California school news Weekly Update

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State update: Annual enrollment data released

On May 21, the California Department of Education **announced** that **school enrollment data for 2024–25 was available in DataQuest.** According to the department, **the latest numbers indicate that "the decline in public school enrollment has begun to slow."**

In 2024–25, California saw 5,806,221 students enrolled in TK-12, a 0.54 percent decline from the previous year. "While the overall decrease in school enrollment compared to pre-pandemic levels continues to be a source of strain on public schools, **new initiatives such as transitional kindergarten (TK) show significant growth and**

signs of promise as local educational agencies work to reengage families, especially as California's families experience increased economic hardship," the department stated. Stay tuned for a more in-depth analysis of 2024–25 enrollment trends on the CSBA blog in June. **Browse DataQuest for state-, county-, district- and school-level data »**

Legislative update: CSBA-sponsored bills sail through suspense hearings

On May 23, **the Assembly and Senate Appropriations committees took up their suspense files, collectively announcing the outcomes of nearly 1,100 bills**. Held nine days after the release of the **Gov. Gavin Newsom's May Budget Revise** — where it was revealed that the state is now facing a $12 billion budget deficit — **controlling for costs of pending legislation was the theme of the day.** In both committees, the respective chairs shared that many bills would be held or heavily amended to reduce cost pressures on the state budget.

The suspense file compiles bills with a price tag of over $150,000 to be considered in bulk in order to weigh their fiscal impact as a whole. Suspense hearings provide the Legislature a singular opportunity to address bills with significant financial price tags, along with some politically difficult measures. Ultimately, less fortunate legislation may be "held on suspense," meaning the bill dies in the committee, mostly due to its costs.

Only two of CSBA's six sponsored bills were in a committee's suspense file and both will now join the other four bills in continuing forward in the Legislature. The two bills are **Assembly Bill 1381** (Muratsuchi, D-Torrance), which would establish a state revolving loan fund to provide zero-interest loans to local educational agencies of up to $200,000 based on enrollment to help with feasibility studies and predevelopment work for housing projects, and **AB 1111** (Soria, D-Fresno), which will address the impacts of 2023's AB 579 requiring all future school bus acquisitions to be zero-emission by providing a five-year extension to the purchasing requirement to LEAs unable to meet the charging infrastructure and maintenance and repair obligations. **Read a breakdown on the outcomes of other significant education legislative measures »**

Federal update: House passes budget reconciliation bill; New grant priorities

On May 22, **the U.S. House of Representatives passed HR 1, called the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, the reconciliation bill that contains a number of tax extensions,**

some new tax proposals, spending cuts and various reforms to domestic programs that have been proposed by the Trump Administration. The bill passed on a vote of 215 to 214 and has been sent to the Senate for further deliberation.

Negotiations on the components of HR 1 will continue while the bill is in the Senate to further lower the out-year costs and to provide more flexibility at the federal level. The various components of the reconciliation bill include:

- Makes permanent the tax cuts from the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that lowered individual and corporate tax rates, increased various tax deductions and increased the Child Tax Credit. The Joint Committee on Taxation estimates these changes would cost $3.7 trillion over the next decade.
- Raising the state and local tax (SALT) deduction to $40,000.
- No tax on tips, car loan interest or overtime pay.
- Cuts to current energy tax credits, including elimination of electric vehicle credits and phasing out solar and wind credits. Also eliminates other regulations that would impact the sale of gas-powered cars sold in the U.S.
- Major reforms to the Medicaid program including program funding reductions, increased eligibility checks, increased work requirements, imposition of cost sharing for certain services, increased data requirements, shortening open enrollment periods for the Affordable Care Act and changes in immigrant care and services.
- Proposed cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) of nearly $300 billion through 2034 by cutting funding for food benefits and requiring states to backfill the funding. It also increases eligibility and work requirements.
- Extends the Secure Rural School (SRS) program for three years.
- Establishes a new tax program to provide tax credits to those who donate to organizations that provide scholarships for students to attend non-public K-12 schools.
- Makes change in higher education financial aid that reduces the number of income-based repayment programs and imposes lifetime caps for some federal grants and loans, like the Pell Grant program.

The reconciliation bill also raises the national debt limit by $4 trillion. The U.S. is expected to reach the current debt limit within the next month or so.

