

CHANGES IN LAW

2025

A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO NEW LAWS IMPACTING
SCHOOL OPERATIONS



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CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

CHANGES IN LAW
2025



aa/rr Atkinson, Andelson
Loya, Ruud & Romo

The 2025 Legislative Session delivered a slate of curriculum and instruction bills with direct operational and compliance implications for schools. While dozens of education measures were signed, a handful stand out for their potential to shape local practice, particularly in literacy, career education, and the rapidly evolving field of equity and instructional oversight.

Master Plan for Career Education Prompts CTEIG Revisions, New Coordinating Body.

The Governor signed several major career education bills, marking a continued shift toward embedding career-connected learning into the state's K–12 framework. [AB 1098](#) (Fong, D-Alhambra) establishes the California Education Interagency Council within the Government Operations Agency to provide coordination among education and workforce systems. The Council will be comprised of the State Board of Education (SBE) President, Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) and the leaders of the state's major systems of higher education. AB 1098 includes several deliverables for the Council, including the development of a strategic plan and work plan, and submitting reports to the Legislature detailing its progress. The 2025-26 state budget included \$1.5 million for this work - expect a push for additional funding in the coming years.

Complementing this, [SB 638](#) (Padilla, D-San Diego) recasts the Career Technical Education Incentive Grant (CTEIG) program, expands allowable uses of CTEIG funds, prioritizes equity, strengthens data and accountability expectations, and requires CDE to consult the newly created Interagency Council when developing and assessing CTEIG applications. Importantly, SB 638 also directs \$150 million into CTEIG (we're still waiting to see when this infusion will be available to the field).

[AB 821](#) (Gipson, D-Carson) makes permanent the option for students to satisfy one of their high school graduation requirements by completing a CTE course, ending years of uncertainty tied to periodic sunset extensions. Since 2010, students have been allowed to meet one of their graduation requirements by completing a CTE course instead of a class in visual and performing arts (VAPA) or world languages. The provision was originally enacted on a trial basis due to concerns that it might reduce enrollment in arts and language courses, but over the past fifteen years it has become a well-established and widely supported part of the high school program. Research consistently shows that participation in CTE improves graduation rates, postsecondary enrollment, employability, and wages—particularly for boys and low-income students. Supporters argue that keeping the option permanent reinforces the state's commitment to career-connected learning and ensures students continue to have pathways that keep them engaged and job-ready. The bill passed unanimously in both houses.

New Law Will Require Follow-Up ELA/ELD Instructional Materials Adoption Next Year.

In literacy and curriculum, [AB 1454](#) (Rivas, D-Hollister) took center stage. The bill reflects a compromise between the California Teachers Association (CTA) and EdVoice that came together only after intervention by Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas (D-Hollister) and weeks of intense negotiations. The push in California to update the state's literacy instruction to include more evidence-based teaching started with last year's [AB 2222](#) (Blanca Rubio, 2024), which was co-sponsored by EdVoice. That bill would have, in part, required all TK-8 textbooks and instructional materials to adhere to "Science of Reading" but it never received a hearing after CTA, the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) and Californians Together came out in opposition. While proponents of "Science of Reading" cited the state's declining reading scores and slow recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic in the need for the bill, opponents argued that the legislation would not meet the needs of multilingual learners and would cut teachers out of curriculum decisions.

While AB 2222 stalled, Speaker Rivas encouraged the author and sponsors to continue to work on the issue and come back with a compromise in 2025. However, when the Legislature returned for the new legislative session, no compromise had been reached and instead, we had two separate measures introduced: [AB 1121](#) by Assembly Member Rubio and [AB 1194](#) by Assembly Education Committee Chair Al Muratsuchi (D-Torrance). AB 1121 would have required the SBE to conduct an English Language Arts/English Language Development (ELA/ELD) adoption for instructional materials that, among other things, adhered to "evidence-based means of teaching foundation reading skills," and required LEAs to only adopt ELA/ELD instructional materials off the SBE-approved list. Alternatively, AB 1194 would have also required the SBE to conduct an ELA/ELD adoption for instructional materials that includes "evidence-based means of teaching foundation reading skills," but would have also allowed LEAs to adopt materials not on the list as long as they met the same criteria. As the early months of the legislative session passed with no agreement between the two sides, Speaker Rivas eventually had to step in to ensure a proposal would be heard before the May 2 policy committee deadline.

AB 1454, which is also co-authored by Assembly Members Muratsuchi and Rubio, requires the SBE to conduct a follow-up adoption of ELA/ELD instructional materials that align to (1) the current ELA/ELD Framework, (2) evidence-based means of teaching foundational reading skills, and (3) the program guidelines for dyslexia. Similar to AB 1194, LEAs would be able to adopt ELA/ELD materials off the SBE-list or through their local adoption process, provided the materials align to the same criteria. The SBE has gotten a head start on the follow-up adoption process, having already approved a [Schedule of Significant Events](#) that sets the adoption for its November 2026 meeting. The bill also directs the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to update training standards for literacy specialists and administrators to align with the same standards.

The goal is to ensure teachers and principals are prepared to implement evidence-based literacy instruction and to address persistent post-pandemic achievement gaps. An earlier version of the bill would have also directed CDE to identify and post a list of literacy professional development programs. However, these provisions were removed from the bill after language was included in this year's budget, as part of [AB 121](#), to instead require the SBE to approve criteria and guidance for the

section or development of PD programs for the effective means of teaching literacy. The 2025-26 state budget also included \$200 million for LEAs for the training of certificated and classified staff who provide or support literacy instruction using professional development programs meeting the approved criteria and guidance. Together with [AB 1255](#) (Committee on Education), which improves support for newcomer students and updates the structure of the Migrant Education Program, the state is clearly prioritizing stronger academic recovery and inclusivity within its instructional framework.

Governor Signs Anti-Discrimination Bill that will Need to be Cleaned Up Next Year.

The most contentious C&I measure of the year, [AB 715](#), by Assembly Members Rick Zbur (D-Los Angeles) and Dawn Addis (D-Morro Bay), redefines how schools handle discrimination and bias in curriculum and professional materials. The bill creates a new Office of Civil Rights (OCR) within the Government Operations Agency and an Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator charged with training, monitoring, and providing technical assistance to LEAs. It requires all instructional and professional development materials to be factually accurate, nonpartisan, and free of advocacy or bias, and mandates LEAs to investigate and remediate any discriminatory content. Vendors found in violation must reimburse public funds and disclose the finding to future contracting districts. Supporters view the measure as an overdue response to rising hate incidents and bias in schools; opponents warn that it could chill classroom discussion, undermine local control, and invite political disputes over instructional content. The bill faced intense and often emotional debate before advancing to the Governor's Desk in the final days of the session. Opposed by both labor and management groups and criticized for ambiguous provisions (such as the requirement that instruction be "factually accurate") the measure prompted commitments from its authors to pursue follow-up legislation next year to clarify and address implementation concerns. In his signing message, the Governor echoed that intent, noting his appreciation for the authors' commitment to a subsequent measure.

Taken together, these measures reflect a legislative year focused on realigning instruction to workforce needs, strengthening literacy and inclusion, and tightening content accountability. While many new requirements will unfold gradually, school administrators should expect 2026 to bring detailed state guidance on CTE coordination, literacy standards, and compliance with the broad mandates of AB 715, arguably the most politically charged education bill in recent memory.

The Governor signed the following curriculum and instruction bills:

Absenteeism

[AB 461 \(Ahrens\) - Truancy.](#)

This bill repeals the criminal offense for parents of a student six years of age or older enrolled in kindergarten or any grades 1-8, who fail to reasonably supervise and encourage pupil school attendance resulting in chronic truancy.

Chapter 154, Statutes of 2025

Assessments

[AB 422 \(Jackson\) - State Seal of Civic Engagement.](#)

AB 422 requires the SPI to, when the SBE next revises the criteria for the State Seal of Civic Engagement, recommend revised criteria for awarding the Seal. The revised criteria must include, along with meeting all other eligibility criteria for the award, requiring a demonstrated understanding of the importance of preserving democracy and its vital institutions.

Chapter 692, Statutes of 2025

[SB 374 \(Archuleta\) - Local educational agencies: annual reporting requirements: IDEA Addendum.](#)

Current law required CDE, on or before March 1, 2025, to provide a report to the SPI, the Governor, and the Legislature on the number and types of reports that school districts, COEs, and charter schools are required to annually submit. Current law repeals these provisions on January 1, 2026. This bill, instead, extends the repeal date of the above-described reporting requirements by one year, to instead be January 1, 2027. The bill also repeals the requirement for the SBE to adopt an Individuals with Disabilities (IDEA) Addendum to the Local Control Accountability Plan relating to service improvements for students with disabilities.

Chapter 580, Statutes of 2025

CTE

[AB 821 \(Gipson\) - Pupil instruction: high school graduation requirements: career technical education.](#)

This bill makes the CTE high school graduation option permanent by removing the sunset clause that would have repealed it in 2027.

Chapter 622, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1098 \(Fong\) - California Education Interagency Council.](#)

This bill establishes in the Government Operations Agency the California Education Interagency Council, composed of specified state officers and one nongovernmental entity representative for purposes of evaluating and addressing the changing nature of work and the economy, integrating and aligning education and employment systems, maximizing funding impact, supporting adult skill development, aligning regional education and workforce needs, and serving as a forum for discussing the impacts of intersegmental and cross-sector policy issues. The bill requires the council, among other duties, to adopt strategic and workforce plans, report on the outcomes of its work and provide recommendations regarding intersegmental, cross-sector, and interagency initiatives and programs to the Governor and the Legislature, and, upon appropriation, establish a faculty and employer advisory committee. The bill also establishes the Office of the California Education Interagency Council in the Government Operations Agency as a neutral administrative body.

Chapter 446, Statutes of 2025

[SB 638 \(Padilla\) - California Education Interagency Council: California Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program.](#)

This measure updates the CTEIG program, expands allowable CTEIG uses to include new or expanded pathways in high-demand fields such as green technology, health care, IT, education, and artificial intelligence, and encourages stronger collaboration with labor and business for apprenticeships, dual enrollment, and work-based learning. It also requires applicants to demonstrate how they serve underrepresented students and align programs with local labor-market needs. New annual reporting will track dual credit and work-based learning participation, and priority for grants will go to districts in high-poverty or high-unemployment areas. The newly created Interagency Council will coordinate cross-sector planning and accountability but will not award grants.

Chapter 457, Statutes of 2025

Curriculum and Instruction

[AB 1255 \(Committee on Education\) - Pupil instruction: newcomer pupils: migrant education: migrant regions.](#)

This bill makes two practical updates for schools serving migrant and newcomer students. The bill clarifies that migrant education regions are defined by COEs, rather than by county boundaries, aligning statute with how the state's Migrant Education Program already operates. It also allows the SBE to include materials addressing the needs of newcomer students, recent immigrant students in their first three years in U.S. schools, during the next adoption of English Language Arts and English Language Development (ELA/ELD) materials, without waiting for a framework revision. This fix removes a technical barrier created by AB 714 (McCarty, 2023), ensuring newcomer-focused content can be considered now rather than delayed several years. The change is intended to help districts access instructional materials that better support English acquisition, academic readiness, and cultural adjustment for newcomer students. The measure passed both houses unanimously, reflecting broad agreement that this is a simple but important fix. It took effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Chapter 185, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1454 \(Rivas\) - Pupil literacy: credential program standards and professional development: instructional materials.](#)

This bill advances California's literacy improvement efforts by requiring the SBE to conduct a new adoption of ELA/ELD instructional materials by January 31, 2027, ensuring schools have updated, high-quality options that explicitly target foundational literacy skills and may include primary language materials for English learners. It also directs the CTC to update preparation standards for reading and literacy leadership specialists and school administrators so they are trained to support teachers in evidence-based literacy instruction, including bilingual settings. The bill responds to stalled post-pandemic reading growth and widening achievement gaps among English learners, low-income students, and other subgroups by modernizing both educator training and instructional materials. Local districts will have flexibility to adopt multiple sets of materials that, together, address the full ELA/ELD framework. The updates are designed to strengthen alignment across teacher preparation, curriculum, and accountability systems to ensure consistent literacy practices statewide.

Chapter 471, Statutes of 2025

[SB 472 \(Stern\) - Pupil instruction: Holocaust and genocide education: notice, survey, and grant program.](#)

SB 472 requires the SPI to establish the Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant Program to provide direct allocations to school districts, COEs, and charter schools for the purposes of providing education and professional development on Holocaust and genocide education, and requires the Legislature to appropriate funds for this purpose. The bill requires CDE to issue a notice to school districts, COEs, and charter schools serving pupils in grades 7 to 12 regarding genocide and Holocaust instruction, and authorizes CDE to issue a survey to these LEAs on the status of Holocaust and genocide instruction at their schools.

Chapter 761, Statutes of 2025

[SB 510 \(Richardson\) - Pupil instruction: treatment of African Americans.](#)

This bill requires the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC), when the SBE next revises the history-social science curriculum framework or adopts new instructional materials, on or after January 1, 2026, to consider including content on the historical, social, economic, and political contributions of African Americans during the Spanish colonization of California, the Gold Rush Era, and Antebellum.

Chapter 100, Statutes of 2025

Instructional Materials

[AB 715 \(Zbur\) - Educational equity: discrimination: antisemitism prevention.](#)

The bill creates an Office of Civil Rights (OCR) within the Government Operations Agency and an Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator to support LEAs in preventing and addressing discrimination, with a particular focus on antisemitism prevention. OCR will provide training, technical assistance, and annual public reports on bias complaints while recommending restorative justice-based strategies to improve school climates. The bill also requires instruction and instructional materials, including professional development materials, to be factually accurate, aligned with adopted curriculum and standards, and free from advocacy, bias, or partisanship. LEAs must investigate and remediate any use of discriminatory materials and take corrective action, with oversight from CDE. Vendors found to violate anti-discrimination laws must reimburse funds and notify all future contracting districts of the violation. The bill explicitly defines that discriminatory bias does not require direct harm or the presence of affected students to be actionable.

Chapter 428, Statutes of 2025

Special Education

[AB 560 \(Addis\) - Special education: resource specialists: special classes.](#)

AB 560 requires the SPI, on or before July 1, 2027, to recommend a maximum adult-to-pupil staffing ratio for special classes and to post the recommendation on CDE's website. In developing the recommendation, the SPI must consult with specific entities, including current special education specialists teaching in a special class setting, administrators and chief business officials serving at school sites, and parents of pupils with exceptional needs who are served in special class settings. The bill also requires LEAs to take all reasonable steps to distribute the workload associated with

initial assessments across all resource specialists employed by the LEA in an equal manner, unless otherwise collectively bargained.

Chapter 560, Statutes of 2025

AB 784 (Hoover) - Special education: specialized deaf and hard-of-hearing services.

Current law defines “special education” as specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of individuals with exceptional needs and includes in that definition speech-language pathology services and certain other services if the service is considered special education rather than a designated instruction and service or related service under state standards. This bill clarifies that those provisions shall not be construed to prohibit an individualized education program (IEP) from including specialized deaf and hard-of-hearing related services as the only services.

Chapter 44, Statutes of 2025

AB 1412 (Gonzalez, Jeff) - Special education: pupil transfers: residency requirements: records.

If an individual with exceptional needs transfers from outside the state to a district in the state, or transfers from district to district, within the same academic year, existing law requires LEAs to provide the pupil with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in a previously approved IEP until the LEA conducts a federally required assessment and develops a new IEP, if appropriate. AB 1412 requires an LEA, upon notification that a pupil enrolling may be eligible to receive services or accommodations, to promptly coordinate with the pupil’s parents and previous school to ensure the timely exchange of records and to reduce any delays in the pupil receiving comparable services or accommodations. The bill requires an LEA, within 30 days of receipt of official records or unofficial records, to either adopt and implement the IEP previously adopted for the pupil or develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP for the pupil that is consistent with federal and state law.

Chapter 453, Statutes of 2025

SB 373 (Grove) - Special education: nonpublic, nonsectarian schools or agencies.

SB 373, beginning with the 2026-27 school year, requires the SPI to take specific steps before certifying a nonpublic, nonsectarian school (NPS) located outside of California, including reviewing assurances related to behavioral interventions to evaluate consistency with California laws, ensuring pupils have been provided a copy of their rights and procedural safeguards, reviewing policies, procedures, and practices for NPS to determine if there is a clear and confidential process for residents to report grievances without fear of retaliation, and revising protocols for identifying signs for abuse or neglect for consistency with mandated reporting requirements. The SPI is also required, during an onsite review of an out-of-state NPS, to interview all pupils with IEPs to discuss progress and address any concerns respecting any limitations to the pupil’s disabilities, if (1) the NPS is the subject of an investigation, (2) there is a change in the certification status or during the year-three monitoring followup visit, or the NPS has pupil-level findings from year two. The bill also requires CDE, on or before July 1, 2026, to update the “Local Educational Agency Onsite Visit for Nonpublic School” form to require additional information for out-of-state NPS.

