

# California schoolnews

Weekly Update

March 30, 2022

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## COVID-19 update: Cardona highlights the needs of students with disabilities in new pandemic era



Education Secretary Miguel **Cardona** on **March 24** published a **letter to educators and parents** about **February's coronavirus-related recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on identifying community levels and the potential impact on children with disabilities**. As the country enters a new phase of the pandemic, Cardona addressed the needs of students with disabilities and

encouraged schools to “lead with equity and inclusion to ensure all students have access to in-person learning alongside their peers.”

**Included in the letter is information on leveraging the Section 504 process on individualized education programs in order to ensure schools have protections in play to protect in-person participation.** Continuing the use of layered mitigation strategies to keep schools safe and efforts to ensure students have access to the education and services they need in the least restrictive setting possible were also addressed. [Read the letter »](#)

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

- Within the last month, California, in partnership with local county offices of education, has **distributed upwards of 14.3 million at-home COVID-19 tests to schools for use by students and staff as they return from spring break**, according to a [release](#) from Gov. Gavin Newsom’s office. The state also has **a stockpile of personal protective equipment, including KN95, N95 and surgical masks available to schools**. “California is focused on keeping schools open and students safe, and we’re not letting our guard down,” Newsom said.
- The U.S. Government Accountability Office on March 23 **reported that during the 2020–21 academic year, an estimated 1.1 million K-12 teachers from across the nation had at least one student who never showed up for class**. The GAO teamed up with Gallup to survey teachers as part of its effort to understand the impact the pandemic has had on public K-12 education. “The long-term impact of the disruptions of the last two years on student enrollment and attendance remains to be seen, particularly for students with whom schools have lost contact,” the agency stated. **The most common obstacle that teachers cited related to student attendance was challenges with the learning environment. Others included competing demands on their time (like work commitments or caring for a family member) and lack of tools for learning at home.** [Learn more »](#)

## Legislative update: Legislative committee takes positions on new education legislation



As the second half of the 2021–22 legislative session continues, **CSBA’s Legislative Committee met in March to consider and take positions on new education legislation. The Committee took positions on 23 bills**, including:

- **Assembly Bill 2034** (O'Donnell, D-Long Beach): Would expand access to school-based health and mental health services by encouraging more schools to participate in the Local Education Agency Medi-Cal Billing Option Program (LEA BOP), which allows schools to bill directly for Medi-Cal services provided by school health professionals, and to bill for more eligible services. The bill would also increase funding by reforming the Department of Health Care Services audit claims process for participating schools. **CSBA Position: Co-sponsor.**

- **AB 1607** (Muratsuchi, D-Torrance): Provides greater fiscal stability for school districts facing declining enrollment by calculating the average daily attendance (ADA) based on a three-year average. **CSBA Position: Support.**
- **Senate Bill 830** (Portantino, D-La Cañada Flintridge) Would authorize LEAs to apply to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for supplemental funding equal to the difference of local control funding formula (LCFF) base funding between an LEA's average daily attendance (ADA) and its enrollment. **CSBA Position: Oppose unless amended.** CSBA is seeking amendments to:
  - Strike the requirement for LEAs to apply for this funding;
  - Delete the requirement to spend 50 percent supplemental funding on attendance remediation;
  - Strike the requirement for an ongoing maintenance of effort (spending floor) equal to expenditures on efforts to address chronic absenteeism and habitual truancy in 2019–20; and
  - Strike the language making funding contingent upon on annual Budget Act appropriation and ensure these funds are ongoing.

For a full listing of CSBA's positions on current legislation, please visit our website [here](#).

#### In other legislative news:

- **Assembly Bill 1993** was pulled by Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland) on March 29. The bill would have required California public and private employers to enforce COVID-19 vaccine mandates for employees and independent contractors.

## Federal update: Biden budget proposal; FCC connectivity funding



On March 28, President **Biden** released his **proposed budget** for fiscal year 2023, previewing the White House's funding priorities, which includes an increase in federal education spending. While Congressional approval is required to make the proposed budget a reality, as proposed, **the President's plan would provide historic funding for Title 1 schools as well as boosts**

**for special education, early childhood programs and programs responding to the impact of the pandemic on students and staff.**

The federal fiscal year will begin on Oct. 1. While the exact timeline for the Congressional budget process is still unknown, **Appropriations overview hearings will begin in the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and related agencies on March 31.** [Read more »](#)

#### In other federal news:

- **A third and final period to file applications for the Emergency Connectivity Fund program opens on April 29 and will close on May 13, [according to](#)** the Federal Communications Commission. With awards for the last application window estimated to be at least \$1 billion, applicants can request money to buy eligible equipment and services to meet the needs of students, school staff and library users between July 1, 2022, and Dec. 31, 2023.

## Tool measures how states are prioritizing social-emotional and academic development



A **new tool** developed by The Education Trust in collaboration with CASEL allows interested parties nationwide to view how their state is prioritizing students' social-emotional and academic development (SEAD). The resource looks at what states have already done, and what they could potentially do, to begin determining best practices and ensure local educational agencies are properly supporting young people as

they deal with disruptions brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The tool, which highlights what policy areas can holistically support students' social-emotional needs and academic achievement, analyzes state policy in the categories of discipline; professional development; rigorous and culturally sustaining curriculum; student, family and community and engagement; and wraparound services. **California's SEAD efforts were rated as follows: discipline received a partially supportive rating; professional development received a rating of most supportive; rigorous and culturally sustaining curriculum received supportive; student, family and community engagement was rated supportive; and wraparound services was rated supportive. [Read more on the CSBA blog](#) »**

## Studies examine effects of California's push for computer science education



New **studies of computer science education at California high schools found that a greater emphasis on computer science education did not produce the anticipated spillover effects**, neither improving nor harming students' math or English language arts skills, according to school-level test scores. However, one trade-off of increased enrollments in computing courses may be that students are taking fewer humanities

courses such as the arts and social studies, researchers Paul Bruno and Colleen M. Lewis at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign found.

Using data that schools reported to the California Department of Education from 2003–19, the researchers explored the effects on student test scores and the curricular trade-offs of

student enrollments in computer science courses. **In a related project, Bruno and Lewis explored equity and diversity among California’s computer science teachers and their students. California has been near the forefront of a nationwide movement prioritizing technology curricula in K-12 public schools. [Read more in the CSBA blog »](#)**

## Expert MAA and LEA billing assistance



Practi-Cal offers the most comprehensive Medi-Cal and Medicaid Administrative billing services available to local educational agencies. Its broad range of expertise allows it to **identify areas of reimbursement often overlooked by others and simplifies the complicated billing process**, while minimizing your efforts. There are **no up-front costs to the district.** [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 [CSBA blog](#).

## Virtual events

**MIG Course 2: Student Learning & Achievement/Policy & Judicial Review**  
April 6-7 | [Register](#)

**MIG Course 2: Student Learning & Achievement/Policy & Judicial Review**  
April 8-9 | [Register](#)

**MIG Course 2: Student Learning & Achievement/Policy & Judicial Review**  
April 12-13 | [Register](#)

**MIG Course 2: Student Learning & Achievement/Policy & Judicial Review**  
April 14-15 | [Register](#)

## Sponsors



**MIG Course 3: School Finance Part 1 and Part 2**

April 19-20 | [Register](#)

**MIG Course 3: School Finance Part 1 and Part 2**

April 29-30 | [Register](#)

## In-person events

**2022 Leadership Institute**

July 22-23 | Los Angeles | [Register](#)

[View complete calendar](#)



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