

# Year in Review

2015







# The state of our association is strong.

In 2015, CSBA fought on a number of fronts to give school districts and county offices of education — and the elected and appointed officials who lead them — the tools, the funding, the support and the guidance needed to make the best decisions for their communities and to create better outcomes for their students. We achieved victories both small and large in the Legislature, Congress, in the legal system, in the press, and in the court of public opinion — and we set the groundwork for future progress on behalf of all students.

These are collective victories, made possible by the dedication and energy of our members, the leadership and commitment of our CSBA Board of Directors, and the expertise and determination of our employees.

## The year that was for public schools

Both public education and CSBA took some big leaps forward during 2015.

California continued moving forward with major systemic reforms such as Common Core State Standards, a new statewide assessment program, the Local Control Funding Formula and a soon-to-be statewide accountability system. School district and county leaders were and continue to be at the forefront implementing these changes — and identifying challenges and barriers to success. Amidst all of these new requirements, CSBA actively asserted the critical perspective of governing teams to state and federal policymakers, especially in support of local flexibility, coherence, and equitable and adequate resources.

Throughout 2015, we also continued aggressively pushing for a fix to the school district reserve cap, which irrationally restricts local school districts from being fiscally responsible and preparing for future economic downturns. Our efforts included launching a major media and grassroots effort, and sponsoring bi-partisan legislation to fix the cap.

With an improving state economy, state funding for schools continued to increase; however, overall education funding remains woefully inadequate to support every student graduating ready for college and career. This puts all of our state's students at a competitive disadvantage that is unacceptable. To address this, CSBA's Education Legal Alliance continued to pursue legal remedies to our funding crisis through the *Robles-Wong v. California* lawsuit (oral arguments on the case were held on Jan. 27, 2016), and we filed a new suit against the state over a manipulation of Proposition 98 funding levels. In addition, CSBA's ELA Adequacy Committee, composed of board members, superintendents and school business officials, produced *California's Challenge: Adequately Funding Education in the 21st Century*, a report that updates prior research and identifies that an additional \$22-42 billion is needed annually to properly support schools.

While adequate funding isn't the sole answer to improving student achievement, we know it's a significant contributing factor to ensuring that students have well-maintained facilities, quality staff and program options that support their learning — and we'll continue to push for it.

## Great support and services for boards: At our core

Providing relevant services, training and resources to help boards carry out their vital role is fundamental to CSBA's work. Looking back at 2015, attendance reached near-record levels at our Annual Education Conference, and we experienced a surge in engagement at training events throughout the state and in individual districts on topics ranging from the Brown Act to superintendent contracts to community leadership. CSBA has increased our professional development menu for governing teams because we understand the powerful correlation between strong leadership and student success. We also announced plans for an exciting new training event this summer exclusively for board members — the 2016 Leadership Institute. With hundreds of free registrations offered to board members at last year's Annual Education Conference, this new Leadership Institute is anticipated to become one of our signature training events.

We also produced a range of research and issue briefs, and ramped up our services that support boards with their essential policy-setting responsibilities.

As we charge into the new year, the state of our association is very strong. The past year has given us many accomplishments to build on. We broadened our influence at the state level and worked hard to engage the membership. Of course, with any dynamic organization, we have big ambitions for the future. I am excited for the opportunities that 2016 will present, and to see CSBA continue to shine.



Sincerely,

**Vernon M. Billy**, CEO & Executive Director

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# Membership is our strength.

In 2015 we maintained our strong membership of 96 percent of all eligible school districts and county offices of education in California. CSBA membership represents 99.8 percent of student enrollment in California schools.

As part of our ongoing effort to obtain your input and better understand your needs and views on critical education issues, we completed the iCount Census and Member Survey, which provides data and serves as a reference point for the association's long-term planning efforts.