Chapter 579, Statutes of 2025

Capitol Advisors Group has produced a set of comprehensive client briefs detailing new education laws that were passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2025. Each brief is organized by subject area and includes an executive summary highlighting major changes we think you should know about. Bills signed by the Governor take effect on January 1, 2026, unless the bill specifically states otherwise.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

CHANGES IN LAW
2025



Universal Transitional Kindergarten (TK) Fully Implemented.

As we are now fully in the 2025-26 school year, school districts that offer kindergarten are expected to be offering TK to all four-year olds who turn four by September 1 of the school year. While we know you are all aware of the programmatic requirements, we just want to remind you all of the following:

- TK classrooms must maintain an average class size of no more than 24 students per class
- TK classrooms must maintain an average of one adult for every ten students
- Teachers first assigned to the TK classroom after July 1, 2015 must have, by August 1, 2025, one of the following:
 - At least 24 units in early childhood education, childhood development, or both.
 - As determined and documented by the local educational agency (LEA) employing the teacher, professional experience in a classroom setting with preschool age children meeting the criteria established by the governing board or body of the LEA that is comparable to the 24 units of education.
 - A child development teacher permit, or an early childhood education specialist credential, issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

We do want to note a small change in particular that was made around the fiscal penalties associated with class sizes. Prior to the passage of the 2025 Budget Act, the penalty for failing to comply with TK class sizes was a loss of the K-3 class size adjustment for all of a LEA's TK ADA, regardless of how close a LEA was to meeting the appropriate class size. The recently enacted budget made changes to much more closely align the fiscal penalty to the other penalties; essentially you are penalized *per school site* that is out of compliance rather than losing the entire apportionment.

We continue to hear from districts up and down the state that getting TK fully online is proving difficult - whether that be related to staffing ratios, facilities, or the credentialing issue. As more data comes from the field on the challenges schools are facing, we anticipate more discussion around this issue.

Progress on TK English Learners (ELs).

You may recall that in 2024, California enacted [AB 2268](#) (Muratsuchi, D-Torrance). The bill was passed largely in response to the fact that, given the expansion to younger ages that would now be eligible for enrollment in TK, students were being over-identified as English Learners via the English Learner Proficiency Assessment of California (ELPAC). While an appropriate step, the implementation of this bill came with a few challenges that the state sought to address this year through the state budget.

- English Language Proficiency Screening. The state provided \$10 million to support the use of English language proficiency screeners for ELs in the TK setting. As part of this, the state requires the the State Superintendent (SPI) to adopt a list of screening instruments for 3 and 4-year olds.
- Local Control Funding Formula losses backfilled. For both the 2025-26 and 2026-27 school years, while the state develops a list of new screener, LEAs could be subject to LCFF funding losses due to no longer being able to identify multilingual learners with the suspension of the ELPAC for TK students. To assist LEAs with this issue, the state provided that LEAs could use kindergarten EL counts for purposes of LCFF supplemental and concentration grants.

As part of this rollout, LEAs are required to administer a home language survey upon TK enrollment to identify if a student's primary language is one other than English. Subsequently, beginning with the 2027-28 school year, LEAs will be required to screen TK students who have been identified as having a primary language other than English within thirty days of TK enrollment.

The Governor signed the following early childhood bills:

Child Care

[AB 563 \(Jackson\) - Childcare: Early Childhood Policy Council.](#)

Current law requires the Early Childhood Policy Council (ECPC) to issue an annual report to the Governor, Legislature, and SPI. This bill requires the ECPC to include successes, challenges, gaps, and recommendations in the annual report and submit it to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees.

Chapter 268, Statutes of 2025

[AB 752 \(Ávila Farías\) - Child daycare facilities.](#)

This bill revises provisions governing colocated daycare centers by clarifying use by right, prohibiting local charges or fees, striking California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemptions and references to "legally established community amenities," maintaining compliance with state safety and licensing laws, and updating definitions of multifamily housing, colocated, local jurisdiction, and use by right.

Chapter 164, Statutes of 2025

[AB 753 \(Garcia\) - Childcare: facility licensure: teacher requirements.](#)

This bill, an urgency statute that took effect immediately upon signature by the Governor, authorizes the SPI and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) director to require contracting agencies to provide data on the number of assistant teacher permits or waivers to the California Department of Education (CDE) and CDSS, and to issue informal directives to implement this requirement. The bill also authorizes the CTC to issue a nonrenewable, two-year assistant teacher permit that allows the permit holder to assist in the care, development, and instruction of children, including temporary independent supervision for up to 120 minutes per day under teacher-level oversight. Lastly, the bill requires the CTC to implement these changes by January 30, 2026, and

sunsets these requirements one year after the adoption of the revised child development permit matrix or January 1, 2029 (whichever is later).

Chapter 165, Statutes of 2025

[SB 778 \(Limón\) - Migrant childcare and development programs.](#)

Current law, for purposes of migrant childcare and development programs, defines a “migrant agricultural worker family” as a family that has earned at least 50% of its total gross income from employment in fishing, agriculture, or agriculturally related work during the 12-month period immediately preceding the date of application for childcare and development services. This bill expands eligibility for the migrant childcare and development programs to include a family with one individual who has earned at least forty percent of their total gross income from employment in fishing, agriculture or agriculturally related work.

Chapter 459, Statutes of 2025

[SB 792 \(Arreguín\) - Childcare.](#)

This bill makes several changes to subsidized childcare programs, including:

- Updating the income cap for disenrollment from subsidized child care services from 70% to 85% of the state median income.
- Updating the income cap for CalWORKs Stage 3 Child Care services from 70% to 85% of the state median income.
- Clarifying that, for reimbursement purposes, “attendance” includes excused absences by children because of medical and educational appointments.
- Specifying that, for reimbursement purposes, a contractor may claim attendance for days that the contractor or provider is required to hold a space for a child during the period that a family is assumed to have abandoned care or is engaging in the appeal process based on disenrollment for abandoning care.
- Extending the family fee exemption to 24 months for families with children who are neglected or abused children who are recipients of child protective services, or children who are at risk of being neglected or abused, upon written referral from a legal, medical, or social services agency.

Chapter 234, Statutes of 2025

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FACILITIES

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aa/rr Atkinson, Andelson
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Civic Center Act is Back on the Books.

While the end of this Legislative session was not nearly as exciting as 2024, when a last minute statewide school facilities bond was negotiated just in time to make it onto the November ballot, there were a handful of bills related to school facilities that are important to share. One bill in particular, [AB 503](#) (González, D-Los Angeles), permanently restores the provisions of The Civic Center Act which sunset on January 1, 2025. Schools frequently allow community-based organizations such as the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, parent-teacher associations, and youth sports leagues, to use their facilities. While this access is extremely valuable to local communities, it comes with unavoidable maintenance and operational costs that without this change, would otherwise fall on districts. AB 503, an urgency measure, became law when the Governor signed the bill, immediately restoring a school district's ability to charge maintenance fees to address the costs of supplies, utilities, and janitorial services associated with operations and maintenance.

Prop 2 Implementation and a New Lawsuit.

The Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) and the State Allocation Board (SAB) have been working on regulations to implement Prop 2, the \$10 billion Kindergarten Through Grade 12 Schools and Local Community College Public Education Facilities Modernization, Repair and Safety Act of 2024. OPSC has held a series of stakeholder meetings throughout 2025 (17 to date with more scheduled), while drafting regulations that implement Prop 2, and the SAB has approved several emergency regulations over the last few months. One of the remaining issues is around the new requirement for a five-year school facilities master plan which should be finalized in the next few weeks. We'll send clients a comprehensive update on the final Prop 2 regulations once the stakeholder meetings wrap up and the SAB completes the rulemaking process.

Also related, Public Advocates filed a lawsuit against the State of California on October 23rd in Alameda County Superior Court, alleging that the changes made to Prop 2 did not address the inequitable funding structure of the State School Facilities Program, and is seeking a court order requiring the state to revise the funding formula to allow "low-wealth" districts an equal opportunity to modernize school facilities by using a sliding scale rather than the first-in-line application process. It is too early to know how or if this lawsuit will impact the State School Facilities Program.

The Governor signed the following facilities bills:

Facilities

[AB 361 \(Schultz\) - Best value procurement: school districts.](#)

This bill permanently allows the Los Angeles Unified School District to use a best value procurement method for bid evaluation and selection for public projects that exceed \$1,000,000, which the district has been able to do for several years under a pilot program, and extends to all other school districts that pilot program until December 31, 2030.

Chapter 144, Statutes of 2025

[AB 503 \(González, Mark\) - School facilities: Civic Center Act: direct costs.](#)

The Civic Center Act authorizes, and in some instances requires, the governing board of a school district to allow the use of school facilities or grounds as a civic center. AB 503 permanently reinstates the Act's provision that authorizes or requires the governing board of a school district to charge a fee, not to exceed the school district's direct costs for use of its school facilities or grounds. For purposes of this bill, "direct costs" includes a specified share of the operating and maintenance costs proportional to the entity's use of the school facilities or grounds and a share of the costs for maintenance, repair, restoration, and refurbishment of the school facilities or grounds proportional to that entity's use of the school facilities or grounds.

Chapter 156, Statutes of 2025

Housing

[AB 1021 \(Wicks\) - Housing: local educational agencies.](#)

The Planning and Zoning Law, until January 1, 2033, deems a housing development project an allowable use on any real property owned by a local educational agency (LEA) if the housing development satisfies specified conditions, including, among others, consisting of at least 10 housing units, 100% of the units being rented by LEA employees, local public employees, and general members of the public pursuant to a specified priority, and a majority of the units being deed restricted for lower income or moderate-income households. This bill revises and recasts these provisions, including, instead of requiring a majority of units to be deed restricted for lower income or moderate-income households, requiring that either 30 percent of the the units be set at a rent affordable to lower income households and at least 20 percent be set at a rent affordable to moderate-income households or at least 12 percent of the total units be set for low-income households, at least 15 percent for lower income households, and at least 20 percent for moderate-income households. The bill also clarifies that if an LEA receives insufficient applications to meet those thresholds, it may offer unoccupied units to other LEAs, not just directly adjacent LEAs.

Chapter 503, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1296 \(Bonta\) - Local educational agencies: reserve funds.](#)

Existing law authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide technical assistance for specified purposes, including in developing housing for students and faculty of universities and colleges This bill requires the department, on or before January 1, 2027, to make

available on its website a form that enables an LEA to notify the department of the agency's interest in using real property that it owns for a housing project. The bill requires the department to review the information submitted via the form and make the information available on its website. The bill also requires the department provide technical assistance to an LEA that submits the notice described above and requests technical assistance, for the purpose of supporting predevelopment activities related to a housing project located on real property owned by the LEA.

Chapter 508, Statutes of 2025

Safe Water

[AB 1096 \(Connolly\) - Water: schoolsites: lead testing.](#)

The California Safe Drinking Water Act requires the State Water Resources Control Board to administer provisions relating to the regulation of drinking water to protect public health. Current federal regulations require community water systems to contact all schools and childcare facilities to provide information about the health risks from lead in drinking water and of eligibility to be sampled for lead by the water system. This bill requires a community water system, when making outreach attempts to elementary schools and childcare facilities for the purposes of offering lead sampling in drinking water, to provide elementary schools and childcare facilities that decline lead testing with an opportunity to provide information about their reasons for declining by allowing them to select from a list that includes specified options, unless the school or childcare facility is exempted from lead testing by federal waiver.

Chapter 290, Statutes of 2025

Transportation

[AB 435 \(Wilson\) - Vehicles: child passenger restraints.](#)

This bill, beginning on January 1, 2027, defines “properly restrained by a safety belt” to mean that the child, meets the requirements of the 5-Step test, which includes that the child is sitting all the way back against the auto seat, the knees of the child bend over the edge of the seat, the shoulder belt snugly crosses the center of the child's chest and shoulder, not the child's neck, the lap belt is as low as possible and is touching the child's thighs, and the child can stay seated like this for the whole trip.

Chapter 434, Statutes of 2025

[SCR 60 \(Cortese\) - School Bus Drivers' Day.](#)

This Senate concurrent resolution designated April 22, 2025, as School Bus Drivers' Day in California, in order to draw special public attention to school bus drivers for their continued and excellent services to pupils in California.

Chapter 118, Statutes of 2025

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GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

CHANGES IN LAW
2025

 CAPITOL
ADVISORS

 Atkinson, Andelson
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Governor Vetoes Charter School Reform Bill.

In a surprising move on the last possible day to act on 2025 legislation, Governor Newsom vetoed [SB 414](#) (Ashby, D-Sacramento), the bill sponsored by the California Charter Schools Association (CCSA) to address the longstanding issue of fraud cases in nonclassroom-based (NCB) charter schools.

Currently, there is a moratorium on approving new NCB charter schools dating back to 2019, but that ends on January 1, 2026. The goal of two bills this past session was to have new oversight and accountability requirements for NCB charter schools in place prior to the moratorium ending. Those bills were [AB 84](#) (Muratsuchi, D-Torrance), sponsored by a coalition of labor groups, and SB 414. After a contentious summer of debate, AB 84 fell far short of the support needed to move forward and was held in the Senate, a major defeat for the labor groups pushing for large scope charter reforms.

SB 414 would have introduced extensive changes to the Education Code, directly impacting charter schools, county offices of education (COE), and school districts. SB 414's main themes were expanded audit requirements for charter schools, new contracting requirements for all LEAs, introduction of an Office of Inspector General and new requirements for Funding Determinations.

In vetoing the bill, Governor Newsom [stated](#):

I am returning Senate Bill 414 without my signature.

This bill makes changes to the oversight, auditing, and funding systems for nonclassroom-based (NCB) charter schools, expands local educational agencies' auditing procedures, and establishes a new Office of the Education Inspector General.

In the wake of several high-profile cases of fraud by NCB charter schools, in partnership with the Legislature, we charged the Legislative Analyst's Office and the Fiscal Crisis Management and Assistance Team with studying ways to improve oversight and accountability, and to provide policymakers with recommendations to address those issues.

I deeply appreciate the efforts of the author and the negotiating parties to develop legislation that builds on these recommendations and the findings from the State Controller. However, this bill falls short. While the oversight and auditing provisions are meaningful, other sections are unworkable, would face legal challenges, and require hundreds of millions of dollars to implement. Additionally, provisions added late in the legislative process undermine important agreements my Administration made during my first term.

While I cannot sign this bill, I remain committed to improving oversight of our education system while preserving the ability of high-quality charter schools to continue educating the students they serve. As such, I am calling on all interested parties to work together in the coming months to find a swift resolution on remaining unresolved issues, so that follow-up legislation can be introduced and passed when the Legislature returns early next year. This legislation must ensure that public funds are properly utilized, address fraud and malfeasance, improve accountability and oversight, and acknowledge our fiscal reality to allow for successful implementation.

In partnership with the Legislature this year, my Administration has enacted a balanced budget that recognizes the challenging fiscal landscape our state faces while maintaining our commitment to working families and our most vulnerable communities. With significant fiscal pressures and the federal government's hostile economic policies, it is vital that we remain disciplined when considering bills with significant fiscal implications that are not included in the budget, such as this measure.

The Legislature is on recess until January, and the NCB moratorium expires January 1, 2026, leaving no practical route for changing the law prior to the moratorium expiring. As things stand, NCB rules will revert to how they were prior to the moratorium being implemented. However, lawmaker concerns with NCB charter schools remain and we fully expect various groups to begin discussions during the Fall and Winter, as the Governor's veto message encourages.

We expect NCB charter schools to begin submitting petitions to LEAs as the January moratorium expiration looms, however we think the laws governing NCB charter schools are destined for change in future action by the Governor and Legislature, so NCB charters and authorizers should proceed with caution.

While AB 84 is technically still a viable vehicle in 2026, it's current version is a long way from being supported by enough interested parties and lawmakers to gain traction. That would leave at least three other possible routes: a new bill, a budget play, or both.

At this point, the Governor could take charge of any negotiations moving forward to ensure the dynamic between labor, charters, and authorizers is productive. He could do that by establishing a scope of charter school reforms his Administration is looking for, or introduce his own proposal through the state budget process.

