

California schoolnews

Weekly Update

September 16, 2026

In this issue

- [CSBA welcomes CTA to the fight to protect Prop 98; CSBA set to file separate litigation against state for withholding \\$3.9B from public schools](#)
- [Legislative update: Governor signs online child safety bills](#)
- [Share your district's superintendent evaluation tool with CSBA](#)
- [Special edition of *California Schools* magazine out now](#)
- [State Board of Education takes deep dive into LCAP and assessment use](#)
- [Federal update: Education Department releases playbook to improve student outcomes](#)
- [Hispanic Heritage Month spotlight: Palomazo Academy](#)
- [Small Schools, Big Ideas: Maple SD is Rooted in Family, Community, and Education](#)
- [Convert property ownership into an active asset](#)

CSBA welcomes CTA to the fight to protect Prop 98; CSBA set to file separate litigation against state for withholding \$3.9B from public schools

On Sept. 15, **CSBA announced that it welcomes the California Teachers Association's (CTA) decision to sue the State of California for withholding \$3.9 billion in Proposition 98 funding from California schools. On Sept. 23, 2024, CSBA's Education Legal Alliance sued the director of the Department of Finance and**



the State of California over their failure to comply with the State Constitution as represented in Prop 98, the voter-approved school funding law. The **ongoing suit** claims the Department of Finance and the state, throughout budget negotiations and culminating in an adopted budget deal, violated both the letter and the spirit of Prop 98.

CTA's litigation will complement CSBA's existing lawsuit, as well as the new, independent litigation CSBA is filing on the withholding. CSBA's new lawsuit, expected to be filed on Sept. 22, will strengthen the case against the state for its repeated, unconstitutional violation of voter-approved laws governing school funding.

"We're pleased that CTA has **joined the legal fight against the state's continual efforts to subvert Proposition 98, which was established by California voters to guarantee at least a minimum level of funding for public education and insulate our schools from wild swings** in revenue that destabilize budgets and the student experience," **said CSBA CEO & Executive Director Vernon M. Billy.** "Prop 98 is not a credit card to be charged at the state's convenience, which is why CSBA will complement its existing litigation against the state for Prop 98 violations in the 2024–25 and 2025–26 budgets with a new lawsuit challenging the withholding of \$3.9 billion in funds from the 2026–27 budget that should have been disbursed to school districts and county offices of education." [Read the full press release »](#)

Legislative update: Governor signs online child safety bills



Referring to recent concerns about the accelerated growth and reach of artificial intelligence (AI), Gov. Gavin Newsom on Sept. 10 acted upon a wide array of legislation to help address the perceived threats and consequences posed by the technology's rapid development. **Signing a total of 13 bills, all which place restrictions and parameters on the use of and accessibility to AI technology, the**

legislation is intended to provide "meaningful safeguards to protect the public."

A majority of the bills were crafted with the concerns of children and youth in mind. From establishing outright prohibitions on the access to certain types of chatbots to restrictions on the access to student-level data, the overall package demonstrates that California continues to be a leader in regulating this growing technology. That said, even though California is a leader in this space, the technology continues to develop faster than public policy can govern it.

Of the 13 bills signed by the Governor, CSBA tracked and was engaged with 10 that interact with the provision of education and services to children. [Learn more on the CSBA blog »](#)

Advocacy is still needed to urge the Governor to sign CSBA's co-sponsored Assembly Bill 2490 (Valencia, D-Anaheim), which would **increase the time a holder of an emergency career substitute teaching permit can serve in a single classroom from 30 to 70 days**. **Contact Gov. Newsom now to urge him to sign AB 2490 »**

Share your district's superintendent evaluation tool with CSBA



CSBA's **Research and Educational Policy Development Department** is collecting superintendent evaluation templates from districts statewide to inform updated guidance for governance teams. **If your board has an evaluation tool or process it's willing to share, board presidents and superintendents are invited to submit it to research@csba.org by Oct. 9.**

Special edition of *California Schools* magazine out now



In a special issue of *California Schools*, **CSBA documents the lead up to, and introductory year of, its campaign for state accountability in California's education system**. The magazine includes a **Q&A with CSBA CEO & Executive Director Vernon M. Billy** on the association's **SOS for Student Achievement: Close the State Accountability Gap** campaign and how the legislative package changed the conversation

in Sacramento, highlighted the need for comprehensive reform of state-level education governance and elevated the concept of alignment, coherence and reciprocal accountability at the state level as foundational to student achievement at the local level. It also features an **in-depth interview with Assembly Education Committee Chair and former CSBA Delegate Dr. Darshana Patel** on her sponsored bills to increase state accountability for education governance and to streamline reporting for LEAs, as well as the unique career and life experiences that shaped her legislative perspective.

