

California schoolnews

Weekly Update

November 4, 2020

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In this Issue

- [California voters maintain ban on affirmative action, other initiatives still undecided](#)
- [COVID updates: New map tracks how California students are learning during the pandemic](#)
- [Apply now for the California Community Schools Partnership Program](#)
- [2019 NAEP scores show widening achievement gaps](#)
- [New bills spotlight upcoming federal legislative priorities impacting schools](#)
- [Coverage you need to ensure student and district safety](#)

CSBA Elections Update Webinar

For the most up-to-date perspective on national, state and local elections as it pertains to public education, please [register for CSBA 2020 Election Update](#), hosted by CSBA Public Information Officer Troy Flint on **Nov. 4, 2020 4:00 PM PST**. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. [Register now »](#)

California voters maintain ban on affirmative action, other initiatives still undecided



After a long night counting votes, the election for president of the United States is left where experts predicted: in limbo while mail-in ballots are counted. Seven states have still not been called — Alaska, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

While the races for California's education-related propositions 15 and 18 have not yet been officially called, neither of the measures

are ahead in polling as of 11:30 a.m. this morning. Proposition 16 was rejected by voters, with 56.1 percent 'no' votes.

Proposition. 16: Affirmative Action. Prop. 16 would have once again allowed public colleges to consider race, gender, ethnicity and national origin in admissions and hiring decisions, reversing a constitutional amendment banning the practice in 1996 when voters passed Prop. 209. Enrollment of Black, Latino and Native American students dropped by an average of 12 percent across the University of California system, according to the university, and while numbers have rebounded somewhat since, those groups are still underrepresented at UC compared with their share of California's population.

Prop. 15: Schools & Communities First initiative. When voters passed Proposition 13 in 1978, they dramatically shrank the funding base for public schools and community colleges in California by allowing landowners to pay taxes based on a property's original purchase price instead of its market value. **Prop. 15 would expand that base again by assessing commercial property tax based on market value for businesses that own California property worth more than \$3 million**, while allowing homeowners to keep their tax breaks. **The tax change could generate up to \$4.6 billion in new funding for K-14 schools (89 percent for K-12 and 11 percent for community colleges)**, according to the state [Legislative Analyst's Office estimates](#). To give assessors time to re-evaluate properties, revenue will be gradual and funds will begin to be received in the 2022–23 school year, with full implementation in 2025–26. **Proposition 15 is currently trailing with 51.7 percent 'no' votes.**

Prop. 18: 17-year-old voters. Prop. 18 would allow 17-year-olds who will be 18 at the time of the general election to vote in the state primary and special elections. Supporters argue that this will allow young people to vote on important matters that directly affect them. Some studies have shown that people who vote from a young age are more likely to continue voting and that 17-year-olds score as well on civic knowledge as voters in their early 20s. Eighteen states have similar measures in place, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. **Prop. 18 is currently trailing with 55.1 percent 'no' votes.**

There may be **some good news for local educational agencies across the state, however: 55 school districts** have general obligation bonds for school facilities revenue

going before voters, and at least a handful so far from [Los Angeles](#) to [Siskiyou County](#) appear to be on track for final approval. [Follow the CSBA blog for updates as the results continue to roll in »](#)

COVID updates: New map tracks how California students are learning during the pandemic



EdSource released an [up-to-date map](#) on Oct. 30 of the type of learning California students are currently experiencing, be it in-person or virtual. The map — developed using the results of a survey of all county offices of education between Oct. 22–29 — gives a broad indication of the kind of instruction offered by all or most public school districts in a particular county.