School Finance Training Requirement for Governing Board Members.

[AB 640](#) (Muratsuchi) requires FCMAT to develop curriculum on K-12 public education school finance laws by October 1, 2026, and will require each local educational agency (LEA) official (defined as any regular member of the governing board of a school district or of a county board of education, or any regular member of the governing body of a charter school or of an entity managing a charter school) to receive training in K-12 public education school finance laws. Any LEA official in service as of April 1, 2027, except for those whose term ends before April 1, 2027, must receive the training before April 1,

2028. LEA officials who commence their initial service on or after April 1, 2027, must receive training no later than one year from the first day of their initial service, or of their subsequent nonconsecutive term. In meeting these requirements, LEAs or a consortium of LEAs may:

- Offer training courses using LEA employees or experienced legal counsel
- Arrange for its officials to receive training courses through an entity meeting certain conditions, including having demonstrable experience supporting LEAs with technical assistance and expertise and has trainers that possess experience in school finance laws
- Arrange for its officials to receive training through FCMAT, for which FCMAT may charge a fee
- Arrange for its officials to receive training courses through a nonprofit statewide education association led by officials who govern school districts and COEs
- Offer their own sets of self-study materials with tests.

Any LEA official who has successfully completed the CSBA Masters in Governance program is exempt from this training requirement.

Ethics Training Update.

A related measure, [SB 827](#) by Senator Jeff Gonzalez (R-Coachella), also updates the list of school personnel that must receive ethics training. Specifically, this bill adds district and county superintendents and charter school administrators to the list of officials who must receive ethics training. Officials starting in their role on or after January 1, 2026 must receive the training within six months. Additionally, starting on July 1, 2026, SB 827 requires an LEA that maintains a website to post clear instructions and contact information for anybody interested in requesting records on ethics training, including when the requirements were satisfied and who provided the service.

New Cyberbullying Policy.

Responding to the concerning rise in incidents of cyberbullying, Assembly Member Josh Lowenthal (D-Long Beach) authored [AB 772](#), which requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop and post a model policy on how to address reported acts of cyberbullying occurring outside school hours, provided that the act is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of creating an intimidating or hostile education environment. CDE must develop the policy in consultation with relevant stakeholders and post it by June 30, 2026. The policy must be appropriate for LEAs that serve pupils enrolled in grades 4-12. LEAs then have until July 1, 2027 to adopt a new policy, or modify an existing one, on how to address reported acts of cyberbullying occurring outside of school hours (again, provided that the act will or is reasonably expected to create an intimidating or hostile educational environment). Interestingly, the model policy developed by CDE must clarify that LEAs are authorized, but not required, to address those acts, and no liability will be imposed if an LEA fails to do so.

School Board Member Compensation.

And finally, [AB 1390](#) (Solache, D-Lakewood) will increase the maximum compensation that eligible school board and county board members can receive, provided they attend all meetings held. These increases are based on county classes (for county board members) or prior year ADA (for school board members). Under the bill's new limits, the range of pay for eligible county board members will be \$800 to \$3,000 (up from \$160 to \$600), and the new range of pay for eligible school board members will be \$600 to \$4,500 (up from \$120 to \$1,500). In sponsoring the bill, the California School Boards Association argued that the pay thresholds haven't been changed in 40 years, and given the time and travel commitment requirements of participating on a governing board, the pay increase was important and long-overdue. The policy is also aimed at increasing the pool of candidates who can consider running for a board position. Nothing in the bill changes a county or school board's ability to raise compensation rates 5% annually above those prescribed in law, nor does it require board members be compensated.

Clarity on Cultural Adornments at Graduation.

After reports that LEAs were prohibiting students from wearing cultural adornments at their graduation ceremonies, Assembly Member James Ramos (D-Highland), authored [AB 1369](#) to provide additional clarity. Under current law, students can wear traditional tribal regalia or items with recognized cultural or religious significance during graduation ceremonies as additions, not replacements to the standard cap and gown. LEAs have the authority to restrict items that could cause a disruption or interfere with the ceremony. According to the bill sponsor, California Indian Legal Services, students were still facing obstacles when trying to exert this right.

AB 1369 aims to make those rights clearer and stronger by specifying that students and their families get to decide what is traditional or significant. It also prevents schools from requiring pre-approval for cultural, religious, or tribal adornments. This bill passed through several policy committees and both the Senate and Assembly Floor with no "no" votes and signals a strong, bipartisan approval of the author's intent to clarify students' rights on this matter.

Bills Modernize, Update Existing Practices on Williams Reviews and School Inventory.

[AB 629](#) (Ward, D-San Diego) raises the threshold value for including equipment in a school district's inventory system from \$500 to \$1,500 and requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to biennially adjust the threshold for inflation and post the adjusted amount on CDE's website. The \$500 threshold was established in 1984, and requires significant staff time to comply with. By raising the threshold, AB 629 upholds the intent of the law while providing relief to LEAs.

Governor Newsom also signed [AB 927](#), authored by Assembly Member LaShae Sharp-Collins (D-San Diego), in July as an urgency measure to give COEs more time and flexibility to complete their reviews of textbooks and instructional materials. Given the significant and unprecedented growth in the list of schools that needed review coming out of the Pandemic, this was an important bill that was

championed by the County Superintendents Association, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, and Public Advocates.

Key changes under AB 927 include extending the inspection window for textbooks and instructional materials from four weeks to eight weeks and requiring county superintendents to prioritize schools with known textbook shortages or safety issues within the first four weeks, when feasible. These updates help ensure county offices can maintain strong oversight and uphold student access to essential learning materials amid expanding responsibilities and limited resources. AB 927 applies these changes to Williams inspection laws for the 2025–26 school year and any subsequent school year that utilizes the list developed by the SPI in 2024–25.

Ongoing Changes to Open Meeting Laws.

Given the prevalence of technology-based or aided meetings during and since the Pandemic, Governor Newsom signed [SB 707](#), by Senator Elena Maria Durazo (D-Los Angeles), making significant updates to the Ralph M. Brown Act, which establishes open meeting requirements for school districts and COEs. While many of the new requirements in SB 707 apply only to cities, counties, and certain special districts, several provisions are still relevant for schools. For example, the bill permanently authorizes board members to use social media to communicate with the public about district business, provided they do not deliberate or discuss district matters with one another on those platforms, and also mandates that local agencies provide a copy of the Brown Act to all elected or appointed members of a legislative body of the agency.

The bill modernizes teleconferencing rules for all by allowing board members with disabilities to participate remotely as a reasonable accommodation. These members must attend meetings via audio and video (unless their disability requires that they participate only by audio), and must disclose whether any other adults are present at their remote location and their general relationship to those individuals. The bill also expands the teleconferencing flexibility authorized during state-declared emergencies to include local emergencies. Additionally, all local agencies, including schools, may make use of new alternative teleconferencing provisions that expand the circumstances under which members may participate remotely. These changes provide greater flexibility for board members facing situations such as childcare needs, illness, family emergencies, or military service. SB 707 also clarifies that public agencies may remove or restrict individuals participating remotely who engage in disruptive behavior.

Importantly, the new section of the Brown Act requiring extensive audiovisual access, translation of agendas, and community outreach, applicable to “eligible legislative bodies” such as large cities and counties, *does not apply to school districts*.

Our friends at AALRR did a comprehensive write up on SB 707, [available here](#).

The Governor signed the following governance and operations bills:

Brown Act

[SB 470 \(Laird\) - Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act: teleconferencing.](#)

This bill extends certain COVID-era Bagley-Keene Open Meeting alternative teleconference rules, including the ability to hold a meeting with the majority of members physically present in the same location but other members joining remotely, until January 1, 2030.

Chapter 222, Statutes of 2025

[SB 707 \(Durazo\) - Open meetings: meeting and teleconference requirements.](#)

This bill makes various changes to the rules for local agencies to hold public meetings pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Act (Brown Act). While most changes only apply to non-LEA public agencies, several changes apply to all, including expanding the “just cause” provisions allowing board members to participate remotely, allowing members with disabilities to participate remotely, and clarifying that the existing ability of local agencies to limit or restrict participation of people who are being disruptive also applies to people joining remotely.

Chapter 327, Statutes of 2025

Elections

[AB 5 \(Berman\) - Elections: official canvass.](#)

AB 5 requires elections officials, on or before the 13th day following an election, to finish counting all ballots, with certain exceptions, including provisional ballots and ballots for which the voter must either verify or provide a signature, and release a vote count for those ballots. If an elections official does not meet that deadline, they are required to file a notice of extension, including the reason for the extension, with the Secretary of State.

Chapter 250, Statutes of 2025

[AB 287 \(Lackey\) - Elections: polling places and vote centers.](#)

Current law authorizes the governing body with jurisdiction over school buildings or other public buildings to allow its buildings to be used for polling places, or for vote centers, beginning up to 10 days before the election and continuing through election day, or to store voting machines and other vote-tabulating devices. Once a governing body has approved the use of a building as a polling place or vote center, current law requires the governing body to instruct the school district or other public administrator to provide the elections official a site with an adequate amount of space that will allow the precinct board or vote center to perform its duties. This bill requires the governing body to instruct the school district or other public administrator to provide the elections official with an adequate amount of space for voting operations and storage of associated supplies. This bill also requires the district administrator to make building parking available at no charge to the precinct or vote center board and voters, if requested by the elections official.

Chapter 253, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1392 \(Sharp-Collins\) - Elections: voter registration information: elected officials and candidates.](#)

AB 1392 requires the residence address, telephone number, and email address of a federal, state, or

local elected official or candidate to be made confidential. The bill requires a list to be made, compiled in part by the Secretary of State (SOS) for persons filing nomination papers for an elected federal or state office and county elections officials for persons filing nominations papers for an elected local office, identifying each elected official or candidate residing in each county. The information must then be made confidential within five business days of receipt by the county elections officer of the SOS' list, or within five business days of nomination papers being filed with the county elections officer. The information must remain confidential until an elected officer leaves office or, for a candidate, until the winning candidate takes office. An elected official or candidate is required to contact their county elections official to ensure their information has been made confidential and they may also opt out of having their information made confidential.

Chapter 300, Statutes of 2025

[SB 482 \(Weber Pierson\) - Roster of public officials: local government.](#)

This bill requires, no more than 120 days after each general election, the governing body of each city, county, or city and county, or their delegated local entity, to submit to the Secretary of State an updated list of local elected or appointed officials.

Chapter 762 , Statutes of 2025

Governance/Operations

[AB 268 \(Kalra\) - State holidays: Diwali.](#)

AB 268 adds "Diwali" to the list of state holidays and authorizes community colleges and public schools to close on "Diwali". The bill authorizes state employees to elect to take time off with pay in recognition of "Diwali."

Chapter 358, Statutes of 2025

[AB 320 \(Bennett\) - Public social services: eligibility: income exclusions.](#)

This bill, to the extent permitted by federal law, prohibits the compensation awarded to a pupil member of a charter school governing board or a county board of education from being considered as income or resources when determining eligibility and benefit amount for any means-tested program and any scholarships for public colleges and universities.

Chapter 686, Statutes of 2025

[AB 542 \(Rodriguez, Celeste\) - Continuation schools and classes: youth workforce development programs.](#)

AB 542 authorizes the governing board of a school district that maintains a continuation high school or continuation education classes to offer youth workforce development programs to pupils on 1 or 2 weekdays per school week if it ensures that those pupils are otherwise enrolled in at least 15 hours of class attendance per school week. The bill also requires a school district that implements a youth workforce development program for these purposes to establish procedures to track pupil attendance and pupil participation while engaged in the program.

Chapter 696, Statutes of 2025

[AB 629 \(Ward\) - School districts: equipment inventory.](#)

Current law requires the governing board of a school district to establish and maintain an inventory of each item of equipment that has a market value above \$500. This bill increases the threshold value from \$500 to \$1,500, and requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to biennially adjust that threshold market value by a specified inflation factor, rounded to the nearest \$50, and to post the adjusted threshold market value to the CDE website.

Chapter 62, Statutes of 2025

[AB 640 \(Muratsuchi\) - Local educational agencies: governance training.](#)

This bill requires any regular member of a governing board of a school district or a county board of education, or any regular member of the governing body of a charter school or a nonprofit public benefit corporation operating a charter school to receive training in K–12 public education school finance laws. The bill prescribes the timelines within which the training is required to be completed and the methods that an LEA or a consortium of LEAs may offer or arrange to provide that training.

Chapter 618, Statutes of 2025

[AB 927 \(Sharp-Collins\) - County superintendent of schools: inspection of public schools.](#)

AB 927, an urgency measure that took effect in July 2025, extends the timeline by which county superintendents of schools must visit and complete the textbook and instructional materials review of the schools identified for inspection, from within the fourth week of the school year to within the eighth week of the school year. The bill also requires the county superintendent to prioritize visiting, within the first 4 weeks of the school year where practicable, those schools for which the county superintendent has received information from a survey, a complaint filed pursuant to the Uniform Complaint Procedures, or any other reliable source that the school does not have sufficient textbooks or that a facility of the school poses an emergency or urgent threat to the health or safety of pupils or staff or is not in good repair.

Chapter 45, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1216 \(Committee on Education\) - Elementary and secondary education: omnibus.](#)

This bill provides technical, noncontroversial clean-up and clarification to Education Code regarding single subject credentials and supplementary authorizations.

Chapter 88, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1369 \(Ramos\) - Pupil rights: school graduation ceremonies and related events: adornments.](#)

Current law authorizes a pupil to wear traditional tribal regalia or recognized objects of religious or cultural significance as an adornment at school graduation ceremonies. Current law prohibits that authorization from limiting an LEA's discretion to prohibit an item that is likely to cause a substantial disruption of, or material interference with, the ceremony. Current law defines "adornment" for these purposes as something attached to or worn with, but not replacing, the cap and gown customarily worn at school graduation ceremonies. AB 1369 extends a pupil's authorization to wear an adornment to school events that are related to graduation and clarifies that what constitutes traditional regalia or recognized objects of religious or cultural significance is to be determined by the pupil and the pupil's family.

Chapter 133, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1390 \(Solache\) - Public school governance: board member compensation.](#)

This bill updates provisions related to the compensation of members of city or county boards of education and the governing boards of school districts by increasing the authorized compensation to instead not exceed a specified amount between \$600 and \$4,500 per month, based on the average daily attendance for the prior school year in the jurisdiction of the governing board for the prior school year.

Chapter 639, Statutes of 2025

[SB 48 \(Gonzalez\) - Educational equity: discrimination prevention coordinators.](#)

AB 715 of the 2025–26 Regular Session established the Office of Civil Rights, under the administration of the Government Operations Agency, with the purpose of working directly with LEAs to prevent and address discrimination and bias. SB 48 requires the Office of Civil Rights to employ a Religious Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, a Race and Ethnicity Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, a Gender Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, and an LGBTQ Discrimination Prevention Coordinator.

Chapter 429, Statutes of 2025

[SB 827 \(Gonzalez\) - Local agency officials: training.](#)

Current law imposes ethics training on specified local agency officials, and requires the local agency to maintain records of the trainings. This bill expands which local agency officials are required to complete the above-described ethics training to include department heads, or other similar administrative officers, and requires officials who commence service on or after January 1, 2026, to receive their initial training within 6 months. For LEAs, this bill defines “department head or other similar administrative officer” to mean the superintendent of a school district, the county superintendent of schools, or the chief administrator of a charter school. The bill also requires the local agency to post clear instructions and contact information for requesting the training records on its website.

Chapter 661, Statutes of 2025

PRA/Gov. Code 1090

[SB 42 \(Umberg\) - Political Reform Act of 1974: public campaign financing: California Fair Elections Act of 2026.](#)

The Political Reform Act of 1974 prohibits a public officer from expending, and a candidate from accepting, public moneys for the purpose of seeking elective office. This bill puts before the voters in November 2026 a system for public funding of state and local election campaigns in California. The ballot measure would remove prohibitions imposed on a public officer or candidate to expend or accept public funds for the purpose of seeking elective office unless the funds are earmarked by a state or local entity for education, transportation, or public safety. Candidates would need to abide by specified expenditure limits and meet strict criteria to qualify for public funds.

Chapter 245, Statutes of 2025

[SB 280 \(Cervantes\) - Elections.](#)

Current law authorizes a candidate for elective office to submit a petition containing a specified number of signatures in lieu of all or part of the fee for filing nomination papers. Current law requires

the Secretary of State to make forms for securing signatures available to each candidate commencing 60 days before the first day for circulating nomination papers and requires candidates to file in-lieu-filing-fee petitions at least 30 days before the close of the nomination period. This bill, for the June 2, 2026 statewide direct primary election, requires the Secretary of State to make those forms available beginning December 19, 2025.

