

California schoolnews

Weekly Update

October 29, 2025

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Legislative update: State's nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office releases budget outlook



The **Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO)** released its annual **analysis of the 2025–26 State Budget**, which outlines how state actions taken during the last two years have continued to result in an ongoing operational deficit — meaning that the state is spending more money than it is receiving. **A series of loans, deferrals and maneuvers, including within Proposition 98, have resulted in a debt of approximately \$21.6**

billion, which will need to be repaid in future years and will compound an already bleak budget outlook. The state is projecting deficits in the coming three years of \$15-25 billion annually due largely to growing costs in certain programs, particularly Medi-Cal, and greater uncertainty about revenues. This is without knowing the full effect of recent federal actions, including the adoption of the One Big Beautiful Bill (HR 1), tariffs and the federal government shutdown.

In a separate analysis, **the LAO discussed the ramifications of HR 1, which will reduce federal funding for several social programs. While the state cannot fully backfill the loss of federal funding, there will likely be significant pressure on lawmakers to preserve programs as much as possible.** Taken together, this **sets the stage for another difficult budget with another potential attempt to manipulate Prop 98 in the coming year.**

Legal update: Attorneys general oppose proposed IDEA data collection change



On Oct. 21, the **California Attorney General, along with 15 other attorneys general, filed a comment letter** opposing proposed revision to the state application under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) by the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). OSERS's proposed change relates to the collection of "significant

disproportionality" data from Section V under Part B of IDEA. The **data collected in that portion of the application aims to promote equity in education under IDEA by helping the ED identify local educational agencies with significant disparities in student representation in special education programming based on race and ethnicity.**

The letter provides important background information related to the reporting requirement, including that **"data and research have shown for decades that students are disproportionately identified for special education and related services, and disproportionately placed in segregated, restrictive special education settings, on the basis of race and ethnicity."** The letter also states that to address this inequity, IDEA has, since 1997, required states that receive federal funds to collect and analyze data related to the race and ethnicity of students identified and placed in special education, and since December 2016 when the ED issued a Final Rule, required states to use a standard methodology with flexible components for local needs to determine when significant disproportionality exists. As part of the standard methodology, states must provide notice to the ED when changes are made to their specific methodology to allow OSERS to assess the change.

In their letter, the attorneys general maintain that OSERS's Proposed Revision to Information Collection removes the requirement for states to report changes to their methodology. **They argue that such a change will "end much-needed oversight and**

prevent [ED] from fulfilling its obligation to evaluate the rationality of changes states may make to their methodologies for calculating significant disproportionality.”

October edition of *California School News* available



The latest edition of CSBA’s newsletter includes **analysis of notable legislation signed or vetoed by Gov. Gavin Newsom** — including **three CSBA-sponsored bills that were signed into the law** this past legislative session — as well as a **recent Supreme Court decision expanding parent/guardian opt-out rights and what it means for local educational agencies**.

This issue also includes recaps of a recent CSBA webinar that examined how to budget during uncertain fiscal times, the latest State Board of Education meeting, and **case summaries from the Office of Administrative Hearings that offer insight into conducting layoffs**; and **reports on the Los Angeles County Office of Education’s Community Schools Initiative** and a **Napa Valley Unified School District partnership that encourages rural, small-town students to pursue top colleges**. [Read the newsletter »](#)

Register now for first webinar in CSBA County Board Handbook series



Through clear explanations, real-world context and relevant prompts, **the new CSBA County Board Governance Handbook** is a resource that aims to help trustees understand the distinct mission and scope of California’s county offices of education and county boards of education; reflect on responsibilities as a board member — individually and collectively; engage in effective advocacy and community relationships; work with

and support school districts within the county office territory; and build the habits and mindset that support long-term public leadership.

Registration is open for “The CSBA County Board Handbook: A tool for great governance,” the first of a five-part webinar series bringing the handbook to life, offering county board members practical tools and real-world strategies to bridge policy and practice. Taking place **on Nov. 12 at 11 a.m., this webinar will include CSBA governance and training experts exploring how to use the handbook as a training tool that leads to greater collaboration** and an increased focus on what it takes to be an excellent board. [Register for the webinar](#) | [View the free, digital version or order a printed copy](#)

State update: California Blue Ribbon Schools celebrated



On Oct. 23, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony **Thurmond** recognized **31 California schools nominated as National Blue Ribbon Schools (NBRS) for 2025** and, following the U.S. Department of Education's elimination of the NBRS program, are now being awarded the distinction of **2025 California Blue Ribbon Schools (CBRS)**. This award honors elementary, middle and high

schools that close achievement and opportunity gaps, as well schools where students demonstrate especially high levels of academic success. The CBRS recognition program, established specifically to recognize certified nominees of the cancelled NBRS program, will be awarded for this year only. Other statewide school recognition programs, such as California Distinguished Schools, will continue to recognize exemplary schools across the state. [Read the list of awardees »](#)

In other state news:

- The California Department of Education (CDE) recently announced that **applications are open for the California Green Ribbon Schools recognition program**, which **honors local educational agencies' environmental literacy and sustainability efforts and spotlights replicable best practices**. Interested parties can request an electronic application and learn more about the program on the [CDE Green Ribbon Schools Award Program webpage](#).

Commission on Teacher Credentialing addresses subject matter requirements and updating exams



The Oct. 23-24 meeting of the **California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)** approved work plans to move forward for **clarifying options for candidates to meet the subject matter requirements (SMR) for teaching credentials**, updating commission-approved exams and restructuring the Administrative Services Credential Program, among other actions.

Assembly Bill 130 (2021) created new options for preliminary teaching credential candidates to demonstrate their credential-appropriate subject matter competence including through an aligned undergraduate degree, by completing aligned coursework, by successfully passing the credential-appropriate assessment or through a combination of these options. **“These new options came with unintended consequences,”** said **Juliet Wahleithner, Division of Research, Evaluation and Assessment director for the CTC**. **“While AB 130 created**

options, it also created new areas of confusion for both programs and candidates. And so, we have some actions to expand on those options. The plan outlined in this item seeks to create new options to eliminate or at least diminish those areas of confusion.” [Read a full recap of the meeting and the options discussed on the CSBA blog »](#)

Districts can diversify investments with OPEB Solutions Program



The OPEB Solutions Program is a **full-service Government Accountability Standards Board-compliant, Internal Revenue Service-approved trust program designed to help local educational agencies safely and securely set aside funds to address and lower their Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability.**

This program gives LEAs local control of assets, providing the flexibility to make contributions as

deemed appropriate and the ability to access and withdraw funds to pay for OPEB expenses at any time. [Learn more »](#)

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

Virtual events

Ethics Assembly Bill 2158

Nov. 3 | [Register](#)

Masters in Governance (MIG) Course 5: Community Relations & Advocacy/ Governance Integration

Nov. 19-20 | [Register](#)

Executive Assistant (EA) Sigma cohort: Governance Integration 4

Nov. 21 | [Register](#)

In-person events

Annual Education Conference and Trade Show

Dec. 3-5 | Sacramento | [Register](#)

Sponsors



[View complete calendar](#)



California School Boards Association | 3251 Beacon Blvd., West Sacramento, CA 95691
Phone: (800) 266-3382 | Fax: (916) 371-3407