

California schoolnews

Weekly Update

September 10, 2025

In this Issue

- [National assessment scores show declines; CSBA calls for state plan](#)
- [Legislative update: Last week of the legislative session](#)
- [New publication: CSBA County Board Governance Handbook available now](#)
- [New CSBA fact sheet shares the basics of effective governance](#)
- [CSBA webinar offers strategies for budgeting in uncertain fiscal times](#)
- [CSBA Communications Chief featured on *EdSource* podcast](#)
- [State update: Albuterol standing order for schools](#)
- [Districts can diversify investments with OPEB Solutions Program](#)

National assessment scores show declines; CSBA calls for state plan



The 2024 results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), [released Sept. 9](#) by the National Center for Education Statistics, showed a decline in all measured areas. **In eighth-grade science, 31 percent performed at or above NAEP Proficient** (the scale measures Basic, Proficient and Advanced), 4 percentage points lower than in 2019; **38 percent performed below NAEP Basic**, 5 percentage points higher

than 2019. The average **12th-grade mathematics and reading scores were the lowest since the current assessments began in 2005. With declining scores for lower-performing students at the 10th and 25th percentiles across assessments, the achievement gap between the highest- and lowest-performing students continued to widen disproportionately.**

Unfortunately, expected **state-level data was not released.** Although more will be revealed with California's standardized testing results next month, the national data, along with California's recent trendline, suggest stagnant outcomes should be expected, particularly for the most vulnerable students.

"Year after year, California students continue to struggle in reading, math and science. The persistent nature of achievement gaps in one of the wealthiest societies in recorded history is a disgrace for California's state leaders and a tragedy for its students," said **CSBA CEO & Executive Director Vernon M. Billy.** **"The state has failed to fully own this crisis. Local school boards carry the burden of trying to triage the situation under political and funding duress, while the state sputters along without a clear, coherent plan that details what the state is going to do differently at its agencies to support the efforts of LEAs to close the achievement gap.**

"Such a plan would, among other things, establish benchmarks for state actions, hold state agencies and policymaking bodies accountable for meeting benchmarks while providing a transparent process for keeping the public informed of state progress toward supporting LEAs," Billy continued. "Without such a plan, we consign another generation to mediocrity." [Read more about the results and CSBA's advocacy push »](#)

Legislative update: Last week of the legislative session



Midnight on Sept. 13 marks the end of the first year of the two-year 2025–27 legislative session. Because it is the first year of a two-year session, some bills, including urgency measures and committee and budget bills, do not have to adhere to the midnight deadline. For the most part, however, **the vast majority of bills will have to pass the Legislature by the deadline and Gov. Gavin Newsom will have 30 days from the end**

of the session — Oct. 12 — to sign or veto all measures that reach his desk.

This year features a number of high-profile education policy issues that could come down to the final hours of the legislative session. These include:

- **Charter school legislation:** The Legislature has been considering two opposing measures, [Assembly Bill 84 \(Muratsuchi\)](#), sponsored by the California Federation of Teachers and the California School Employees Association, and [Senate Bill 414 \(Ashby\)](#), sponsored by the California Charter Schools Association, to determine how to best enhance oversight of nonclassroom-based charter schools. AB 84 has been turned into a two-year bill and it remains unclear whether SB 414 will garner the necessary votes to reach the Governor's desk. **CSBA Position:** Opposed to SB 414 and Neutral on AB 84

- **Antisemitism legislation:** [AB 715 \(Zbur/Addis\)](#) is undergoing significant negotiations to address antisemitic incidences and other forms of discrimination and prejudice. Addressing prejudice and discrimination is critical to providing a safe and supporting learning environment, which includes addressing incidences of antisemitism. However, concerns remain that the current version of the bill could result in a curtailing of academic freedom and have a chilling effect on how schools can talk about and address incidences of antisemitism, as well as other forms of prejudice. **CSBA Position:** Opposed

New publication: CSBA County Board Governance Handbook available now



The CSBA County Board Governance Handbook is designed to give a cohesive and practical overview of the work of California's county boards of education. Through clear explanations, real-world context and relevant prompts, this resource 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.
- Build the habits and mindset that support long-term public leadership.