Chapter 97, Statutes of 2025

[SB 852 \(Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments\) - Political Reform Act of 1974: Citizens Redistricting Commission.](#)

The Political Reform Act of 1974 authorizes the Legislature to amend its provisions by enactment of a bill by a 2/3 vote of each house if that bill furthers the act's purposes and, at least 8 days before passage, or at least 12 days before passage if the previous form of the bill did not amend the act, the bill in its final form has been delivered to the Fair Political Practices Commission for distribution to the news media and every person who has requested a copy from the commission. The act requires the Legislative Counsel to allow the public to sign up to receive an email alert any time a bill that would amend the act is introduced, amended, referred to the floor or committee, or voted on. This bill eliminates the requirement that a bill amending the act must be delivered to the commission for distribution to the news media and every person who has requested a copy, instead requiring an otherwise proper amendment of the act to be printed, distributed to the Members of the Legislature, and published on the internet.

Chapter 331, Statutes of 2025

Suspension/Expulsion

[AB 772 \(Lowenthal\) - Cyberbullying: off-campus acts: model policy.](#)

Current law requires an LEA to adopt, on or before December 31, 2019, procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying. This bill requires CDE, on or before June 30, 2026, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, to develop, post, and distribute to LEAs a model policy on how to address certain reported acts of cyberbullying occurring outside of school hours and outside of the campus. The bill requires the model policy to clarify that LEAs are authorized, but not required, to address those acts. The bill requires LEAs, on or before July 1, 2027, to adopt a policy, or modify its existing procedures for preventing acts of bullying, on how to address certain reported acts of cyberbullying occurring outside of school hours and outside of the campus. The bill also authorizes the adopted policy to be the model policy developed by CDE or a locally adopted policy with input from stakeholders. AB 772 requires LEAs to post a copy of the adopted policy on its website and the website of each of its schoolsites.

Chapter 620, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1230 \(Bonta\) - Pupil discipline: expulsions: procedures.](#)

The bill requires the governing board of a school district to (1) assist an expelled pupil in locating opportunities accessible to the pupil that are necessary to complete the requirements of a plan for rehabilitation, and (2) as part of the process for a required review, indicate whether or not the pupil had access to the necessary resources to complete their rehabilitation plan. The bill prohibits the governing board from requiring the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian to pay for any costs or

services that the governing board determines to be necessary for the pupil to complete a plan of rehabilitation and prohibits an expelled pupil from being denied readmission due to financial or transportation barriers or a lack of viable opportunities to complete a term of the rehabilitation plan.

Chapter 294, Statutes of 2025

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HUMAN RESOURCES

CHANGES IN LAW
2025



For the second year in a row, the majority of human resources (HR) bills that we identified as imposing burdensome and costly new procedures on schools failed to make it to the Governor's desk. However, because this was the first year of a two-year legislative session, many of these bills could be revived when the Legislature returns in January. This includes [AB 65](#) (Aguilar-Curry), which would entitle school employees to 14-weeks of paid pregnancy-related leave and [AB 917](#) (Ávila Farías), which would remove exemptions from permanent status for teachers at super small school districts (under 250 ADA) and regional occupational centers or programs (ROCPs).

Bill to Prevent Childhood Sexual Assaults at Schools Expands Background Check, Training Requirements.

In 2019, the state passed [AB 218](#) (Gonzalez), which, in part, extended the statute of limitations period for claims of childhood sexual assault from 8 years from the date a plaintiff turns 18-years old (i.e. 26 years old) to 22 years from that date (i.e. 40 years old). Earlier this year, the Fiscal Crisis & Management Assessment Team (FCMAT) released a report on the fiscal impact of these changes to the statute of limitations for childhood sexual assault claims on public agencies, including local education agencies (LEAs).

As AB 218 was moving through the Legislature, school advocates expressed sympathy for victims but also raised concerns that the bill's changes could place a potentially unbearable financial burden on public schools. In acknowledgement of this looming threat, the 2024 Budget Act required FCMAT to provide recommendations to the Legislature and the Department of Finance on "new, existing, or strengthened funding and financing mechanisms to finance judgments or settlements arising from claims of childhood sexual abuse, to be utilized by local agencies."

Entitled [Childhood Sexual Assault: Fiscal Implications for California Public Agencies](#), the report contained over 20 fiscal and policy recommendations for the Legislature to consider. [SB 577](#) by Senator John Laird (D-Santa Cruz) included many of the fiscal recommendations in the report but ultimately stalled on the Assembly Floor after strong opposition from trial attorneys and victims' rights groups. After announcing the bill would no longer be moving forward, Senator Laird expressed his disappointment, stating, "I had hoped to protect survivors access to justice while finding some fiscal relief to local governments...despite these months of hard work, it was just impossible to balance these interests to get to a successful outcome this year." The Senator has also expressed his hope to continue to work on the bill next year.

While SB 577 did not make it to the Governor's desk, the Governor did sign [SB 848](#) by Senator Sasha Renée Pérez (D-Pasadena), which included a number of the report's policy recommendations related to prevention and student safety. In support of the bill, the Senator wrote:

While most school employees are dedicated professionals who nurture student growth, disciplinary statutes and post-incident reforms in California lacks a comprehensive approach to preventing abuse in K-12 schools. SB 848 aims to create a safer environment for students by strengthening policies on professional boundaries, school safety plans, and child protection.

Classified Employee Background Checks and Statewide Database

Last year, the Governor signed [AB 2534](#) (Flora, 2024), which required applicants for a certificated position to provide a list of their former public school employers and the hiring LEA to contact each former employer to see if the applicant had been the subject of a report to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) for egregious misconduct. The FCMAT report noted that AB 2534 was a start towards meeting the need for stronger background checks but also acknowledged that it fell short because it only applied to public school employers and to certificated staff.

SB 848 addresses this gap in multiple ways. First, it expands the requirements of AB 2534 to applicants for certificated positions at state special schools, diagnostic centers operated by the California Department of Education (CDE), and private schools and expands the type of prior employers the applicant must list to include those same entities. Secondly, it establishes parallel procedures for applicants for non-certificated positions. Beginning January 1, 2026, applicants for classified positions will be required to provide a complete list of every school district, county office of education (COE), charter school, state special school, diagnostic center operated by CDE, and private school the applicant was previously an employee of, and school employers will be required to inquire with every former employer on the list.

The FCMAT report also recommended that the state establish a database of school employee work history in California's public and private schools. To this end, SB 848 tasks the CTC to, on or before July 1, 2027, develop a statewide data system that includes specific information for classified employees of an LEA or private school, including the name of any LEA or private school employer that conducted an employee investigation for egregious misconduct that resulted in evidence for a substantiated report. However, the creation of this database is contingent on there being funding made available for this purpose and no funding was included in this year's budget. As the creation of this database would help streamline background checks and hiring for classified positions, expect a strong advocacy push for funding to be provided in next year's budget.

If funded, these provisions in SB 848 would also require school employers to check the database before hiring an applicant for a classified position and establish a timeline by which a school employer would have to notify the database of certain events, like when an applicant has been hired, a classified employee has left their position, and when an investigation into egregious misconduct has begun. The CTC would also be authorized to initiate review upon the receipt of either a substantiated report entered into the data system or a record of a start of an investigation followed by a change in employment status during the investigation that has been entered into the data system.

Mandated Reporters

The FCMAT report called out the fact that while certain public school employees are mandated reporters, current law did not include all school employees who interact with students and recommended that the Legislature amend the definition of “mandated reporter” to include all employees, volunteers and governing board members of a public or private school. SB 848 implements this recommendation and adds certain contractors to the list of mandated reporters, so that the definition now includes:

- All employees, volunteers, and governing body members of a school district, COE, charter school or private school
- All employees, volunteers, and board members of a public or private school
- All contractors to a school district, COE, charter school, state special school or diagnostic center operated by CDE, or private school whose duties require contact with or supervision of students at that school district, COE, charter school, state special school or diagnostic center, or private school
- All employees and volunteers assigned to a state special school or diagnostic center operated by CDE.

The bill defines a volunteer to be “a person who is over 18 years of age and who interacts with pupils outside of the immediate supervision and control of the pupil’s parent or guardian or a school employee.”

Additionally, in response to FCMAT’s recommendation that the Legislature increase the quality and consistency of mandated reporter training in order to “prevent, build awareness of, and increase access to reporting options for, childhood sexual assault,” SB 848 makes the following changes, effective July 1, 2026:

- Expands CDE’s statewide guidance on the responsibilities of mandated reporters to include information on the identification of, and reporting requirements for, child sexual abuse and assault (current law was limited to child abuse and neglect).
- Expands the requirement that CDE develop and provide information regarding the detection and reporting of child abuse to also include information on the detection and reporting of child assault and also requires the information be provided to private schools and school volunteers.
- Expands the requirement that CDE develop and disseminate information regarding the prevention of abuse of children on school grounds by school personnel to specify that this includes the prevention of sexual assault and abuse committed by volunteers and also requires the dissemination of this information to private schools and school volunteers.
- Expands the requirements to provide annual training on the mandated reporter requirements, provide annual training on the prevention of abuse on school grounds or in

school-sponsored programs, and develop a process for all persons required to receive training to provide proof of completion to also apply to private schools.

- Requires trainings to be provided to school volunteers upon commencing volunteer services and for proof of completion to be provided within 6 weeks of commencing volunteer services.
- Provides that if a school, including a private school, does not use the online training module provided by the Department of Social Services (DSS), it must use an equivalent training module that was developed specifically to meet the mandated reporter training requirements that has been approved by the school's public entity risk pool joint powers authority or liability insurance provider.

Sex Offense Convictions

SB 848 amends current law to explicitly prohibit a school district from hiring a person that has been convicted of a sex offense. Current law had previously only applied this prohibition to persons convicted of a violent or serious felony. The bill also provides that a person shall not be denied employment or terminated from employment solely on the basis that the person has been convicted of a sex offense, if the person has obtained a certificate of rehabilitation and pardon, and that a temporary, substitute, or probationary employee must be terminated automatically if the Department of Justice sends a school district written electronic notification that the employee has been convicted of a sex offense. A "sex offense" is defined to include any offense listed in [Education Code Section 44010](#) that is not otherwise considered a violent or serious felony.

Other Student Safety Provisions

SB 848 also requires the adoption of policies on professional boundaries between adults and students and changes to comprehensive school safety plans as well as includes provisions regarding guidance on child abuse and assault prevention education. More information about these provisions of the bill can be found in the School Safety Section.

Governor Vetoes Bill That Would Have Authorized 60-day Substitutes.

As schools look for short-term solutions to help address educator shortages while waiting for the state's longer-term investments in the teacher pipeline to pay dividends, Governor Newsom vetoed [AB 1224](#) by Assembly Member Avelino Valencia (D-Anaheim). This bill would have authorized a school district, COE, or charter school to place a substitute in a single assignment for 60-days, instead of just 30-days (or 20-days for special education). The bill would have also required such a placement to have been approved by the LEA's governing board and, if the substitute teacher does not have a clear credential, for the LEA to provide access to professional development, orientation, and mentoring opportunities.

The bill was widely supported by education management groups and individual LEAs, who emphasized that while a full-time teacher is always preferable, it is also important for schools to have ways to

provide as much instructional continuity in the classroom as possible when a full-time teacher is unavailable. The bill, however, was [opposed](#) by the California Teachers Association (CTA), the CTC, Public Advocates, and Disability Rights California. Opponents argued that the bill “undermines teacher quality standards at the expense of California’s most vulnerable children,” and that “students with disabilities, English learners, and low-income students are paying the price...”

Despite having included similar authorizations without any additional conditions in previous budgets during the Pandemic, the Governor, in his [veto message](#), expressed concerns about the bill’s lack of required training and mentoring, writing:

“While this bill requires local educational agencies to offer mentorship, training, and support to substitute teachers, it does not mandate their participation in these programs. As such, this bill would allow individuals to serve our highest-need students for as much as a third of a school year without minimally required training or mentorship.”

He went on to encourage the CTC to work with interest holders to “expeditiously reexamine and amend its short-term staffing pathways to support continuity of instruction, and to address the minimum levels of preparation and support required.” With the staffing crisis in many places across the state only getting worse, we expect this issue to be debated again when the Legislature returns in January.

State Expands Credentialing Options to Help Address Non-Educator Staffing Issues.

While he was not convinced about the need to allow substitutes to serve longer in a single assignment, the Governor did sign a handful of bills this year that aim to help schools address their other staffing shortages, from making it easier for out-of-state applicants to provide mental health services in schools, to expanding access to administrative services credentials.

With CDE data showing that California lacks a sufficient number of trained personnel to meet the mental health needs of students, [AB 606](#) by Assembly Member Sharon Quirk-Silva (D-Fullerton) creates a preliminary professional services credential to allow an out-of-state applicant with an out-of-state credential to work in California schools while completing any remaining requirements needed for a clear California credential. Under the bill’s provisions, the CTC is required to issue the preliminary credential if an out-of-state applicant meets the following criteria:

1. Possesses a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning.
2. Has earned a valid corresponding pupil personnel services credential specialization in school counseling, school social work, or school psychology, based upon an out-of-state preparation program.
3. Has successfully completed a criminal background check conducted for credentialing purposes.

The Governor also signed two bills that broaden options under the administrative services credential. Looking to expand access to high-quality administrative training at the local level, [AB 959](#) by Assembly Member Heather Hadwick (R-Alturas) authorizes COEs and school districts to offer a one-year internship program for candidates for a preliminary administrative credential. Previously only institutions of higher education were allowed to offer these internship programs. Additionally, [AB 1009](#) by Assembly Member Blanca Rubio (D-Baldwin Park) authorizes occupational therapists (OTs) and physical therapists (PTs) to be eligible for a preliminary administrative services credential. As there is no credential requirement for OTs and PTs to serve in a California public school, there was previously no way for them to take on certificated leadership roles.

New Law Will Require Additional Employee Notices Beginning in 2026.

Prompted in part due to reports of increased immigration raids at workplaces, Senator Eloise Gómez Reyes (D-San Bernardino) introduced [SB 294](#). Entitled “The Workplace Know Your Rights Act,” the bill requires, on or before February 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, employers to provide a standalone written notice to each current employee that contains a description of the following worker’s rights:

1. The right to worker’s compensation benefits, including disability pay and medical care for work-related injuries or illness, as well as the contact information for the Division of Worker’s Compensation.
2. The right to notice of inspection by immigration agencies.
3. Protection against unfair immigration-related practices against a person exercising protected rights.
4. The right to organize a union or engage in concerted activity in the workplace.
5. Constitutional rights when interacting with law enforcement at the workplace, including an employee’s right under the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures and rights under the Fifth Amendment to the United State Constitution to due process and against self-incrimination.

The notice must also be provided to each new employee upon hire as well as annually to an employee’s authorized representatives, if any. Employers will be required to keep records of their compliance with this notice requirement for three years, including the date that each written notice was provided or sent.

In explaining the need for the bill, Senator Reyes stated, “Now, more than ever, it is imperative that workers and employers know their rights under California and federal law...It is critical that our workers are equipped with the tools they need to exercise their rights.” To this end, the bill also requires an employer to allow an employee to name an emergency contact no later than March 30, 2026 for current employees, and at the time of hire for new employees after that, and for the employee to indicate whether they want the emergency contact to be notified if the employee has been arrested or detained.

To help with implementation, the Labor Commissioner, on or before January 1, 2026, must post on its website a template notice that employers may use to meet this requirement. The template must also include new developments pertaining to laws enforced by the Labor and Workforce Development Agency that the Labor Commissioner deems material and necessary and a list of the enforcement agencies that may enforce the underlying rights in the notice.

The Governor signed the following human resources bills:

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)

[AB 606 \(Quirk-Silva\) - Certificated employees: professional services credential: out-of-state applicants.](#)

This bill requires the CTC to issue a preliminary professional services credential with a specialization in pupil personnel services to an out-of-state prepared applicant who satisfies the following requirements:

1. Possesses a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning.
2. Has earned a valid corresponding pupil personnel services credential specialized in school counseling, school social work, or school psychology, based upon an out-of-state preparation program.
3. Has successfully completed a criminal background check conducted for credentialing purposes.

The bill also provides that a credential issued pursuant to this section would be valid for a period of 2 years and eligible for renewal for a period of no more than 2 years, so long as the credential-holder demonstrates satisfactory progress.

