Overall, **14 percent of fourth grade students** statewide attend schools offering all students hybrid modes of instruction, while just **about 18 percent are offering full-time in-person instruction.** **Nineteen percent of eighth graders have the opportunity to learn**

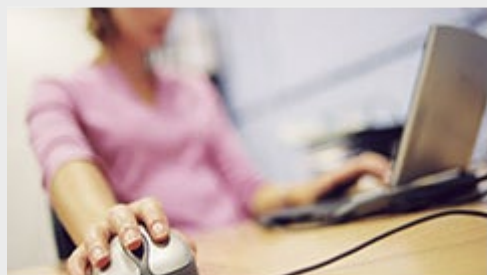
through hybrid instruction and only 3 percent can do so fully in person.  
[Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

## Register for CSBA webinar on broadband for California



Join CSBA CEO & Executive Director Vernon M. Billy on **Tuesday, April 20 from 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.** as he leads a discussion on the **critical importance of universal broadband access to California's K-12 schools** and the state's economic future. **"Broadband for California: Connecting to Our Promise"** will feature panelists including school board trustees, superintendents, state legislators, **business leaders** and advocates for closing the digital divide. [Learn more and register »](#)

## Statewide coalition calls for \$8 billion to help close digital divide



A cross-sector coalition of which CSBA is a part is [urging legislative leaders](#) to provide a one-time, \$8 billion investment in high speed 100 Mbps broadband infrastructure and programs. Investing in universal broadband access is the ideal use of the one-time funds included in the American Rescue Plan Act, the coalition argues, because it "is a largely one-time cost and it would both improve

lives in the short-term and increase the speed and size of the economic recovery, thereby producing medium-and long-term gains for all levels of government and the state's economy as a whole."

**The funding request complements, rather than competes with, several important bills currently pending in the Legislature. [Assembly Bill 14](#) and [Senate Bill 4](#)** would make important reforms to the CPUC's broadband infrastructure subsidy program and authorize a \$1 billion revenue bond. Additionally, [AB 34](#) would place a broadband bond on the November 2022 ballot. **With 8.4 million California residents without broadband subscriptions and a disproportionate rate of underserved rural, tribal and communities of color, this one-time investment represents a serious effort to make substantial progress on closing the digital divide**, setting the stage for California to once again be a leader in digital access. The broad-based group representing education, health, local government and economic policy organizations believe bold investment in broadband infrastructure and support services is critical to improving health, equity, education and the economy statewide now and for years to come. [Read the letter »](#)

## Biden releases American Jobs Plan proposal



President Joe Biden on March 31 released the American Jobs Plan proposal, a **\$2 trillion plan focused on infrastructure and climate which includes for K-12 education \$100 billion for modernizing schools featuring \$50 billion in direct grants and \$50 billion in bonds; \$100 billion for broadband; and \$48 billion for workforce development**, including apprenticeship and career pathways programs

that start in middle and high school.

The substantial infrastructure package is likely to undergo significant changes as it progresses through Congress. [Read the White House fact sheet for the proposal »](#)

## National school reopening summit emphasizes safety and collaboration



The **U.S. Department of Education** on **March 24** hosted the **National Safe School Reopening Summit**, which presented three panels discussing different aspects of school reopening from both a scientific and boots-on-the-ground perspective from district representatives around the U.S., including San Diego County's Cajon Valley Union School District. **In a panel led by Linda Darling-**

**Hammond**, president of both the **California State Board of Education and Learning Policy Institute**, **Cajon Valley Union SD Assistant Superintendent Karen Minshew** shared the district's reopening experience, **emphasizing communication and trust with stakeholders, and how it will continue to focus on relevant real-world curriculum that builds on student's strengths.** Other panels included a review of the latest science on school reopening by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the mechanics of reopening with districts from Cleveland, OH and New York City. [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

## Anti-racism webinar series and sample resolutions



The San Diego County Office of Education is hosting a new **three-day series exploring teacher identity, what it means to leverage social and emotional learning as an anti-racist teacher, and how it can help create an assets-based classroom culture where students are valued for their unique strengths.** Following the spike in hate crimes against Asian Americans and the country-wide

protests following the deaths of George Floyd and other Black Americans, local educational agencies have worked to address racial and ethnic inequities within the K-12 education system. **The series begins today, March 31, at 3:30 p.m. and will conclude April 2.** [Learn more and register »](#)

Both the **Asian Pacific Islander School Board Members Association** and **CSBA** have **provided template resolutions condemning anti-Asian hatred and violence.** ([CSBA sample resolution](#)| [APISBMA sample resolution](#))

"The battle against racism is older than America itself and schools cannot win it alone," **said CSBA President Suzanne Kitchens.** "We can, however, play a decisive role in creating conditions of inclusion and respect on our campuses and root out discrimination wherever it occurs. **We need to reexamine and reinforce our commitment to positive school cultures, anti-bullying, restorative justice and how the study and appreciation of the many cultures that form the American fabric contributes to a richer, safer and more respectful society.**"

## NSBA awards California district for special ed innovation



The National School Boards Association has awarded **Lowell Joint School District in Whittier, Calif. with a 2021 First Place Magna Award for its Special Education Blue Ribbon Action Team.** The Magna Awards honor districts across the country for programs that break down barriers for underserved students. Lowell's Special Education Blue Ribbon Action Team overhauled its processes

to drive and guide the program toward its goals of meeting the needs of students with disabilities, which has **helped reduce challenges for students with disabilities, leading to an increase in the number of students mainstreamed along with their age-appropriate peers.** [Learn more »](#)

Coverage you need to ensure student and district safety



Accidents happen. Are your students covered? To help members best address insurance-related issues, **CSBA has joined forces with California's leading provider of student accident and sickness insurance.** Myers-Stevens & Toohey is a full-service administrator based in Southern California that has worked closely with public K-12 schools for over 35 years. CSBA's **sponsored**

**catastrophic injury coverage is affordable and can be extended to cover all school activities,** including travel to and from home and school. [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](#).

## Virtual events

**MIG Course 4: Human Resources/Collective Bargaining**  
May 21-22 | [Registration closed](#)

**MIG Course 5: Community Relations & Advocacy/Governance Integration**  
June 11-12 | [Registration closed](#)

**2021 Executive Assistants Certification Program (Gamma Cohort)**  
July 30 - Nov. 5 | [Register here](#)

[View complete calendar](#)

## Business Services