The Senate will take up the bill in the coming weeks and is likely to make significant changes to the current version. Under the reconciliation process, the legislation is subject to the Senate's Byrd Rule, which requires all provisions to be primarily budgetary in nature; however, it only requires a simple majority to pass. **If the Senate makes any changes to the bill, the House will have to vote on the updated version** before sending it to the President's desk.

In other federal news:

- On May 21, **the U.S. Department of Education proposed changes to its grant priorities that will impact grant applications going forward.** The priorities highlight the President's focus on education topics like school choice and diversity, equity and inclusion. Competitive grants make up a small piece of the department's overall portfolio. **These priorities will not affect most of the federal K-12 funding**, which go toward grants that the Education Department allocates to states by formula, such as Title I, to support students from low-income communities, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. **The priorities, published in the Federal Register, will be open for public comment for 30 days before the Education Department finalizes them.**

Legal update: Court order slows early efforts to close US Department of Education

On May 22, **a federal judge in the U.S. District Court in the District of Massachusetts issued a preliminary injunction preventing the implementation of a major reduction in force (RIF) and requiring the reinstating of employees let go through the RIF at the U.S. Department of Education (ED) until a decision is made on the merits of the case.** After Secretary of Education Linda McMahon announced a large-scale RIF that would cut the ED's workforce in half, California along with 20 other states filed a lawsuit alleging that the RIF was unlawful. Separately, two Massachusetts school districts as well as a number of national and regional labor organizations representing educators and school staff filed another lawsuit on the same issue. Both sets of plaintiffs sought a preliminary injunction, prompting the judge to consolidate their applications.

The consolidated **plaintiffs allege that the RIF cuts were so severe and sweeping that they have hamstrung the ED from being able to perform its statutorily mandated functions and obligations.** The plaintiffs argued that, by its breadth and severity, the RIF is an impermissible step toward dismantling the ED in its entirety, that it violates the Constitution's Separation of Powers doctrine, the Take Care clause of the Constitution, the Administrative Procedure Act and it is ultra vires, or beyond one's legal power or authority. After a thorough analysis of the parties' arguments, the court granted consolidated plaintiffs' motion enjoining McMahon and the Trump Administration from carrying out the RIF, and ordered that federal employees whose employment was terminated or eliminated on or after Jan. 20, 2025, as part of the RIF be reinstated.

Legal update: Divided court leaves decision stopping religious charter schools in Oklahoma in place

On May 22**, the Supreme Court issued a rare 4-4 decision in *Oklahoma Statewide Charter School Board v. Drummond*, a highly**

anticipated case that questioned whether state-funded religious charter schools violate the First Amendment. Due to the court's inability to reach a majority, **the decision is a one sentence order that affirms the judgment from the Oklahoma Supreme Court invalidating the charter school**, and nothing more. The 4-4 split came as a result of Justice Amy Coney Barrett recusing herself from the case. She did not state a reason for her recusal and simply did not participate in the case.

The Oklahoma Statewide Charter School Board approved St. Isidore of Seville Catholic Virtual School's charter school application in 2023. The school is a virtual charter run by the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and the Diocese of Tulsa, and the state Attorney General Gentner Drummond asked the Oklahoma Supreme Court to invalidate the approval due to state law requirements that mandate public schools, including charter schools, be non-sectarian or non-religious. The Oklahoma Supreme Court agreed with the attorney general that state law does not allow religious charter schools to be funded by the state and those state laws do not violate the Oklahoma or United States constitutions.

The charter school and state charter school board appealed that decision to the U.S. Supreme Court, where the justices, apart from Justice Barrett, heard oral argument on April 30. **While the Oklahoma Supreme Court's decision stands, it applies only to the state of Oklahoma.** Consequently, **this issue may resurface in the future in another state.**

New guide: Advancing equitable and supportive discipline

CSBA's Research and Education Policy Development Department collaborated with researchers from University of California (UC), Los Angeles, and UC Berkeley's Race, Education and Community Healing (REACH) Network to develop an **executive summary** of **new research** on the efforts of 10 California schools to address discipline disparities.