Chapter 375, Statutes of 2025

[AB 959 \(Hadwick\) - Teacher credentialing: administrative services credential: internship program.](#)

Current law sets forth the minimum requirements for a preliminary services credential with a specialization in administrative services, which include, among other requirements, possession of one of various types of credentials and the completion of either an entry-level program of specialized and professional preparation in administrative services or a one-year internship in a program of supervised training in administrative services that is provided by a regionally accredited institution of higher education. AB 959 expands the above-described one-year internships to also include those provided by a school district or COE.

Chapter 171, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1009 \(Rubio, Blanca\) - Teacher credentialing: administrative services credential: occupational and physical therapists.](#)

This bill provides that the possession of a valid license to practice occupational therapy or physical therapy may be used to satisfy the credential requirement for a preliminary credential with a

specialization in administrative services. AB 1009 also provides, however, that a preliminary services credential issued to an individual based, in part, on one of those licenses does not authorize the supervision or evaluation of teachers, unless the employing LEA determines that the individual possesses additional educational or job experience, leadership training, or an advanced degree that qualifies the individual or the responsibilities of a school administrator. The bill also increases the minimum experience required for a preliminary administrative services credential from three years to five years, but also authorizes an LEA to request a waiver of up to two years of that experience for a candidate who completes a CTC-approved administrative services program, holds an appropriate clear or life prerequisite credential or license, and has been offered employment in an administrative position by the LEA.

Chapter 629, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1034 \(Ávila Farías\) - Teacher credentialing: programs of professional preparation: youth mental health.](#)

Current law requires, as a minimum requirement for a preliminary multiple subject, single subject, or education specialist teaching credential, the satisfactory completion of a program of professional preparation that provides specified experience, including health education. This bill expands what is required as part of health education experience to also include a basic understanding of youth mental health.

Chapter 46, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1119 \(Patel\) - Teacher credentialing: dual credentialing.](#)

AB 1119 requires the CTC, on or before March 1, 2027, to develop, establish, and promulgate through the regulatory process efficient routes for (1) teacher candidates to obtain a multiple subject credential, a single subject credential, or a PK–3 early childhood education specialist instruction credential, and an education specialist credential (known as dual credentialing), (2) existing teachers who hold a multiple subject credential, a single subject credential, or a PK–3 early childhood education specialist instruction credential to obtain an education specialist credential, and (3) existing teachers who hold an education specialist credential to obtain a multiple subject credential, a single subject credential, or a PK–3 early childhood education specialist instruction credential.

Chapter 390, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1123 \(Muratsuchi\) - Commission on Teacher Credentialing: membership.](#)

This bill authorizes the Governor to appoint to the CTC, as one of the 6 practicing teachers, a teacher with a commission-issued child development teacher permit who teaches at a licensed state-funded preschool or prekindergarten program. The bill also, upon the occurrence of the first vacancy of a public representative position on or after January 1, 2026, reduces the number of public representatives on the commission from 3 to 2 and requires the Governor to appoint instead one early childhood faculty member representing the early childhood higher education systems who teaches at either (1) an early childhood or child development baccalaureate degree program at one of the California State University or University of California campuses or (2) an associate degree program in one of the California Community Colleges' early childhood education programs.

Chapter 181, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1306 \(Muratsuchi\) - Teacher preparation programs: school districts and county offices of education: English learners.](#)

Current law requires the CTC to issue authorizations for a teacher to provide specific services to limited-English-proficient pupils. AB 1306 authorizes the CTC to approve a teacher education program offered by a school district or COE administered for purposes of earning a cross-cultural language and academic development certificate or a bilingual authorization certificate, including a California Teacher of English Learners program. The bill requires the CTC to apply the standards for approval of a program of professional preparation offered by a regionally accredited institution of higher education to a program of professional preparation offered by a school district or COE under these provisions.

Chapter 727, Statutes of 2025

Human Resources

[AB 406 \(Schiavo\) - Employment: unlawful discrimination: victims of violence.](#)

Makes technical and conforming amendments to Labor Code and Government Code sections to clarify timelines for enforcement by the Civil Rights Department (CRD) and the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE) regarding employee protections for victims of crime and family members of victims of crime. Specifically, AB 406 restores specified Labor Code sections that were deleted by AB 2499 (Schiavo, Chapter 967, Statutes of 2024) regarding an employee's rights to take time off work for jury duty, judicial proceedings to serve as a witness or answer subpoenas, or to obtain relief related to being a crime victim. The bill also clarifies that pending cases arising from employer violations of the above rights occurring on or before December 31, 2024 are still valid and within the jurisdiction of the DLSE but transfers jurisdiction to the CRD for such cases arising from employer violations on or after January 1, 2025.

Chapter 148, Statutes of 2025

[AB 642 \(Muratsuchi\) - Emergencies proclaimed by the Governor: school employee catastrophic leave.](#)

Current law authorizes the governing board of a school district or COE to establish a catastrophic leave program to permit employees of that school district or COE, if specified conditions are met, to donate eligible leave credits to an employee when that employee or a member of their family suffers from a catastrophic illness or injury. This bill extends the above-described authorization to the governing body of a charter school and authorizes the governing board or body of a school district, COE, or charter school to also permit employees to donate eligible leave credits to an employee impacted by a state of emergency that has been proclaimed by the Governor. This bill took effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Chapter 83, Statutes of 2025

[AB 692 \(Kalra\) - Employment: contracts in restraint of trade.](#)

AB 692, for contracts entered into on or after January 1, 2026, makes it unlawful to include in any employment contract, or to require a worker to execute as a condition of employment or a work relationship a contract that includes, specified contract terms, including a term that imposes any penalty, fee, or cost on a worker if the worker's employment or work relationship with a specific

employer terminates. The bill further declares these contracts as contracts that restrain a person from engaging in a lawful profession, trade, or business, and as void and contrary to public policy.

Chapter 703, Statutes of 2025

[AB 858 \(Lee\) - Employment: rehiring and retention: displaced workers.](#)

Until December 31, 2025, current law (1) requires an employer to offer its laid-off employees specified information about job positions that become available for which the laid-off employees are qualified, and to offer positions to those laid-off employees based on a preference system, in accordance with specified timelines and procedures and (2) prohibits an employer from refusing to employ, terminating, reducing compensation, or taking other adverse action against a laid-off employee for seeking to enforce their rights under these provisions. For these purposes, a “laid-off employee” means an employee who was employed by the employer for 6 months or more and whose most recent separation from active employment by the employer occurred on or after March 4, 2020, and was due to a reason related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This bill extends operation of these provisions until January 1, 2027.

Chapter 280, Statutes of 2025

[SB 294 \(Reyes\) - The Workplace Know Your Rights Act.](#)

This bill establishes the Workplace Know Your Rights Act, which requires an employer, on or before February 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, to provide a stand-alone written notice to each current employee of specified workers’ rights, including the right to workers compensation benefits, the right to notice of inspection by immigration agencies, protection against unfair immigration-related practices against a a person exercising protected rights, the right to organize or union, and constitutional rights when interacting with law enforcement in the workplace. SB 294 also requires an employer to provide the written notice to each new employee upon hire and to provide the written notice annually to an employee’s authorized representative, if any. Under the bill, the Labor Commissioner must develop a template notice that an employer may use to comply with the notice requirement as well as post the template notice on its website on or before January 1, 2026, and post an updated template notice annually thereafter.

Chapter 667, Statutes of 2025

[SB 513 \(Durazo\) - Personnel records.](#)

Current law grants current and former employees, or their representative, the right to inspect and receive a copy of personnel records maintained by the employer relating to the employee’s performance or to any grievance concerning the employee and makes it a crime for an employer to violate this right. This bill provides that personnel records relating to the employee’s performance include education and training records and requires an employer who maintains education and training records to ensure those records include (1) the name of the employee, (2) the name of the training provider, (3) the duration and date of the training, (4) the core competencies of a training, and (5) the resulting certification or qualification.

Chapter 654, Statutes of 2025

[SB 521 \(Gonzalez\) - Public employment: disqualification.](#)

Current law disqualifies a public employee from any public employment for 5 years if the employee is convicted of any felony involving accepting or giving, or offering to give, a bribe, the embezzlement of

public money, extortion or theft of public money, perjury, or conspiracy to commit any of those crimes arising directly out of their official duties. SB 521 expands that provision to include any felony involving a conflict of interest. For purposes of these provisions, a “public employee” is defined as any person employed at will for the purposes of providing services to an elected public officer who take public office, or is reelected to public office, on or after January 1, 2013.

Chapter 92, Statutes of 2025

[SB 590 \(Durazo\) - Paid family leave: eligibility: care for designated persons.](#)

Current law establishes a family temporary disability insurance program, for the provision of wage replacement benefits for up to 8 weeks to workers who take time off work for prescribed purposes, including to care for a seriously ill family member. This bill, commencing July 1, 2028, expands eligibility for benefits under the paid family leave program to include individuals who take time off work to care for a seriously ill designated person. A “designated person” is defined to mean any care recipient related by blood or whose association with the individual is the equivalent of a family relationship.

Chapter 772, Statutes of 2025

[SB 642 \(Limón\) - Employment: payment of wages.](#)

SB 642 makes various changes to the state’s Equal Pay Act, including revising the definition of “pay scale” to mean a good faith estimate of the salary or hourly range that the employer reasonably expects to pay for the position upon hire, extending the statute of limitations on civil actions to recover wages to no later than three years after the last date the cause of action occurs (up from two years), and entitling an employee to obtain relief for the entire period of time in which a violation exists but not to exceed 6 years.

Chapter 468, Statutes of 2025

Labor Relations

[AB 288 \(McKinnor\) - Employment: labor organization and unfair practices.](#)

Under existing law, PERB has the power and duty to investigate an unfair practice charge and to determine whether the charge is justified and the appropriate remedy for the unfair practice. The federal National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) establishes a comprehensive statutory scheme regulating unfair labor practices on the part of employers and labor organizations in industries affecting interstate commerce, and vests in the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) the power to conduct elections to determine employee representatives and to prevent unfair labor practices affecting commerce. This bill expands the Public Employment Relations Board’s (PERB’s) jurisdiction by authorizing a worker, under specified circumstances, to petition PERB to protect and enforce prescribed rights, including, among other circumstances, if the worker is employed in a position subject to the NLRA but the NLRB expressly or impliedly cedes jurisdiction. The bill authorizes PERB to, among other things, decide unfair labor practice cases, as specified, pursuant to a specified timeline and order all appropriate relief for a violation, including civil penalties, as prescribed. In order to pursue relief from PERB, the bill requires a covered worker or their representative to file an unfair practice charge or petition that includes specified information, including, where applicable, the original charge or petition filed with the NLRB. The bill would require PERB to hold the supporting documentation and evidence confidential

and maintain it as part of its investigatory file and would exempt this documentation and evidence from the California Public Records Act.

Chapter 139, Statutes of 2025

Retirement/CalSTRS/CalPERS

[AB 1067 \(Quirk-Silva\) - Public employees' retirement: felony convictions.](#)

The California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013 requires a public employee who is convicted of any state or federal felony for conduct arising out of, or in the performance of, the public employee's official duties in pursuit of the office or appointment, or in connection with obtaining salary, disability retirement, service retirement, or other benefits, to forfeit all accrued rights and benefits in any public retirement system from the earliest date of the commission of the felony to the date of conviction, and prohibits the public employee from accruing further benefits in that public retirement system. AB 1067 requires a public employer that is investigating a public employee for such misconduct, to continue the investigation even if the public employee retires while under investigation, if the investigation indicates that the public employee may have committed a crime. The bill also requires a public employer, if the investigation indicates that the public employee may have committed a crime, to refer the matter to the appropriate law enforcement agency, after which the public employer is authorized to close the investigation.

Chapter 388, Statutes of 2025

[SB 443 \(Rubio\) - Retirement: joint powers authorities.](#)

The Joint Exercise of Powers Act generally authorizes 2 or more public agencies, by agreement, to jointly exercise any common power, which may include hiring employees and establishing retirement systems. SB 443 requires a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to obtain approval from a retirement system prior to adding a new employer to the JPA and enrolling any of its employees into membership

Chapter 756, Statutes of 2025

[SB 853 \(Committee on Labor, Public Employment and Retirement\) - Public employees' retirement.](#)

This bill makes technical, non-substantive amendments to clean up and clarify specified portions of the Education and Government Codes regulating the California State Teacher's Retirement System (CalSTRS), the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS), and the County Employees Retirement Law of 1937 (CERL) retirement systems, including clarifying that CalSTRS members' "annual pay rate" is salary that the member could earn from each position the member holds during the school term, not from only one position the member holds during the term, and stating explicitly that the CalSTRS board has final authority for determining who is an employer for purposes of CalSTRS programs and whom the board may admit into CalSTRS membership.

Chapter 239, Statutes of 2025

Staff Shortage

[AB 378 \(Valencia\) - Education finance: Classified School Employee Summer Assistance Program.](#)

Current law establishes the Classified School Employee Summer Assistance Program, which an LEA can elect to participate in and which allows eligible classified employees working for a TK-12 school

district or COE to set aside a portion of their monthly paycheck during the school year to receive up to a dollar-for-dollar match from the state during the summer. This bill would add a JPA formed pursuant to the Joint Exercise of Powers Act consisting solely of school districts and COEs to the definition of a LEA for purposes of the program, thereby authorizing a JPA and its classified employees to participate in the program.

Chapter 258, Statutes of 2025

Workers Compensation

[AB 1398 \(Valencia\) - Workers' compensation.](#)

This bill, in order to facilitate the prosecution of workers' compensation fraud, clarifies that the existing laws on referrals for workers' compensation related-services do not preclude any other applicable laws and that an interested party in a workers' compensation claim must disclose in writing a financial interest in an entity providing services to a third-party payer or any other entity paid for services furnished pursuant to a referral.

Chapter 640, Statutes of 2025

Capitol Advisors Group has produced a set of comprehensive client briefs detailing new education laws that were passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2025. Each brief is organized by subject area and includes an executive summary highlighting major changes we think you should know about. Bills signed by the Governor take effect on January 1, 2026, unless the bill specifically states otherwise.

IMMIGRATION

CHANGES IN LAW
2025

 CAPITOL
ADVISORS

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Loya, Ruud & Romo

Governor Newsom signed two important measures addressing immigration enforcement and schools while vetoing another.

New Laws Address Immigration Enforcement on School Campuses.

[AB 49](#) by Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi (D-Torrance) tightens the rules for how schools interact with immigration enforcement on school campuses. Specifically, it prohibits local educational agency (LEA) personnel from permitting anyone engaged in immigration enforcement to enter a non-public area of a school site for any purpose without a valid judicial warrant or court order, and it bars the release of student, family, or employee information to immigration authorities unless disclosure is expressly required by law. The bill also tasks the State Attorney General with updating the state's model policy limiting assistance with immigration enforcement by December 1, 2025. LEAs must then adopt or update their local policies by March 1, 2026, maintain them, and furnish them to the California Department of Education (CDE) on request. The measure clarifies that LEAs can consult counsel and challenge warrants, subpoenas, or orders as appropriate, and it authorizes CDE monitoring/auditing of compliance.

[SB 98](#) by Senator Sasha Renée Pérez (D-Pasadena) requires K-12 LEAs to add a new notification procedure into their Comprehensive School Safety Plans (CSSP). When immigration enforcement is confirmed on a school site, the LEA must notify parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and staff. The notice must include the date/time and location of the confirmed enforcement and a link to resources (including your LEA's model policies), and it must not include personally identifiable information. LEAs must incorporate this protocol at the next regular safety plan review on or before March 1, 2026, and keep it in place through January 1, 2031. Parallel provisions apply to higher-ed campuses (CCC, CSU, Cal-Grant-eligible private schools), and K-12 LEAs may adopt stronger protections than the statutory floor.

Both AB 49 and SB 98 were urgency statutes, meaning they took effect immediately upon the Governor's signature.

The enactment of these bills puts California squarely on the side of keeping immigration enforcement off school campuses unless there's clear legal authority. Supporters frame that as protecting kids and calming families, critics will call it "sanctuary schools" and may try to challenge parts of it in court. For school leaders, the politics show up at the front office where you will be expected to ask for warrants, limit access to nonpublic areas, and notify your community, while keeping workable relationships with local law enforcement and federal agents. In many communities, school officials can expect pressure from both directions: families wanting strong protections and some law enforcement or elected

officials pushing back. The backing for these bills in Sacramento is strong, so a quick reversal is very unlikely. The bigger risk is confusion and potential court challenges as folks implement these new state laws.

