

California schoolnews

Weekly Update

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CSBA CEO & Executive Director Vernon M. Billy details in *SF Chronicle* how CSBA's Close the State Accountability Gap legislation can make a lasting impact on education



The following is an excerpt from an opinion piece by CSBA CEO & Executive Director Vernon M. Billy, “**Newsom can still do more to fix California’s schools before he leaves office**,” that was published on Aug. 4 by the *San Francisco Chronicle*: “In July, Gov. Gavin Newsom held a press conference to celebrate signing into law Assembly Bill 181,

which will establish far greater control over public education for the governors who succeed him. Moving school oversight under a new education commissioner role appointed by the governor is a crucial first step in repairing California's fragmented system of education governance at the state level. **Newsom deserves praise for identifying the problem of disjointed governance, but effective governance reform cannot stop at reassigning authority.**

California's persistent student **achievement gaps are exacerbated by disconnected state initiatives, inconsistent implementation, unclear accountability for state actions and insufficient evaluation of whether state investments are producing results.** At any given moment, some 13 state agencies and departments are working to oversee, assist and regulate school districts and county offices of education in California. AB 181 is the first step in correcting this problem, not the endpoint.

SOS for Student Achievement: Close the State Accountability Gap legislation, sponsored by CSBA, would act as an extension of AB 181 by connecting governance reform to measurable outcomes for students, especially those affected by persistent achievement gaps. The legislative package requires California to write an actual plan for supporting local schools, with clear goals, benchmarks and annual performance targets for state action. The intent is to ensure that state assistance to local schools is directed by an aligned, overarching strategy rather than pet projects or the prevailing political winds.

As Newsom enters his last several months as the state's top executive, Close the State Accountability Gap legislation provides an opportunity to expand on AB 181 and do what no other governor has done before — establish a new state education system based on reciprocal accountability.” [Read the full article »](#)

Federal update: Senate committee advances bipartisan bill to block Education Department program transfers



On July 30, the **Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee** advanced legislation that would block the Trump administration from transferring several major U.S. Department of Education programs and functions to other federal agencies. **S 5046, the Protecting Education Programs and Federal Education Responsibilities Act**, was passed by the committee on a 13-9 vote and now awaits

potential consideration by the full Senate. The bill would prevent the transfer of programs overseen by four major Education Department offices: the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, the office overseeing elementary and secondary education, the Office of Postsecondary Education and the Office of Indian Education.

The bill received bipartisan support, with Republican Sens. Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska joining Democrats in supporting the measure. Murkowski raised concerns about whether agencies receiving transferred programs have the staff and expertise needed to carry out their responsibilities and highlighted the importance of protecting services for Native students.

The legislation comes as the administration continues efforts to reduce the size of the U.S. Department of Education and shift responsibilities to other federal agencies. **For school districts and county offices of education, the debate could have significant implications for the federal administration, oversight and funding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and other major education programs. CSBA will continue to monitor congressional action and advocate for strong federal support for public education and students with disabilities.**

CSBA Legislative Awards Program nominations open



The **nomination period for the 2026 CSBA Legislative Awards Program is open through Sept. 18.** For more than 30 years, CSBA has **honored current members of the California State Senate and Assembly, as well as members of Congress, who actively work to improve public schools, support local school board governance** and exercise leadership in the legislative arena.

CSBA encourages all school district and county office of education boards to consider nominating their state or federal legislative representatives if they have gone above and beyond for public education in 2026. The nominated legislator must represent the nominating school district or COE. Local educational agency boards can nominate leaders from their district in one of five categories: Outstanding Legislator; Outstanding Freshmen Legislator; Special Recognition; Albert S. Rodda Lifetime Achievement Award; or Dede Alpert Award for Exemplary Education Leadership. [Learn more and make a nomination »](#)

CSBA 2026–27 Back-to-School Digest



As the 2026–27 academic year begins, **school communities are preparing for another year of opportunities, new and continuing priorities and evolving challenges.** To help governance teams start the year with confidence, **CSBA has assembled this Back-to-School Digest featuring timely resources, practical guidance and key information for school boards and superintendents.**

This resource contains a selection of recent relevant work from CSBA's Research and Education Policy Development, Policy and Governance Technology Services, Legal and Communications departments on topics such as board operations, policy implementation, artificial intelligence, professional development, student literacy, instructional materials adoption, school safety, immigration and more.