"**Practical Steps Toward Advancing Equitable and Supportive Discipline: A Guide for School Boards**" **outlines five key considerations for governance teams evaluating their local discipline practices,** such as setting clear expectations for restorative discipline practices and monitoring discipline data. **It also highlights local examples** from schools in the REACH Network **and provides boards with essential questions about discipline disparities**, emphasizing that inclusive practices are vital for enhancing student outcomes and fostering positive learning environments. **Read the executive summary »**

Register for upcoming webinars on LEA finances and AI policy and procurement

CSBA has two informative webinars coming up in early June:

Partner webinar: Managing budget challenges and long-term liabilities during fiscal uncertainty, June 3 at 10 a.m.
Experts from CSBA and Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS) will share the latest **updates from Gov. Gavin Newsom's 2025–26 May Budget Revise** and how local educational agencies' finances may be impacted. As LEAs prepare for fiscal uncertainties ahead, hear how the Governor and Legislative Analyst's Office plan to manage budget challenges and secure education funding in this year's state budget. While many factors are out of LEAs' control, **learn the advantages of creating a rainy-day fund and other strategies for cutting costs, saving money and addressing rising long-term liabilities such as other post-employment benefits and pensions.** **Register »**

Navigating AI policy, privacy and procurement with CITE: A primer for TK-12 board members, June 10 at 11 a.m.
Join CSBA and California IT in Education (CITE) for this interactive webinar designed for **TK-12 board members to examine the essential aspects of artificial intelligence (AI) policy in education.** This webinar will cover the fundamentals of AI and its application within school systems. The key components of effective AI policies will be discussed, including both classroom use and procurement processes. Additionally, CITE will provide an overview of the many AI resources it has available. **Register »**

AAPI Heritage Month interview: CSBA Delegate-at-Large, Asian/Pacific Islander Sylvia Leong

To close out Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, **CSBA interviewed its Director-at-Large, API Sylvia Leong.** Currently **serving her third term on the Cupertino Union School District board, Leong also serves as the CSBA liaison for the Asian Pacific Islander School Boards Association and was a founding member of the Santa Clara County School Boards Association Unhoused Students Advocacy Committee.** She has been working with students for more than 20 years and is passionate about holistic education that balances academics with social-emotional health to best equip students for future success.

"As a school board member, I have the privilege and responsibility to help shape the very spaces where children learn who they are and whether they matter," Leong said. **"I know how powerful it is for a child to walk into a classroom and feel they belong. That who they are isn't something to hide, but something to celebrate.** That's why it's so important to me that we are culturally responsive as a district and work to build our students up." **Read the full interview »**

BuyBoard Spotlight: Library books, used textbooks and supplies

This month, **CSBA is highlighting library books, textbooks and related supplies available from BuyBoard Purchasing Cooperative vendors**, which are used by local educational agencies and public agencies across California. The rigorous criteria of both CSBA and BuyBoard ensure that these vendors meet high expectations for quality and service.

Library books, used textbooks and other books have been competitively procured by BuyBoard, saving districts valuable time and resources. BuyBoard-member LEAs can purchase a wide variety of books for schools and libraries from a number of awarded vendors. For more information about the procurement of library books, textbooks and supplies on contract ***#702-23, Library Books, Used Textbooks, and Other Books*** — as well as over 90 other competitively procured contract categories — please reach out to Doug Williams at douglas.williams@buyboard.com or 425-260-4423. **Learn more »**

Convert property ownership into an active asset

Property Planning Solutions by DCG Strategies aims to **help school leaders explore the ways in which their real estate assets can be leveraged** to secure additional funding for district initiatives, equip students with the education and experiences they need to be successful, invest in deferred facilities maintenance and capital improvements, reduce cost and liability from holding closed or grossly underutilized sites, bolster general fund reserves and even attract new staff. School leaders and board members can gain access to real estate experts that work to align a local educational agency's priorities with the realities of the real estate market. Services include **real estate consulting, property planning, strategic asset management, educator housing development and real property brokerage services.** **Learn more »**

Stay up to date with the latest news and resources on the CSBA blog.

Sponsors

Virtual events

Ethics Assembly Bill 2158
June 4 | **Register**

Executive Assistant (EA) Rho: Job Mechanics 3A/3B
June 5-6 | **Register**

The Brown Act
June 13 | **Register**

Executive Assistant (EA) Rho: Governance Integration
June 27 | **Register**

Ethics Assembly Bill 2158
Aug. 4 | **Register**

The Brown Act
Aug. 15 | **Register**

Ethics Assembly Bill 2158
Sept. 3 | **Register**

The Brown Act
Sept. 3 | **Register**

In-person events

Masters in Governance (MIG) Course 5: Community Relations & Advocacy/ Governance Integration
June 7 | Riverside | **Register**

County Board Conference
Sept. 5-7 | Monterey | **Register**

View complete calendar