## Standing up for Public Schools and Local Governance

### Advocacy

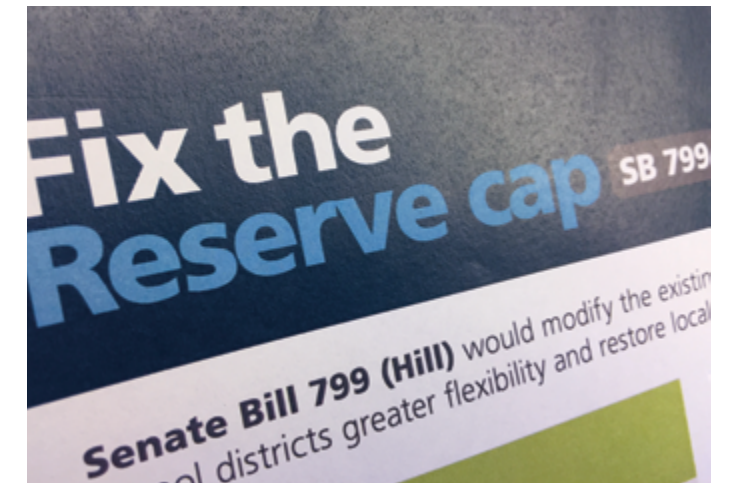
CSBA is the leader in advocating for its members in the legislative, political, judicial, community and media arenas. Our seasoned team of lobbyists and policy experts advance the association's Policy Platform and legislative agenda with the Legislature and Governor's Office, state and federal elected officials and agencies, California Department of Education, State Board of Education, Commission on Teacher Credentialing, and Congress. Our 2015 accomplishments include:

- ❖ **School funding and the Local Control Funding Formula** — Continued support in the state budget process for additional investments in the LCFF, additional investment in implementation of statewide curriculum standards and final elimination of apportionment deferrals:
  - » Additional \$6 billion in ongoing funding for LCFF grants in the 2015-16 budget, moving districts 90 percent of the way toward full implementation.
  - » \$3.2 billion in one-time discretionary funding to assist in implementing academic standards (\$530 per ADA).
  - » \$900 million allocated to buy out the last of the apportionment deferrals.

- » Argued successfully to limit state audits on old mandate claims paid with one-time money, so districts would not lose funding in later years.
- » Worked to protect existing program funding by opposing efforts to add programs to Proposition 98 without adjusting the guarantee upward.

- ❖ **School District Reserve Cap** — Sponsored SB 799 (Hill, and Glazer, plus 15 co-authors) and led media and legislative efforts to relieve school districts from the onerous cap on local reserves that was adopted by the Legislature in 2014.
- ❖ **Teacher Evaluation Bills** — Opposed labor-sponsored teacher evaluation bills that attempted to expand the scope of collective bargaining, and would have added at least \$60 million in new mandated costs.\*
- ❖ **School Districts Savings** — Opposed numerous legislative proposals resulting in savings to school districts of approximately \$110 million annually, or about \$18 per ADA.

\* Additional savings to districts range from \$10 per ADA to possibly hundreds of dollars per ADA.





# Be the voice

For over six million public schoolchildren



- ❖ **Effective LCFF implementation and less restrictive regulations** — Worked successfully with the State Board of Education to counter calls for strict regulations on LCFF implementation and continued representation of school boards in all discussions around the LCFF Rubric.
- ❖ **Legislative Action Day** — School board members from around the state gathered and delivered more than 800 resolutions and letters to the governor's office, calling for a repeal to the reserve cap.
- ❖ **ESEA Reauthorization** — Supported reauthorization legislation in Congress that returns substantial discretion to states and local school districts. Lobbied members of Congress and federal agencies on specific issues relating to ESEA reauthorization, special education program funding, rural schools funding, Internet access funding and other essential federal programs. Held a briefing in Washington, D.C. for the staff of the California Congressional Delegation on these issues.