Governor Vetoes Bill to Address Impact of Immigration Enforcement Activities on School Attendance.

Surprising to many, Governor Newsom vetoed [AB 1348](#) by Assembly Member Jasmeet Bains (D-Bakersfield), a bill that would have added immigration enforcement activity as a reason schools could seek a J-13 A Waiver from the state for lost attendance. In his veto message, Governor Newsom wrote,

“While I appreciate the author’s intent to protect school funding when students are absent because of immigration-enforcement activity, this bill overlaps substantially with existing law and program structures. Under current provisions, local educational agencies already have mechanisms to address attendance disruptions due to emergencies; the new waiver category proposed here is duplicative and poses significant cost pressures on the state during a period of constrained revenue growth.

“In addition, broader demographic shifts and federal enforcement patterns suggest that the fiscal impact of routine waiver use would exceed the assumptions presented during policy deliberations. California public schools must remain focused on improving chronic-absenteeism outcomes and reinforcing trust in families and communities — an objective best advanced through robust outreach, student-engagement strategies, and partnerships with community-based organizations rather than by creating new-funding waivers. For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.”

As immigration enforcement activities near schools continue around the state, we don’t think this issue is over. Watch for a similar measure to emerge again if attendance continues to be impacted and the current attendance recovery methods prove insufficient.

The Governor signed the following immigration bills:

Immigration

[AB 49 \(Muratsuchi\) - Schoolsites: immigration enforcement.](#)

This measure creates new legal obligations for districts, county offices, and charter schools to protect students and staff from immigration enforcement activities on campus. The bill prohibits school officials from granting access to any immigration enforcement officer unless that officer presents a valid judicial warrant or court order, and it bars LEAs from sharing student, family, or staff information with immigration authorities unless explicitly required by law. Under the new law, the Attorney General (AG) must update the model policies limiting assistance with immigration enforcement by December 1, 2025, and every LEA must adopt or update its local policy by March 1, 2026. LEAs must maintain and make these policies available to the California Department of Education (CDE) upon request, and the

CDE is authorized to monitor and audit districts to verify compliance. The measure took immediate effect as an urgency statute and applies to all K–12 LEAs.

Chapter 122, Statutes of 2025

[AB 419 \(Connolly\) - Educational equity: immigration enforcement.](#)

This measure requires all LEAs to make the AG’s “*Know Your Educational Rights: Immigration-Enforcement Action at California Schools*” guide visible and accessible to students and families. Specifically, each LEA must: 1) Post the guide in the administrative building at every school site; 2) Post the guide on the LEA’s website and each school’s website in every language provided by the Attorney General, and 3) Update the online posting the school year following any revisions made by the AG. The bill’s intent is to ensure immigrant students and families understand their rights to a free public education, the confidentiality of personal information, and how schools must handle immigration-enforcement activity. It builds on the protections in AB 49 (Muratsuchi) by increasing public visibility of state guidance.

Chapter 663, Statutes of 2025

[AB 495 \(Rodriguez, Celeste\) - Family Preparedness Plan Act of 2025.](#)

AB 495 establishes new procedures for schools, childcare programs, and families to ensure children remain safe and cared for if parents are detained, deported, or otherwise unavailable due to immigration or other crises. For childcare and preschool facilities, AB 495 prohibits staff from collecting immigration or citizenship information, mandates reporting of any law-enforcement or immigration enforcement requests to the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the AG, and requires the AG to develop model policies limiting enforcement actions at those facilities by April 1, 2026, which all state preschool programs must adopt by July 1, 2026. The bill also modifies the definition of “relative” for purposes of the caregiver affidavit. Specifically, relative would be changed to mean an adult who is related to the child by blood, adoption, or affinity within the fifth degree of kinship, including stepparents, stepsiblings, and all relatives whose status is preceded by the words “great,” “great-great,” or “grand,” or the spouse of any of these persons even if the marriage was terminated by death or dissolution.

Chapter 664, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1261 \(Bonta\) - Immigration: immigrant youth: access to legal counsel.](#)

This bill establishes a statewide program guaranteeing legal counsel for all unaccompanied undocumented minors in immigration proceedings in California. The bill responds to the federal government’s 2025 suspension of contracts funding legal aid for these children and ensures California fills that gap. Under the bill, the DSS must contract with qualified nonprofit legal service organizations or county public defender offices to provide representation beginning when a child is designated as an unaccompanied minor. Legal services extend to immigration court, federal filings, and related state proceedings needed to obtain immigration relief, unless the youth already has counsel. Contracts must prioritize nonprofits that lack federal funding and organizations experienced in asylum, trafficking, and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) cases. The measure also allows DSS to fund social work services to support minors in navigating legal and placement issues. “Immigrant youth” is defined as any minor residing in or formerly residing in California who entered the U.S. without a parent or guardian and lacks lawful immigration status.

Chapter 665, Statutes of 2025

[SB 81 \(Arreguín\) - Health and care facilities: information sharing.](#)

This measure expands California's "safe haven" protections to hospitals, clinics, and other health care facilities. The bill prohibits health care providers and facility personnel (including public and private hospitals, clinics, and physician organizations), from granting access to nonpublic areas of a facility to immigration enforcement officers unless they present a valid judicial warrant or court order. Health care entities must document and witness any denial of access and notify management or legal counsel immediately when enforcement agents appear. SB 81 also adds immigration status and place of birth to the definition of "medical information" under the Confidentiality of Medical Information Act (CMIA), explicitly prohibiting disclosure of that information for immigration enforcement purposes except under a court order or warrant. Facilities are required to designate treatment areas as "nonpublic," establish visitor documentation procedures, and train staff on how to respond to immigration inquiries. Covered facilities have 45 days from enactment to comply, and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) will review facility policies for compliance. The measure was enacted as an urgency statute, taking effect immediately.

Chapter 123, Statutes of 2025

[SB 98 \(Pérez\) - Elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education: immigration enforcement: notification.](#)

This bill adds new requirements for schools, county offices of education, and colleges to notify staff, students, and parents when immigration enforcement is confirmed on or near campus. The bill requires all K–12 school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools to update their CSSPs by March 1, 2026, or the next scheduled review, to include procedures for notifying parents, guardians, teachers, and staff if immigration enforcement occurs on school grounds. Notifications must protect privacy, avoid panic, and may include links to educational rights resources and counseling services. For colleges and universities, the bill mandates that each California Community College, CSU, and qualifying private institution (and requests UC participation) notify students, faculty, and campus staff when immigration enforcement is confirmed on campus. Notifications must include the date, time, and location of the enforcement activity and resource links but cannot include any personally identifiable information. These provisions apply through January 1, 2031, and allow LEAs to adopt stronger protections, if desired.

Chapter 124, Statutes of 2025

[SB 307 \(Cervantes\) - Public postsecondary education: immigration enforcement.](#)

This measure strengthens protections and academic continuity for undocumented students in California's public universities when immigration enforcement activity disrupts their studies. The bill requires the CSU and requests the UC to ensure that a student's inability to attend classes due to immigration enforcement does not affect their eligibility for in-state tuition under AB 540 or their access to financial aid, fellowships, housing, or campus services. It directs campuses to make "reasonable and good-faith efforts" to help affected students retain benefits and re-enroll seamlessly once they return. CSU must adopt a systemwide policy addressing how grades, withdrawals, and re-enrollment are handled for undocumented students who miss coursework because of immigration enforcement activity. The policy must include a timeframe during which a student can be re-enrolled with the same academic status they held before withdrawal upon written notice of intent to return. The

bill further requires Dreamer Resource Liaisons to assist students with accessing financial aid and support services when they face detention or deportation threats.

Chapter 668, Statutes of 2025

[SB 313 \(Cervantes\) - Vital records: birth certificates.](#)

SB 313 modifies California's birth certificate requirements to include the birthplace of each parent in the confidential medical and social portion of the certificate of live birth, beginning July 1, 2027, while ensuring that this information remains confidential and unavailable to the public. The measure directs the CDPH to revise birth certificate forms and digital systems accordingly and restricts access to this information solely to authorized public health and research personnel, as allowed under current law. The parental birthplace data will not appear on the publicly available portion of birth certificates, which helps protect immigrant families' privacy while supporting demographic and health research. The bill is a direct response to the 2025 federal executive order attempting to limit birthright citizenship.

Chapter 669, Statutes of 2025

[SB 580 \(Durazo\) - Attorney General: immigration enforcement policies.](#)

The bill expands California's sanctuary-state framework by requiring the AG to establish statewide model policies, audit criteria, and training standards for how all state and local agencies, including schools, interact with federal immigration authorities. Under the bill, the AG must, by July 1, 2026, publish model policies governing immigration-related interactions and the handling of data within state and local databases, including those managed by private vendors. Every state or local agency must adopt the AG's model policies (or equivalent) by January 1, 2027. The goal is to ensure that no state or local resources (personnel, facilities, or databases) are used to support federal immigration enforcement except as required by law. The AG's guidance will include training recommendations and audit criteria to ensure that data systems and staff practices comply with privacy protections and limit unauthorized access by immigration authorities. Agencies must review their database governance and staff protocols accordingly. While the bill applies broadly to all state and local entities, LEAs are directly affected because school records systems and student information databases are covered. This will require policy updates, privacy audits, and potential retraining for staff handling data that could be subject to federal requests. The bill builds on earlier "safe haven" measures (AB 49, AB 419, AB 495) by extending protections to the data systems themselves, preventing student and family information from being used for immigration enforcement.

Chapter 670, Statutes of 2025

Capitol Advisors Group has produced a set of comprehensive client briefs detailing new education laws that were passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2025. Each brief is organized by subject area and includes an executive summary highlighting major changes we think you should know about. Bills signed by the Governor take effect on January 1, 2026, unless the bill specifically states otherwise.

SCHOOL FINANCE

CHANGES IN LAW
2025



aa/rr Atkinson, Andelson
Loya, Ruud & Romo

The 2025 legislative session focused heavily on budget stability and accountability within a slower-revenue environment. The Governor signed a series of major budget and trailer bills shaping education finance and operations for the 2025–26 fiscal year.

The centerpiece is [AB 121](#) (Education Omnibus Trailer Bill), which sets the Proposition 98 Guarantee at \$114.6 billion, fully funds the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) with a 2.30% COLA, and delivers significant new investments in literacy, teacher development, and career education. Key allocations include \$1.7 billion for the Student Support and Professional Learning Grant to help schools address rising costs, \$215 million for literacy coaches, an additional \$150 million for CTE and career pathways, and an additional \$160 million to support the implementation universal school meals. The bill also strengthens budget oversight and LCAP compliance, enforces fiscal penalties for late adoption, and provides wildfire relief for affected local educational agencies (LEAs).

Complementing that, [SB 101](#) (Budget Act of 2025) establishes the overall \$321.1 billion state budget, including maintaining Proposition 98 funding stability and expanding total funding for the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (\$4.5 billion). Together, AB 121 and SB 101 ensure steady TK–12 funding growth despite projected fiscal headwinds.

[SB 147](#) (Education Finance Trailer Bill Clean-Up) fine-tunes implementation of several new programs, including aligning timelines for literacy professional development grants, expanding student teacher stipend funding, and clarifies that non-teacher interns are eligible for the Golden State Teacher Grant Program.

[SB 595](#) (Choi, R-Irvine) modernizes local investment and financial reporting laws, tightening timelines for required reports to the State Controller and extending investment flexibility for local agencies, changes that will affect county treasurers and district business officials managing pooled funds.

Finally, [SB 663](#) (Allen, D-Santa Monica), while not directly changing education programs, provides critical property tax relief for communities affected by the 2025 Los Angeles and Ventura County wildfires, ensuring that local schools in those regions are held harmless through state backfills under Proposition 98.

The Governor signed the following school finance bills:

School Finance

[AB 100 \(Gabriel\) - Budget Acts of 2023 and 2024.](#)

This bill alters the Budget Act of 2023 and the Budget Act of 2024 by amending and adding items of appropriation and making other changes. This bill took effect immediately upon signature by the Governor as a Budget Bill.

Chapter 2, Statutes of 2025

[AB 102 \(Gabriel\) - Budget Act of 2025.](#)

This measure changes the Budget Act of 2025 by amending, adding, and repealing items of appropriation and making other changes. This bill took effect immediately upon signature by the Governor as a Budget Bill.

Chapter 5, Statutes of 2025

[AB 118 \(Committee on Budget\) - Human services.](#)

This bill is a budget trailer bill implementing several human services provisions from the 2025–26 Budget Act that indirectly affect county offices of education and district partners involved in juvenile justice, child welfare, and social service coordination. The bill revises the Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant formula beginning in 2026–27, shifting funding to emphasize youth served in less restrictive, community-based programs and prohibiting allocations to any county operating juvenile facilities deemed “unsuitable” for confinement. Among other things, it requires counties to include detailed expenditure summaries and descriptions of their reentry and alternative programs in annual block grant plans. The measure also mandates child and family team meetings for children receiving family maintenance services, an important change for district liaisons who coordinate with social workers under foster youth or family support programs. For the CalWORKs program, counties must provide pre-populated semiannual renewal forms to participants, streamlining parent reporting and enrollment processes. AB 118 also tightens rules on Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) payments for out-of-state residential treatment facilities, limiting use to qualified, licensed programs and requiring annual reporting by county adoption agencies. The bill appropriates \$208.8 million for juvenile justice realignment and clarifies funding responsibilities between the state and counties under federal in-home support compliance rules.

Chapter 7, Statutes of 2025

[AB 121 \(Committee on Budget\) - Education finance: education omnibus budget trailer bill.](#)

This measure is the 2025 Education Omnibus Budget Trailer Bill, enacting the TK–14 components of the state budget and setting the Proposition 98 Guarantee at \$114.6 billion for 2025–26. It fully funds the Local Control Funding Formula with a 2.3% COLA and provides major one-time investments, including \$1.7 billion for a Student Support and Professional Development Block Grant, \$215 million for Literacy Coaches and Reading Specialists, and \$200 million for evidence-based literacy training. The bill allocates \$150 million for CTE and career pathways, \$160 million for universal school meals implementation, and \$300 million for student teacher stipends. It strengthens district and county budget oversight processes, imposes fiscal penalties for failing to adopt timely LCAPs, and

streamlines audit extensions, among other things. It also provides wildfire relief for LEAs impacted by the 2025 Los Angeles fires, including attendance and property tax protections.

Chapter 8, Statutes of 2025

[AB 123 Higher education budget trailer bill.](#)

This bill is the 2025 Higher Education Budget Trailer Bill, implementing the college and university provisions of the 2025–26 state budget. It funds new UC student housing construction at UC Davis and UC Santa Barbara and extends multiple higher education programs, including the Golden State Teacher Grant, Rising Scholars, and Native American Student Success initiatives. The bill requires the UC and CSU systems to begin developing a uniform set of academic standards for dual enrollment and college-credit coursework beginning in October 2025, promoting smoother K–16 alignment. It establishes the California Career Passport Program, administered by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, to create a digital record of students' academic progress, employment preparation, and credit for prior learning, funded at \$25 million. AB 123 also provides new funding for community colleges, including \$60 million for a Student Support Block Grant, \$20 million for emergency financial aid, \$15 million for Dreamer Resource Liaisons, and \$10 million each for healthy school food and firefighter training programs. It supports workforce recovery in regions affected by the Palisades and Eaton fires and continues the Credit for Prior Learning Initiative with up to \$15 million in funding.

Chapter 9, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1438 \(Gallagher\) - School finance: administrative employee-to-teacher ratio: Paradise Unified School District.](#)

This measure grants the Paradise Unified School District (PUSD) a three-year exemption, from fiscal years 2024–25 through 2026–27, from state penalties tied to exceeding the statutory administrative employee-to-teacher ratio. The bill acknowledges the district's ongoing recovery from the 2018 Camp Fire, which destroyed most of its facilities and led to steep enrollment declines, forcing the district to operate with higher administrative staffing levels as schools reopen. Without this relief, PUSD would face penalties exceeding \$245,000 per year, diverting resources from rebuilding efforts. The measure requires PUSD to submit a detailed report by September 1, 2026, to the California Department of Education, the Department of Finance, and legislative committees documenting its staffing ratios, reasons for noncompliance, student impact, and progress toward meeting state standards by 2026–27. The bill is an urgency statute, ensuring uninterrupted state funding during the district's recovery period.