Other articles cover topics including **the importance of understanding data and how it can be used to drive student achievement; the reporting burden local educational agencies face and CSBA's advocacy to lighten the load;** Fontana Unified School District's College Application Submit Day; rethinking teacher staffing; legal challenges regarding the educational rights of undocumented immigrant students and more. **[Read the magazine »](#)**

State Board of Education takes deep dive into LCAP and assessment use



The **State Board of Education's (SBE) Sept. 9 meeting** included thorough discussion on proposed changes to the state's **Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) template** — including ways to make the document more useful to schools and communities rather than an exercise in compliance — as well as potential use of 11th grade Smarter Balanced results in higher education admissions and more.

The board **provided feedback** regarding the draft LCAP template and instructions, which will be brought back to the board for final adoption during its November 2026 meeting.

During public comment, CSBA Legislative Advocate Carlos Machado noted that the LCAP must be a meaningful strategic planning tool, not a compliance exercise, and urged the board to collaborate with entities like CSBA to rethink and reshape the LCAP to “reduce overlap, redundancy and administrative complexities to successfully drive clear, transparent communication.” [Read a full recap on the CSBA blog »](#)

Federal update: Education Department releases playbook to improve student outcomes



On Sept. 9, the **U.S. Department of Education launched** the **Learning Agenda Playbook**, a resource that was developed with input from states “to strengthen their capacity, enable them to take greater ownership of education, and drive improvement at the state and local levels,” according to a press release.

The playbook — which includes a facilitator's guide, facilitator's toolbox, learning agenda template and capacity continuum — intends to ensure that state education leaders have the tools to identify their own priorities, use evidence to find what works best for students and direct resources accordingly. [Learn more »](#)

Hispanic Heritage Month spotlight: Palomazo Academy



When **students at Santa Ana High School said in 2019 that they wanted the opportunity to connect to their culture through music, leaders at HALOS — a district-funded afterschool program — got to work buying instruments popular in Latin regional music** including guitars, accordions and more.

Now, the Palomazo Academy, which HALOS hosts every Tuesday and Thursday, provides access to instruments and peer instruction at no cost to students. And, perhaps more importantly, it offers students a safe space to create, build confidence and connect to their roots, according to HALOS Site Supervisor Ruby Echeverria. By emphasizing Latin Regional Mexican music — which includes genres across various parts of rural Mexico and the southwestern United States, encompassing styles like rancheras, corridos, cumbias, boleros and ballads — Palomazo has created a bridge between generations and has helped students embrace their roots, according to Echeverria. CSBA is highlighting this program for National Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrated each year from Sept. 15-Oct. 15. [Learn more on the CSBA blog »](#)

Small Schools, Big Ideas: Maple SD is Rooted in Family, Community, and Education



CSBA is recognizing the work of small districts through the [Small Schools, Big Ideas](#) blog series. All 285 students enrolled in Maple School District participate in the TK-8 local educational agency's program, Rooted in Family, Community, and Education. Launched in August 2025, the initiative aims to strengthen student outcomes by empowering families first. Located in rural Kern County, the 115-year-

old single campus is surrounded by pistachio and almond orchards. According to Superintendent Bryan Easter, the school has long maintained a close-knit, family-centered culture, with many staff members spending their entire careers at Maple SD.

CSBA Public Affairs and Community Engagement Representative Cecilio Barrera saw the program in action while speaking to Easter about the role of adult engagement in children's educational journeys, early successes the program has seen and how an already strong sense of community helped effectively launch the Rooted series with broad support from families and staff. [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

Convert property ownership into an active asset

**Property
Planning**
Solutions



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](#).

In-person events

Masters in Governance (MIG) for County Office of Education 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

Student Board Member Bundle Subscription

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

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

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

Education Workforce Housing (EWH): Virtual Bootcamp #1

Sept. 23-24 | [Register](#)

EWH: Deep Dive Workshop A

Sept. 30-Oct. 1 | [Register](#)

Oct. 28-29 | [Register](#)

MIG Course 3: School Finance Part 1 and Part 2

Oct. 6-14 | [Register](#)

EWH: Deep Dive Workshop B

Oct. 7-8 | [Register](#)

Nov. 5-6 | [Register](#)

Executive Assistant (EA) Upsilon: Job Mechanics 3A/3B

Sponsors



Oct. 8-9 | [Register](#)

**MIG Course 4: Human Resources/
Collective Bargaining**

Oct. 20-28 | [Register](#)

EWB: Virtual Bootcamp #2

Oct. 21-22 | [Register](#)

**MIG Course 5: Community Relations &
Advocacy/Governance Integration**

Nov. 3-10 | [Register](#)

[View complete calendar](#)