- ❖ **Adequate Yearly Progress sanctions** — Successfully protected nearly 200 school districts from AYP sanctions by advocating to adjust attendance metrics before the State Board of Education.
- ❖ **Student Test Scores** — Advocated successfully for the California Department of Education to develop materials for schools to use to explain students' test scores to parents.
- ❖ **Adult Education** — Successfully supported allowing Joint Powers ROC/Ps to participate as adult education consortia members.
- ❖ **Representation** — CSBA leaders and staff represented the interests of governing board members on various state-level committees addressing Common Core State Standards, testing and accountability, teacher and administrator certification, school finance, health and nutrition.

## We fight better when we stand together

### CSBA Education Legal Alliance

Through our Education Legal Alliance, CSBA represents the state-wide interests of school districts, county offices of education and public education in legal proceedings with the state and federal courts and state agencies. Highlights of this work in 2015 included:

- ❖ **Funding Adequacy** — Convened the CSBA ELA Adequacy Committee to spearhead CSBA's work to define adequate funding in California and determine how to put a plan into action that will adequately fund California schools to prepare our students to be successful, well-educated, productive citizens of the future. The committee released its report *California's Challenge: Adequately Funding Education in the 21st Century*, at the 2015 Annual Education Conference and Trade Show.
- ❖ **Proposition 98** — Filed a lawsuit challenging a manipulation of the Proposition 98 minimum guarantee included in the 2015-16 budget (potential gain of approximately \$24/pupil).
- ❖ **State Mandate Test Claim** — Facilitated and supported the filing of a state mandate test claim regarding administration of the new statewide assessment (potential gain of approximately \$100/per ADA or \$600 million annually).
- ❖ **Legal Reviews and Advice** — Provided legal opinion and support in collaboration with Government Relations staff to assess legislation, including teacher evaluation and the reserve cap.
- ❖ **Amicus Briefs** — Filed ten amicus briefs and three amicus support letters. Issues included: separation of church and state; Proposition 39 facility requests; teacher tenure, dismissal and layoff; lease leaseback; and use of personal cellphones by elected officials to conduct official business.
- ❖ **Legal Update Webcasts** — Hosted "Education Insights: Legal Update" webcast series to provide members with in-depth information on key educational issues, including reporting gifts on Form 700, superintendent contracts and the executive search process, board and superintendent relations, lease-leaseback facility agreements, and adequately funding education.
- ❖ **Legal Publications** — Published an updated version of the Brown Act book as well as three legal guidance documents and alerts on International Student Exchange Placement Organizations, Grade Span Adjustment Requirements, and Districts at Risk from Lawsuits Regarding P.E. Instructional Minute Requirement.
- ❖ **Member Assistance** — Handled more than 100 inquiries from members, and tracked a broad range of matters, from disputes about meaningful instructional minutes, payment of agency fees, collective bargaining, LCFF, IDEA and charter schools.







# Keeping You and Your District/County Office Ahead of the Curve

## Policy Guidance and Services

CSBA works hard to save you time and money, keep your district or county office informed on current and emerging education issues, and legally compliant through sample board policies and updates. Nearly 900 member districts and county offices of education utilized CSBA Policy Services, and subscriptions to Agenda Online, our electronic board meeting agenda service, continued to steadily rise. Highlights of support and services in 2015 included:

- ❖ **Industry Research & Guidance** — Published 13 fact sheets and governance research briefs on important policy issues such as infectious diseases, math misplacement, school climate and LCAPs, discipline, drinking water, civics learning and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.
- ❖ **CSBA Publications** — Updated the second edition of CSBA's *Call to Order: A Blueprint for Great Board Meetings*.
- ❖ **Policy Guidance** — Produced 83 sample policies and three comprehensive issues of Policy News to provide members with resources and information supporting effective local governance. Increased our policy distribution from three to five packets per year. Distributed special policy update packets to address student participation in sex-segregated school programs and activities, and sample policies related to the prohibition of discrimination, bullying, and sexual harassment of students and related Uniform Complaint Procedures.
- ❖ **County boards** — Began development of a reference board policy manual for use by county boards of education.