Chapter 193, Statutes of 2025

[SB 101 \(Wiener\) - Budget Act of 2025.](#)

This bill enacts California's 2025–26 State Budget, a \$324.7 billion spending plan that preserves education stability despite slower state revenue growth assumptions. The budget continues targeted investments in literacy, teacher training, and extended learning, reinforcing the state's post-pandemic recovery strategy. For higher education, the budget restores prior UC and CSU base funding reductions, funds enrollment growth, and provides new one-time investments in student housing, CalBRIDGE research fellowships, and local journalism programs. Community colleges receive additional support through COLA adjustments, workforce development funds, and aid for apprenticeship and career pathway programs. SB 101 also allocates funding for wildfire recovery,

farm-to-school nutrition, and school construction projects, including those serving communities affected by recent disasters.

Chapter 4, Statutes of 2025

[SB 120 \(Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review\) - Early childhood education and childcare.](#)

This measure is the 2025–26 early childhood education and childcare budget trailer bill, implementing key policy and funding changes from the state budget. The bill suspends the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for childcare and preschool programs in 2025–26 but guarantees annual COLAs beginning July 1, 2026. It shifts all subsidized childcare and preschool programs, both direct contract and voucher-based, to reimbursement based on enrollment and families' certified need, a change aimed at stabilizing provider funding. SB 120 directs the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to report quarterly to the Legislature through July 2027 on implementation progress for rate reform and prospective payment systems. The bill sets legislative intent to replace the regional market rate system with a new cost-based rate model that reflects program quality, geography, and regulatory differences, ensuring equity across settings. It extends the "cost of care plus" monthly rate increases for all subsidized providers and links future increases to the statutory COLA formula. The measure also ensures that collective bargaining agreements with Child Care Providers United take precedence if any conflicts arise. Finally, SB 120 appropriates \$88.55 million from the General Fund to CDSS to support the transition to the new reimbursement model.

Chapter 13, Statutes of 2025

[SB 147 \(Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review\) - Education finance: education omnibus trailer bill.](#)

This bill is the 2025–26 K–12 Education Omnibus Trailer Bill, which makes the statutory changes needed to implement education provisions of the state budget. The bill refines implementation of several high-profile initiatives, including adjustments to the Literacy Instruction Professional Development Grants, aligning expenditure and reporting deadlines for smoother district compliance. It authorizes the CDE to charge modest fees to non-LEA organizations that submit literacy professional development programs for state approval, ensuring cost recovery for administrative review. SB 147 also increases funding for the Student Teacher Stipend Program's media campaign and grant management system from \$5 million to \$6 million, expanding outreach and administrative capacity. It clarifies that the Individualized Education Program (IEP) template must be translated into the top ten non-English languages in California and made available online, a move aimed at improving accessibility for families of students with disabilities. In addition, the bill explicitly extends eligibility for the Golden State Teacher Grant Program to include non-teacher interns, broadening access to aspiring educators in specialized or classified roles.

Chapter 744, Statutes of 2025

[SB 151 \(Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review\) - Early childhood education and childcare.](#)

This bill would extend the period in which reimbursement of state-subsidized childcare and development providers, license-exempt providers, and California state preschool family childcare home education network providers is based on the maximum authorized or certified hours of care to July 1, 2028.

Chapter 108, Statutes of 2025

[SB 595 \(Choi\) - Local government: investments and financial reports.](#)

This measure updates state laws governing local government financial reporting and investment practices, with implications for county offices of education and school districts that manage local investment pools or fiscal records. The bill revises the deadline for filing annual financial transaction reports with the State Controller's Office (SCO), allowing penalties if reports are not submitted within 10 months after the end of the fiscal year, instead of 20 days after notification. This aims to address widespread late filings, as more than 1,000 agencies failed to report on time in 2022–23. SB 595 also extends until 2026 key investment provisions that allow local agencies with over \$100 million in assets to hold a larger share of their surplus funds (up to 40%) in commercial paper and permits investment in securities that may yield zero or negative interest during certain market conditions. Importantly, the bill extends the maximum maturity for commercial paper from 270 to 397 days, providing greater flexibility and alignment with federal standards for qualified institutional investors. These changes are intended to modernize local investment practices while maintaining safeguards for risk management and transparency. The measure also clarifies that the SCO may extend financial reporting deadlines for local agencies under extenuating circumstances.

Chapter 323, Statutes of 2025

[SB 663 \(Allen\) - Winter Fires of 2025: real property tax: exemptions and reassessment.](#)

This bill provides urgent property tax relief for homeowners, nonprofits, and disabled veterans impacted by the 2025 Los Angeles and Ventura County wildfires, as well as the 2024 Mountain and Franklin fires. The bill allows affected property owners up to 24 months (instead of 12) to file disaster reassessment claims and extends the five-year rebuilding deadline to eight years for retaining base-year property tax values, giving victims more time to reconstruct destroyed homes and facilities. It directs county assessors to continue recognizing welfare exemptions for churches, nonprofits, and similar entities whose properties were destroyed, as long as owners show intent and progress toward rebuilding by December 31, 2033. The bill also clarifies that under the disabled veterans' exemption, a veteran's destroyed residence will continue to qualify as their principal residence during reconstruction if ownership and intent to rebuild are maintained. SB 663 grants assessors flexibility to determine the official date of property damage for disaster reassessment purposes, reducing bureaucratic delays. It applies similar protections to both residential and nonprofit properties and codifies that these provisions apply to disasters for which the Governor proclaimed a state of emergency. While the measure may reduce local property tax revenue by an estimated \$184 million, the state is expected to backfill the education share under Proposition 98.

Chapter 549, Statutes of 2025

Charter Schools

[SB 631 \(Richardson\) - Charter School Revolving Loan Fund.](#)

This bill, among other things, increases the maximum loan amount and the maximum lifetime loan limitation by \$250,000 to instead be \$500,000. It also revises and recasts the maximum repayment period of a loan, no longer makes the charter school solely liable for repayment of a loan in the event of a default, and revises criteria for receiving priority in the granting of loans. The bill requires moneys in the fund to instead be loaned at the interest rate described above or at a rate equal to 50% of the

interest rate paid by the state on the most recent sale of state general obligation bonds, whichever is less, except that the bill prohibits the interest rate from being set at a rate lower than 3%.

Chapter 776, Statutes of 2025

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SCHOOL SAFETY

CHANGES IN LAW
2025



aahr Atkinson, Andelson
Loya, Ruud & Romo

Comprehensive School Safety Plans (CSSPs) Expanded in Effort to Combat Childhood Assaults.

As mentioned in our [Human Resources Brief](#), earlier this year, the Fiscal Crisis & Management Assessment Team (FCMAT) released a [report](#) on the fiscal impact of recent changes to the statute of limitations for childhood sexual assault claims on public agencies, including local education agencies (LEAs). The report contained over 20 fiscal and policy recommendations for the Legislature to help with mitigation. In response to this report, and in order to increase student safety on campus, the Governor signed [SB 848](#) by Senator Sasha Renée Pérez (D-Pasadena), which included a number of the report's policy recommendations related to prevention and student safety.

We want to acknowledge that another bill, [SB 577](#) (Laird, D-Santa Cruz) looked to assist public agencies in tackling the immense financial impacts of these cases. That bill, however, did not make it to the Governor's desk. Look for this issue to receive more attention and discussion next year.

Board Policies on Safe School Environments

SB 848 declares the Legislature's intent that schools be "safe and nurturing places for pupils that are free of fear and threats of violence and free of violent crimes and sexual offenses committed by, or intended to be committed by, other pupils, school employees, volunteers, and contractors."

To this end, the bill requires each governing board of a school district, county board of education, and governing body of a charter school or private school to, before July 1, 2026, adopt written policies that promote safe environments for pupil learning and engagement. The written policies must explicitly address professional boundaries (i) between pupils and school employees, adult volunteers, and school contractors, (ii) among and between pupils, and (iii) among and between adults employed, volunteering, or under contract, as well as establish appropriate limits on contact during or outside of the schoolday between pupils and school employees, volunteers, and school contractors via social media internet platforms, text messaging, and other forms of communication that do not otherwise include the pupil's parent or guardians.

The bill also requires the same entities to adopt written policies, plans, or specifications regarding school facilities, and the furnishing of school facilities, that address classroom and nonclassroom environments to promote safe environments for learning and engagement that are easily supervised.

School Safety Plan

Noting that the issue of training and appropriate supervision of employees and others on school campuses is often raised during settlement negotiations and trials, the FCMAT report recommended that CSSPs be updated to include required policies “designed to improve supervision and protection of children.” SB 848 implements this recommendation by requiring an LEA’s school safety plan, the next time it is reviewed and updated, but no later than July 1, 2026, to include “procedures specifically designed to address the supervision and protection of children from child abuse or neglect or sex offenses.”

Sexual Assault Prevention Education

Citing recent efforts to train students regarding cyberbullying and the influences of school media, FCMAT also recommended that the Legislature mandate that same urgency regarding the training of students on the prevention of childhood sexual assault. In line with this recommendation, SB 848 requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), on or before July 1, 2026, to develop, disseminate to schools, and post on its website, resources and information on the following:

- Building awareness and understanding of appropriate boundaries regarding adult-to-pupil interactions and relationships, professional boundaries between pupils and school personnel and volunteers, and pupil-to-pupil interactions and relationships;
- Building awareness and understanding of the detection and indicators of inappropriate behaviors in adults and pupils, and strategies to reduce risk and establish healthy boundaries; and
- Options to report child abuse and assault, and inappropriate interactions and relationships, and to safely seek assistance.

Additionally, the bill requires the SPI to develop guidance on the appropriate means of instructing pupils regarding the prevention of abuse, including sexual abuse and assault, of pupils. It is important to note, however, that while FCMAT had recommended the Legislature mandate this instruction, SB 848 simply authorizes schools to annually provide the instruction, using the CDE-developed resources, information, and guidance. If a school chooses to provide the instruction, it must be delivered by certificated personnel who do not otherwise have regular contact with the pupils receiving the instruction and who receive continuation training on new developments in the understanding of abuse, including sexual abuse and assault, and instruction on current prevention efforts and methods.

Other HR-related Provisions

SB 848 also makes changes to applicant background checks and expands who qualifies as a mandated reporter as well as what must be included in annual mandated reporter training. More information about these provisions of the bill can be found in the HR Section ([linked above](#)).

Bill adds Clarity to School Smartphone Prohibition Law.

You may recall [AB 3216](#) (Hoover, Statutes of 2024) which enacted new policy around the use of smartphones by pupils on campus. The bill required the governing body of all school districts, county offices of education (COEs), and charter schools, to, by July 1, 2026, adopt policies either limiting or prohibiting the use of smartphones by pupils while on a schoolsite or otherwise under the supervision or control of an employee or employees of the school agency. As schools began rolling out these new policies, however, it became clear that there were potential conflicts with the CSSP.

Prior to AB 3216's enactment, schools were simply *authorized* to adopt these policies, and as part of that section of the Education Code, it is specified that students shall not be prohibited access to their smartphones in case of an emergency or in response to a perceived threat of danger. Some schools, however, had otherwise addressed pupil smartphone use in emergency situations within their CSSP; in some cases prohibiting or limiting smartphone use. With schools now being required to adopt a policy around pupil smartphone use, there was concern amongst some in the education community that there would be confusion between CSSPs that addressed smartphone use during an emergency, and the requirement in existing law that students be granted access to their smartphones during an emergency.

Enter [AB 962](#), also authored by Assembly Member Hoover (R-Folsom). Signed by the Governor, the bill makes clear that in instances where a school's CSSP addresses the use of smartphones by pupils during an emergency, the CSSP will supersede the existing requirement that students be given access to their smartphones in an emergency. To be clear, if a CSSP does not address pupil smartphone use in emergency situations, the requirement that pupils have access to their smartphones in an emergency situation would still apply.

LGBTQ+ Suicide Hotline to be Printed on Student ID Cards.

In an effort to provide support for students in the LGBTQ+ community, Assembly Member Mark González (D-Los Angeles) authored [AB 727](#). The bill requires public schools serving grades seven to twelve, as well as institutions of higher education, that issue student identification cards (ID cards) to include printed contact information for the Trevor Projects's LGBTQ+ suicide hotline. In authoring the bill, Assembly Member González, stated:

"FBI data shows that reported hate crimes against LGBTQ+ youth in schools more than doubled between 2018 and 2022. However, due to voluntary reporting policies, the true numbers are likely even higher... By requiring student ID cards for students in grades 7-12 and higher education to include The Trevor Project's 24/7 crisis hotline and text line and mandating annual updates to the CDE's website with LGBTQ+ support resources, AB 727 is a necessary step in ensuring that LGBTQ+ students receive the resources and support they need to thrive."

Student ID cards have become a common place for quick access to information for kids who might need help or who are dealing with mental health issues or other crises. Over the past several years, in fact, the state has continued to require different pieces of information to be published on student ID cards. For instance, in 2019, [SB 316](#) (Rubio, Statutes of 2019) required that schools serving students

in grade nine to twelve print the telephone number for the National Domestic Violence Hotline on the back of student ID cards.

To that end, when AB 727 was being considered by the Senate Education Committee this year, the staff pointed to a few issues that may be addressed down the road. In particular, the analysis of the bill pointed out the fact that student ID cards are of limited size and are quickly running out of room as more required information is added. They point to the fact, for example, that a QR code linking to the required resources could be a potential solution to allow for more robust and up to date information.

One last thing to note is that AB 727's requirements only apply to schools that issue student ID cards. To the extent a school does not issue ID cards, this new requirement would not apply - i.e., a school would not be required to *start* issuing ID cards to comply with the new law.

The Governor signed the following school safety bills:

Child Abuse

[AB 653 \(Lackey\) - Child abuse: mandated reporters: talent agents, managers, and coaches.](#)

The Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act requires a mandated reporter, as defined, to report whenever they, in their professional capacity or within the scope of their employment, have knowledge of or observed a child whom the mandated reporter knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect. This bill makes individuals employed as talent agents, talent managers, and talent coaches who provide services to minors, mandated reporters.

Chapter 379, Statutes of 2025

[AB 741 \(Ransom\) - Department of Justice: child abuse reporting.](#)

Current law requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to maintain the Child Abuse Central Index (CACI), which is an index of all reports of child abuse and severe neglect submitted by an agency mandated to make those reports. This bill requires the DOJ to monitor the CACI and notify the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program if a child abuse investigation record involving a CASA employee or volunteer is added to the CACI, and allows the DOJ to increase the fee for a CASA candidate's state and federal criminal history background check to be sufficient to cover the cost of processing subsequent child abuse investigation notifications from the CACI.

Chapter 619, Statutes of 2025

[SB 680 \(Rubio\) - Sex offender registration: unlawful sexual intercourse with a minor.](#)

The Sex Offender Registration Act requires a person convicted of specified crimes to register with law enforcement as a sex offender while residing in California or while attending school or working in California. This bill makes a defendant convicted of statutory rape subject to mandatory sex offender registration if there is more than a 10-year age gap with the minor.

Chapter 780, Statutes of 2025

Guns

[AB 383 \(Davies\) - Firearms: prohibition: minors.](#)

This bill authorizes the issuance of a search warrant for minors unlawfully in possession of a firearm, expands the exemptions prohibiting minors from possessing firearms, applies existing firearms relinquishment procedures to adjudicated minors, and disarms certain adjudicated minors until age 30.

Chapter 362, Statutes of 2025

School Safety

[AB 382 \(Berman\) - Pedestrian safety: school zones: speed limits.](#)

This bill reduces the school zone speed limit from 25 miles per hour to 20 miles per hour beginning January 1, 2031.

Chapter 555, Statutes of 2025

[AB 727 \(González, Mark\) - Pupil and student safety: identification cards.](#)

Commencing July 1, 2026, requires public schools that serve pupils in any of grades 7 to 12, inclusive, and public institutions of higher education, that issue pupil identification cards to additionally have printed on the identification cards the telephone number and text line for the Trevor Project's LGBTQ+ suicide hotline.

Chapter 483, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1005 \(Davies\) - Drowning prevention: public schools: informational materials.](#)

Existing law authorizes drowning or injury prevention organizations (DIPs) to provide informational materials, in electronic or hardcopy form, to a public school regarding topics relating to drowning prevention. This bill makes several changes to the authorizations and requirements of DIPs that provide informational materials to LEAs. Specifically, the bill requires DIPs to provide written evidence, in the form of a letter or document no longer than one page, to a school administrator, demonstrating that the informational materials provided by the DIP aligns with the drowning, drowning prevention, water safety, rescue, and swim skill lesson information found on the drowning prevention webpage of the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The bill further requires CDE to compile and make available on its website school-based water safety and drowning prevention resources.