The results were fairly evenly split among the state's 58 counties: **17 predominantly larger, urban counties reported the majority of their districts were in distance learning**, with all or most districts signaling they would do so at least through Jan. 1, 2021; **21 counties said most districts are offering some form of in-person instruction**, or are planning to offer it sometime in November, in hybrid or a range of other formats; and **20 counties reported a mix of districts offering instruction through in-person or distance learning**. [Find your county on the map »](#)

In other COVID-19 developments:

- The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology released a ["Parent and Family Digital Learning Guide"](#) aimed at helping parents struggling to support their child in a virtual learning environment. The document should help empower parents to feel comfortable being involved in their child's education as they provide support, monitor academic progress and use technology in the classroom or living room. [Read the guidance »](#)
- State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond announced on Oct. 29 that Southern California Gas Company and San Diego Gas & Electric, in partnership with the San Diego Foundation, **donated \$420,000 to the Bridging the Digital Divide Fund**. SDG&E and the San Diego Foundation's **grant of \$100,000 to the Classroom of the Future Foundation will address the digital divide among tribal K–12 youth in San Diego County**. SoCalGas' portion of \$320,000 will be split into five grants to separate organizations in Southern California for specific work to close the digital divide. [Learn more »](#)

Apply now for the California Community Schools Partnership Program



More children are in need of wraparound support to access meals, mental and physical health care and the technology required to succeed in a virtual learning model due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, districts and schools have shifted their focus, becoming the link between students and community services.

The goal of [community schools](#) is to bring schools, families, neighborhoods, and public

and private agencies together to better meet student and family needs in and outside of the school day.

Thurmond [announced Oct. 30](#) that \$45 million in grant funding was available to help local educational agencies in this work. LEAs can now begin applying for the California Community Schools Partnership Program to expand and sustain existing community schools, coordinate and provide support services and physical and mental health supports for pupils and families at community schools, or provide training and support to personnel to help develop best practices for integrating student supports.

Applications are due Dec. 4, 2020, by 11:59 p.m. The California Department of Education will hold a series of webinars to assist LEAs with the application process beginning [Nov. 10](#) and [18](#). Questions should be directed to the California Community Schools Partnership Program at CCSPP@cde.ca.gov. [Learn more and apply »](#)

2019 NAEP scores show widening achievement gaps



The latest scores on the [National Assessment of Educational Progress](#) showed a slight decline in 12th-grade reading compared to 2015, with scores holding steady overall in math. The results also show an alarming and widening gap between students who generally perform well in school, and those who already struggle academically, with the lowest-

performing students contributing to the drop in scores.

“Not only are the students furthest behind not catching up to their higher-performing peers, the gaps appear to be widening,” said Paul Gasparini, member of the National Assessment Governing Board. **“That should concern all of us, including educators and policymakers, who are committed to building a more equitable education system, economy and society.”** [Read more on the CSBA blog »](#)

New bills spotlight upcoming federal legislative priorities impacting schools



A handful of bills introduced at the end of October suggest **lawmakers are preparing to help local educational agencies better weather the pandemic after the election.** Realistically, none of these will be heard before Congress adjourns at the end of December, but they do provide some insight into upcoming legislative priorities. Rep. Jahana Hayes (D–CT), Chairman Bobby Scott (D–VA) and other **Democratic members**

on the House Education and Labor Committee **introduced** legislation entitled the “Save Education Jobs Act of 2020” (**H.R.8691**) which aims to establish a \$261 billion “Education Jobs Fund” to provide targeted aid to states and school districts over the next 10 years.

S.4865, sponsored by Sen. Sherrod Brown (D–OH), would improve the full-service community school program — a model that has become even more vital during the pandemic, as more students and families than ever need the sort of wraparound services that can be delivered by schools with the help of local community partnerships and support.

S.4831, sponsored by Sen. Mazie K. Hirono, would provide resources for states, LEAs and others to assess and address instructional loss among K-12 students.

Coverage you need to ensure student and district safety



Accidents happen. Are your students covered? To help members best address insurance-related issues, **CSBA has joined forces with California’s leading provider of student accident and sickness insurance.** Myers-Stevens & Toohey is a full-service administrator based in Southern California that has worked closely with public K-12 schools for over 35 years. CSBA’s **sponsored catastrophic injury coverage is affordable and can be extended**

to cover all school activities, including travel to and from home and school. [Learn more »](#)

COVID-19 resources

Stay up to date with the latest news and resources related to COVID-19 on [CSBA’s dedicated webpage](#) and with articles frequently posted on the newly redesigned [CSBA blog](#).

[View complete calendar](#)

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