## Membership Services, Training & Events

CSBA provides a range of valuable trainings and services, based on the latest governance research and best practices. This helps keep you informed and build the skills you and your board need to operate as an effective governance team. Highlights in 2015 include:

- ❖ **Annual Education Conference and Trade Show** — Hosted nearly 3,000 school district and county of education leaders at our premier continuing education program.
- ❖ **Governance Consulting Workshops** — Provided 70 personalized Governance Consulting Workshops to governing boards.
- ❖ **Masters in Governance program** — Experienced a 16 percent increase in participation among board members and their superintendents in the MIG program.
- ❖ **Online Learning** — Conducted a number of online learning opportunities, including the 2015 Forecast and Back to School webcasts, and Education Insights: Legal Update series, which provided updates and information on current education trends and issues.
- ❖ **Policy Developmental Workshops** — Provided numerous multi-day policy developmental workshops, covering districts in 25 of the 58 counties across the state.







## Business Partners and Affiliates Programs

From facilities design to legal services, furnishings, student services and more, districts and COEs have their work cut out for them in finding and securing the services of great businesses. In an effort to help streamline this process and provide options for every type of need, CSBA develops and maintains relationships with more than 80 affiliates and partner companies that provide these vital products and services. Last year, CSBA, through our business partnerships:

- ❖ **Provided 21 school districts funding totaling more than \$100 million through CSBA’s Cash Reserve Program** — These funds will help guard against temporary cash flow shortages in a safe, cost-effective way, creating an additional cash reserve to the general fund.
- ❖ **Added two new business partners** — Total School Solutions, which provides CSBA members a reliable source for facilities master planning, processing state eligibility and funding applications, and annual Prop 39 performance audits; and Comcast Internet Essentials, which offers low-cost internet service for eligible students.

## LCFF-LCAP

As part of our effort to assist members in successfully implementing LCFF, CSBA and California Forward co-convene the Local Control Funding Formula Collaborative Working Group composed of 17 individual Local Education Agencies. To date, the CWG has:

- ❖ Provided critical input to the State Board of Education on the LCAP template and evaluation rubric.
- ❖ Developed a tool for use in evaluating and describing promising practices in LCFF implementation.
- ❖ Established a “promising practices” inventory featuring best examples of district and county offices of education LCFF/LCAP efforts to help members learn from their peers when trying to improve their own programs.

# Keeping You Informed and Building Support for Public Schools

We continued to work hard to ensure you are kept up-to-date on the latest industry news and trends that affect your work through a variety of channels such as our *California School News* monthly newsletter and quarterly magazine, email blasts, our website and social media. In addition, we led or participated in a number of communications activities intended to advance issues that matter most to our members. Highlights from 2015 included:

- ❖ **Media coverage**
  - » Issued 39 press releases, op-eds, and statements.
  - » Managed more than 200 media inquiries.
- ❖ **Member Newsletter** — Revamped the weekly news eBlast for easier reading on mobile devices.
- ❖ **California Schools Magazine** — Launched new Member Profile department in *California Schools*, CSBA’s quarterly magazine
- ❖ **csba.org** — Garnered more than 521,000 page views on CSBA’s website.
- ❖ **Social Media** — Enhanced CSBA’s social media presence by adding nearly 800 new Twitter followers.