[Download the **FREE** digital version today](#) | [Order a printed copy](#)

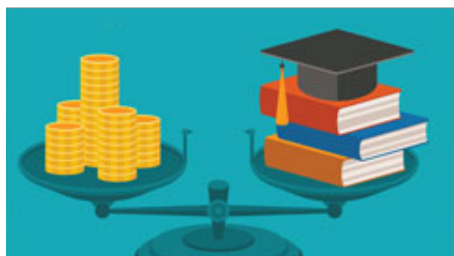
New CSBA fact sheet shares the basics of effective governance



The Research and Education Policy Development Department has created a fact sheet **sharing insights from CSBA's Strengthening Local Governance Policy Pillar Committee**, which last met at the May Delegate Assembly. **"Effective Governance: Recommendations from the Field"** reports what protocols and practices **Delegates said support effective governance and how to navigate barriers** when they arise.

This resource also includes CSBA's recommendations for governance teams to work effectively and efficiently, questions boards should consider, resources for further professional development and learning, and sample board bylaws, board policies and administrative regulations. [Read the fact sheet »](#)

CSBA webinar offers strategies for budgeting in uncertain fiscal times



In a time marked by declining enrollment, shifts in federal policy and rising costs, **the board's role as stewards of local education finance is more critical than ever**. In response to concerns from board members around the state, CSBA recently hosted a webinar, "Maximizing Impact: Prioritizing investments for students' long-term success," featuring **education researchers from WestEd sharing the current budget landscape and**

strategies on navigating uncertain budget scenarios. Fresno Unified School District Board President Valerie F. Davis joined the panelists to talk about **the district's student outcomes-focused governance and the board's oversight role**. [Read a recap](#) | [Watch the webinar](#)

CSBA Communications Chief featured on *EdSource* podcast



A Sept. 4 *EdSource* podcast, "School leaders grapple with Supreme Court decision on religious rights," featured **CSBA Communications Chief Troy Flint speaking about the complex issue of offering opt-out forms to parents who want to withdraw their children from materials and discussions on LGBTQ+ issues** and other subjects that conflict with their "sincerely held religious beliefs."

"Many school board members have heard if they don't implement this in a way that people on the Right feel reflects the primary themes of the Supreme Court decision and gives parents those robust, opt-out rights, they would be sued for noncompliance," Flint said. "Then, people on the Left are arguing this is discriminatory in nature and if you implement this in a way that makes LGBTQ+ students or families feel 'less than,' then we will sue you on the grounds of discrimination. **School board members are caught between a rock and a hard place.**" [Listen to the podcast »](#)

State update: Albuterol standing order for schools



The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Office of School Health recently announced that it has issued a statewide standing order that enables all California local educational agencies to obtain albuterol metered-dose inhalers (MDIs) and disposable spacers without the need for an independent physician's prescription. LEAs may place orders on behalf of multiple schools under their jurisdiction.

For the Albuterol standing order, MDIs may be obtained in quantities of two per school site and disposable spacers in quantities of 25 per school site. Schools may request refills if devices are used or become inoperable. CDPH [is hosting a webinar on Sept. 16 at 2 p.m.](#) for school administrators, school nurses, local health department staff and others working in school health to launch the initiative. [Learn more »](#)

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 districts local control of assets, providing LEAs with 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](#).

Sponsors



Virtual events

2025 CCSA Fall Virtual Workshop

Sept. 19 | [Register](#)

Masters in Governance (MIG) Course 2: Student Learning & Achievement/Policy & Judicial Review

Oct. 1-2 | [Register](#)

EA Sigma: Job Mechanics 3A/3B

Oct. 16-17 | [Register](#)

MIG Course 3: School Finance Part 1 and Part 2

Oct. 22-23 | [Register](#)

In-person events

MIG Course 4: Human Resources/ Collective Bargaining

Oct. 4 | Torrance | [Register](#)

Oct. 4 | Stockton | [Register](#)

Education Workforce Housing Bootcamp

Oct. 15 | San Jose | [Register](#)

Oct. 24 | Covina | [Register](#)

MIG Course 4: Human Resources/ Collective Bargaining

Oct. 18 | Torrance | [Register](#)

Oct. 18 | Stockton | [Register](#)

Legal Services UCP University

Oct. 29 | Redondo Beach | [Register](#)

[View complete calendar](#)