CSBA hopes this digest serves as a valuable resource and supports governance teams as they work to create safe and successful learning environments for students, staff and

families. [Read it now »](#)

Student voices help shape conversations at AEC



The **call for proposals for student-led sessions at CSBA's Annual Education Conference and Trade Show (AEC) is open through Sept. 11.**

Proposals should align with one of this year's conference strands: Empowering all Students and LEAs in a Digital World; Fostering Strong Community Partnerships; Health, Safety and Wellness; Pathways to College, Career and Beyond; Strategic Governance for Organizational

Success; or Strategies for Financial Resilience.

Students see the current state of education from a unique vantage point, and AEC, which will take place Dec. 3-5 in San Diego, offers a platform to share that perspective. Does your local educational agency have students with innovative ideas? Encourage them to participate — all students are invited to submit proposals for workshop sessions. Don't miss this chance to share insights, connect with peers and give LEA leaders from across the state a firsthand look at how students are making a difference. [Learn more »](#)

Student board member training bundle



CSBA is offering a **virtual student board member training bundle for students who want to improve their knowledge, skills and abilities as school board members.** This program, which begins in September, is designed to engage students and elevate their understanding of governance while serving as a school board member.

Topics that will be covered include the nuances of governance, legal issues surrounding the Brown Act and meetings, California school board membership, finance, advocacy and engagement, and transition planning. Students will have opportunities to utilize new tools and templates designed to craft motions, present viewpoints and solicit community input.

Additionally, there are **several virtual Student Board Member Governance Q&A and Networking events** that will allow students to call in, ask questions regarding governance, advocacy and student voice, share their experiences with peers and speak with CSBA training faculty members. [Learn more and register »](#)

Foster & Foster can help with GASB report needs



The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) establishes accounting reporting standards. GASB 68 reports are required for pensions that are provided to the employees of state and local governmental employers through pension plans that are administered through trusts. GASB 75 reports are required for other post-employment benefits that are provided to the employees of state and local governmental

employers. **CSBA offers actuarial services through its partner Foster & Foster, which provides GASB-compliant reports to state and local governmental employers with no limit to the number of participants. [Learn more »](#)**

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

In-person events

Masters in Governance (MIG) for County Offices of Education (COE) Course 2: Student Learning & Achievement | Policy & Judicial Review

Aug. 14 | Woodland | [Register](#)

MIG COE Course 3: Finance & Facilities

Aug. 15 | Woodland | [Register](#)

Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) University

Aug. 18 | West Sacramento | [Register](#)

MIG COE Course 4: Community Relations and Advocacy | Governance Integration

Sept. 24 | Marina del Rey | [Register](#)

2026 CSBA Counties Conference

Sept. 25-27 | Marina del Rey | [Register](#)

2026 Annual Education Conference and Trade Show

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

Virtual events

Executive Assistant (EA) Upsilon: Understanding Culture 1A/1B

Aug. 20-21 | [Register](#)

Board Presidents Workshop

Sponsors



Aug. 24-25 | [Register](#)

MIG Course 1: Foundations of Effective Governance/Setting Direction

Sept. 8-16 | [Register](#)

EA Upsilon: Governance 2A/2B

Sept. 10-11 | [Register](#)

CCSA 2026 Fall Workshop

Sept. 18 | [Register](#)

Student Board Member Bundle Subscription

Sept. 21-May 10 | [Register](#)

MIG Course 2: Student Learning & Achievement/Policy & Judicial Review

Sept. 22-30 | [Register](#)

[View complete calendar](#)