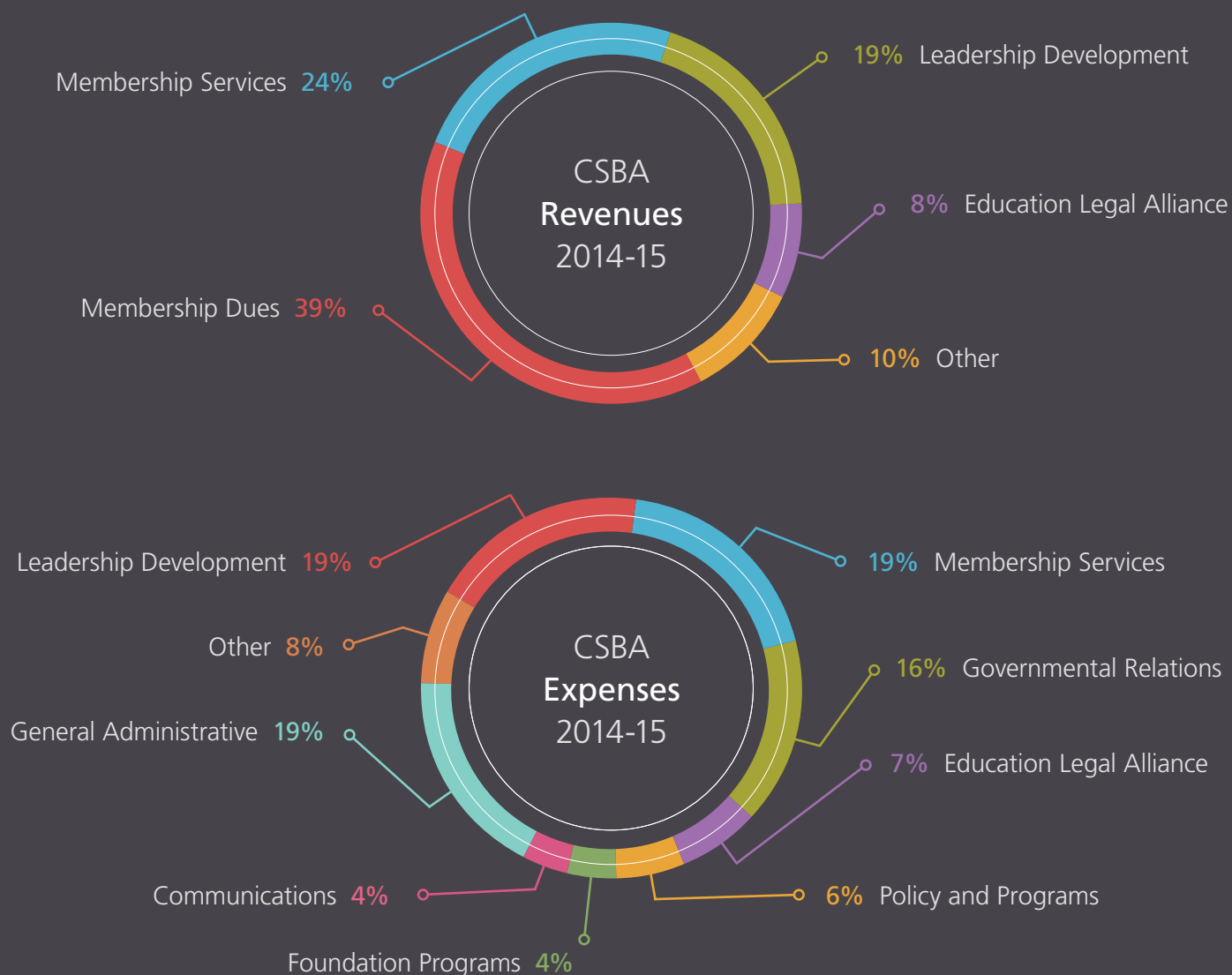


## Paving the Way — CSBA Foundation

The California School Boards Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit, tax-exempt educational organization whose mission is to provide direct support and training to school board members, conduct policy research and analysis, and recognize educational leadership and achievements in California. Aligned with the vision and mission

of the organization, CSBF initiatives included LCFF-LCAP, funding adequacy, summer learning and foster youth. The foundation also supports the Golden Bell Awards program, which honors 53 innovative and exemplary programs, highlighting the achievements of public schools.

# Financial Strength and Stability



## CSBA Governance

CSBA is governed by a 5-member Executive Committee, a 32-member Board of Directors and 275-member Delegate Assembly. An Executive Committee comprised of 5 members meets to provide leadership.



## 2015 Executive Committee

Jesús Holguín, *President*

Chris Ungar, *President-elect*

Sherry Reusche, *Vice President*

Josephine Lucey, *Immediate Past President*

Vernon M. Billy, *CEO & Executive Director*