Chapter 387, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1239 \(Dixon\) - Human trafficking: data.](#)

AB 1239 requires the DOJ to include on the OpenJustice Web portal information concerning arrests for human trafficking and the number of individuals reported as a victim of human trafficking, through the California Incident-Based Reporting System.

Chapter 393, Statutes of 2025

[SB 19 \(Rubio\) - Crimes: threats.](#)

This bill creates a new crime of threatening to commit a crime that will result in death or great bodily injury at a daycare, school, university, workplace, house of worship, or medical facility, punishable as an alternate felony-misdemeanor.

Chapter 594, Statutes of 2025

School Safety Plans

[AB 962 \(Hoover\) - Pupil safety: comprehensive school safety plans: use of smartphones.](#)

Current law requires the governing board of a school district, a county board of education, and the governing body of a charter school to, by July 1, 2026, develop and adopt a policy to limit or prohibit the use by its pupils of smartphones while the pupils are at a schoolsite or while the pupils are under the supervision and control of an employee or employees of that school district, COE, or charter school. Current law, however, requires that students have access to their smartphones in the case of an emergency or in response to a perceived threat of danger. This bill provides that if a CSSP addresses student smartphone use in emergency situations, the CSSP's provisions would apply.

Chapter 284, Statutes of 2025

[SB 848 \(Pérez\) - Pupil safety: school employee misconduct: child abuse prevention.](#)

In addition to numerous other requirements around employment and expansion of mandated reporters as it pertains to the CSSP, this bill requires the CSSP to include child abuse or neglect reporting procedures and additionally requires a CSSP, when it is next reviewed and updated, or by no later than July 1, 2026, to include procedures specifically designed to address the supervision and protection of children from child abuse or neglect and sex offenses.

Chapter 460, Statutes of 2025

Wildfires

[AB 1003 \(Calderon\) - Public health: emergency plans and wildfire research.](#)

Current law requires the State Department of Public Health to develop a plan with recommendations and guidelines for counties to use in the case of a significant air quality event caused by wildfires or other sources, including establishing policies and procedures that address respiratory protection and other protective equipment and devices and providing information to residents on what they should do if the air quality index hits a significant threshold. Current law also requires a county to develop a county-specific plan that addresses all of the recommendations and guidelines of the plan developed by the department. This bill requires the department's plan to be completed on or before June 30, 2027, posted on the department's internet website within 7 days of completion, and distributed within 14 days of completion to certain local and state entities and officers. It also requires the county-specific plan to incorporate a process to conduct outreach and communicate to the public and with key stakeholders about the plan.

Chapter 537, Statutes of 2025

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STUDENT SERVICES

CHANGES IN LAW
2025

CAPITOL
ADVISORS

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State Requires Schools to Start Phasing Out “Ultraprocessed Foods of Concern” Beginning in 2029.

On January 3, Governor Newsom issued an [executive order](#) (EO), citing the “emerging scientific evidence” linking ultraprocessed foods (UPFs) with increased health risks and directing state agencies to recommend potential actions to limit the harms associated with UPFs, including in school meals. Building on this EO, Assembly Member Jesse Gabriel (D-Encino) introduced, and the Governor signed, [AB 1264](#), which establishes a timeline by which the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) must establish a definition for “UPFs of concern” and “restricted school foods” and schools must begin phasing out their use on campus.

The bill’s enactment comes just a month after the federal government released its [Make Our Children Healthy Again Strategy](#), which is part of President Trump’s larger Make America Healthy Again initiative. With his eyes clearly on the federal stage, when announcing the signing of AB 1264, the Governor said:

California has never waited for Washington or anyone else to lead on kids’ health—we’ve been out front for years, removing harmful additives and improving school nutrition. This first-in-the-nation law builds on the work to make sure every California student has access to healthy, delicious meals that help them thrive.

The First Partner, Jennifer Siebel Newsom, who has made school nutrition one of her priorities during her tenure, added, “By removing the most concerning ultra-processed foods, we’re helping children stay nourished, focused, and ready to learn...While Washington debates how to ‘make America healthy again,’ they need not look any further than California.”

For his part, Assembly Member Gabriel, who is the current chair of the Assembly Budget Committee, has also become a champion of minimally processed foods in recent years. He authored [AB 2316](#) last year, which prohibits the use of specified dyes and other substances in school meals beginning December 31, 2027, and before that he ran [AB 418](#), the California Food Safety Act, which prohibited the sale of any food with certain substances beginning January 1, 2027. Both bills were signed by Governor Newsom and cited in his January EO.

The Assembly Member’s latest effort to address chemical additives in foods will be implemented in several stages:

- **June 1, 2028** - CDPH must adopt, in consultation with a number of entities including school food authorities, school nutrition directors and school nutrition programs managers as well as the California Department of Education (CDE), regulations to identify and define UPFs of concern and restricted school foods based on a number of factors, including whether a substance or group of substances is linked to health harms or adverse health consequences.
- **July 1, 2029** - Local educational agencies (LEAs) must begin to phase out UPFs of concern and restricted school foods.
- **July 1, 2032** - Vendors are prohibited from offering UPFs of concern or restricted school foods to schools.
- **July 1, 2035** - LEAs are prohibited from offering or selling foods or beverages containing UPFs of concern or restricted school foods to students.

It should be noted that while AB 1264 does establish a definition of a UPF, its intent is not to prohibit all UPFs in school foods but, rather, is specific to “UPFs of concern” and “restricted school foods.” Additionally, the prohibition does not apply to foods provided to schools by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foods in Schools program, which provides the majority of foods to schools.

New Laws to Ensure Students’ Unique Medical Needs are Better Served.

Governor Newsom approved two bills which, together, will provide clarity, direction and options for school nurses and other trained school health personnel in the administration of needed medical services for students. Most importantly, these two new laws will better prevent disruptions in student medical care and ensure that students with special healthcare needs receive uninterrupted support.

Under the Education Code, qualified designated personnel, including licensed vocational nurses (LVNs), in educational settings have been permitted to provide suctioning and tracheostomy care to students who have specialized physical health care needs. However, recent legislation, [SB 1436](#) (Roth, Statutes of 2022), which authorized the Respiratory Care Board to promulgate future regulations for LVNs, raised a concern that LVNs could be unintentionally prevented from continuing to provide these critical services in the educational setting. [SB 389](#) by Senator Rosilicie Ochoa-Bogh (R-Yucaipa) clarifies the confusion and ensures that LVNs working in educational settings under the supervision of a credentialed school nurse can continue to provide these key services to the students who need them regardless of any future changes in other areas of law.

Specifically, SB 389 allows the performance of suctioning and other basic respiratory tasks and services by LVNs when performed under the supervision of a credentialed school nurse.

Another bill in the student health space updates the education code as it pertains to epinephrine. Under current law, school districts, county offices of education (COEs), and charter schools are

permitted to provide emergency epinephrine auto-injectors to trained personnel and to permit trained personnel to utilize the auto-injectors to respond to a person suffering from anaphylaxis.

[SB 568](#), authored by Senator Roger Niello (R-Fair Oaks), expands the options for epinephrine delivery by authorizing schools to utilize “epinephrine delivery systems” rather than specifically using “epinephrine auto injectors.” With the FDA having recently approved epinephrine nasal spray for use by adults and children as young as four years old, this change in the law will give schools options on how to best serve their students. The bill further clarifies that the epinephrine delivery systems shall be made available at each schoolsite, and at the location of any state or federally subsidized child care program operated by or under contract with an LEA.

The Governor signed the following student services bills:

Alternative Education

[AB 952 \(Elhawary\) - Youth Offender Program Camp Pilot Program.](#)

Under current law, The Secretary of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation established the Youth Offender Program Camp Pilot Program, with the purpose of the program being to encourage youth offenders to commit to positive change and self-improvement with the goal of being law-abiding members of society upon release and to provide youth the opportunity to receive wildland firefighting training. AB 952 requires the Secretary to make the Youth Offender Program Camp Pilot Program permanent and authorizes the Secretary to expand the program to include some or all of California Conservation Camps.

Chapter 718, Statutes of 2025

Child Nutrition

[AB 593 \(Wicks\) - CalFresh: data sharing.](#)

Current law authorizes certain public entities, including the California Department of Education (CDE), to share data with the Department of Social Services (DSS) for the purposes of improving the administration of CalFresh, increasing CalFresh participation, and measuring the impact of CalFresh. This bill repeals that authorization.

Chapter 698, Statutes of 2025

[AB 1264 \(Gabriel\) - Pupil nutrition: restricted school foods and ultraprocessed foods of concern: prohibition.](#)

This bill defines “ultraprocessed food” and requires the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to adopt regulations on or before June 1, 2028 to define “ultraprocessed food of concern” and “restricted school foods.” The bill then requires schools to begin to phase out restricted school foods and ultraprocessed foods of concern no later than July 1, 2029 and, beginning July 1, 2032, prohibits a vendor from offering restricted school foods and ultraprocessed foods of concern to a school. The bill also, beginning July 1, 2035, prohibits an LEA from offering a nutritionally adequate breakfast or

lunch that includes restricted school foods or ultraprocessed foods of concern, except for foods provided by USDA Foods in Schools program, as well as prohibits a school from selling such food or beverages, except for foods sold as part of a school fundraising event.

Chapter 467, Statutes of 2025

Homeless/Foster Youth

[AB 677 \(Bryan\) - Pupil records and health: pupils experiencing homelessness: directory information and reporting.](#)

Current law authorizes a school district or COE to develop a schoolsite-based oral health assessment program and authorizes school districts, COEs, and charter schools to enter into a memorandum of understanding with a nonprofit eye examination provider to provide eye examinations to pupils at any schoolsite within the LEA. This bill authorizes the disclosure of directory information of a pupil identified as a homeless child or youth to facilitate an eye examination or an oral health assessment, unless the parent or a pupil who has been accorded parental rights has provided written notice to the school that they do not consent to the physical examination. The bill also requires directory information disclosed pursuant to this authorization to be disclosed only for the purpose of facilitating an eye examination or an oral health assessment.

Chapter 163, Statutes of 2025

[AB 896 \(Elhawary\) - Foster care: placement transition planning.](#)

Current law requires, prior to making a change in the placement of a dependent child, a social worker or placing agency to develop and implement a placement preservation strategy to preserve the dependent child's placement. This bill, among other things, requires each county child welfare agency to adopt a placement transition planning policy for supporting foster children who are transitioning between placement settings and who are transitioning from foster care to reunification, and requires that the policy ensures that foster children are provided the opportunity to provide input on their placement transition and provides guidance to social workers for obtaining input and sharing information in placement transition planning. When developing the planning policy, the bill requires the county welfare agency to consult with foster youth, caregivers, and tribes to create a policy that includes, among other things, consideration of a child's educational needs and how to maintain continuity in education, child daycare, and extracurricular and social activities.

Chapter 564, Statutes of 2025

Pupil Health

[AB 310 \(Alanis\) - Nevaeh Youth Sports Safety Act.](#)

The Nevaeh Youth Sports Safety Act requires a youth sports organization to ensure, by January 1, 2027, that its athletes have access to an automated external defibrillator (AED) during any practice or match. Current law requires the AED to be administered by a medical professional or other certified and qualified person designated by a youth sports organization. AB 310 delays the requirement to have access to an AED until January 1, 2028 and removes the requirement that it be administered by a medical professional. However, the bill also requires, by January 1, 2027, a youth sports organization to ensure that its coaches are certified to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)

and to operate an AED and to have a written emergency response plan that includes specific information, including the location and procedures to be followed during a sudden cardiac event.

Chapter 254, Statutes of 2025

[SB 389 \(Ochoa Bogh\) - Pupil health: individuals with exceptional needs: respiratory services: licensed vocational nurses.](#)

The Respiratory Care Practice Act establishes the Respiratory Care Board of California to license and regulate the practice of respiratory care. The act authorizes, among other things, a licensed vocational nurse (LVN) who is employed by a home health agency to perform respiratory tasks and services identified by the board. SB 389 also authorizes a LVN to perform suctioning and other basic respiratory tasks and services under the supervision of a credentialed school nurse. This bill also authorizes an individual with exceptional needs who requires specialized physical health care services to be assisted by a LVN under the supervision of a credentialed school nurse for the above-described basic respiratory services.

Chapter 582, Statutes of 2025

[SB 568 \(Niello\) - Pupil health: epinephrine delivery systems: schoolsites and childcare programs.](#)

Current law requires an LEA to provide emergency epinephrine auto-injectors in an accessible location upon need for emergency use by school nurses or trained personnel who have volunteered. This bill updates references to “epinephrine auto-injectors” to instead reference “epinephrine delivery systems,” requires the epinephrine delivery systems to be stored at each schoolsite, and expands the requirement to include childcare programs operated by or under contract with an LEA.

Chapter 322, Statutes of 2025

Student Services

[AB 749 \(McKinnor\) - Youth Sports for All Act.](#)

AB 749, entitled the Youth Sports for All Act, requires the State Public Health Officer to, on or before July 1, 2026, establish and convene the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Development of a California Department of Youth Sports to conduct a comprehensive study on the need for and feasibility of creating a centralized entity charged with supporting and regulating youth sports. The bill requires the Commission to submit the study to the Legislature and the Governor on or before January 1, 2028. Implementation of the bill’s provisions is contingent upon funding being available for this purpose. To this end, if funding is not available by the bill’s deadlines, the bill provides that the State Public Officer is then required to convene the Commission within 6-months of funding becoming available and the Commission is required submit its study within two years of funding becoming available.

Chapter 705, Statutes of 2025

[AB 932 \(Irwin\) - Community youth athletics programs: sex or gender discrimination.](#)

Current law prohibits a city, county, city and county, or special district from discriminating against any person on the basis of gender in the operation, conduct, or administration of community youth athletics programs or in the allocation of parks and recreation facilities and resources that support or enable these programs. This bill expands this prohibition to also apply to school districts, COEs, and

charter schools with regards to the operation conduct or administration of community youth athletics programs and in the allocation of school and recreation facilities and resources.

Chapter 628, Statutes of 2025

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TECHNOLOGY

CHANGES IN LAW
2025



Legislature and Governor Continue to Grapple with Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Like last year, there were dozens of bills introduced this session that sought to tackle the rapidly expanding and increasingly ubiquitous AI industry. Whether the bills looked to address issues directly impacting children, or AI generally, many made it to the Governor's desk.

While not specific to children or schools, we would be remiss in not noting that Governor Newsom signed [SB 53](#), authored by Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco). The bill targets large scale AI platforms and implements several new sweeping, first-in-the-nation policy changes to increase safety and transparency for these developers. Although not an exhaustive list, some of the new policies include but are not limited to: requiring that developers publish transparency reports before publishing a new or significantly modified version of an existing model, transmitting to the Office of Emergency Services (OES) a summary of any assessments of catastrophic risk, and also requiring OES to establish a mechanism to be used by a developer or a member of the public to report a critical safety incident. The bill also installs whistleblower protections for employees of developers when disclosing information about activities that pose a specific and substantial danger to public health or safety resulting from catastrophic risk.

In addition to signing SB 53, two of the bills most relevant to child safety were dealing with installing guardrails for companion chatbots. A common theme we saw throughout both the Legislative process and the Governor's actions on these bills was the attempt to strike a very delicate balance between wanting to protect consumers and, specifically children, while maintaining innovation in the space. To that end, one of the highest profile bills was vetoed, while one dealing with the same issue was signed. [AB 1064](#) by Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (D-Orinda) would have put in place prescriptive guidelines for AI chatbots being used by minors. In his veto message, the Governor noted:

"While I strongly support the author's goal of establishing necessary safeguards for the safe use of AI by minors, AB 1064 imposes such broad restrictions on the use of conversational AI tools that it may unintentionally lead to a total ban on the use of these products by minors... We cannot prepare our youth for a future where AI is ubiquitous by preventing their use of these tools altogether."

The veto of AB 1064 came on the heels of the Governor signing [SB 243](#) (Padilla, D-San Diego). This bill sought to tackle the same issues as AB 1064, but in the Governor's eyes, was more narrowly and appropriately tailored. In fact, he addressed SB 243 in the veto message of AB 1064, saying:

“This is why I recently signed SB 243 (Padilla), which requires chatbot platforms to establish protocols to detect, remove, and respond to instances of suicidal ideation, suicide, or self-harm expressed by users... As for younger users, SB 243 further requires operators to disclose to minors that they are interacting with AI, provide periodic reminders to take a break and that the chatbot is artificially generated, and prevent chatbots from producing sexually explicit material.”

Specifically, SB 243 requires operators of companion chatbot platforms to, if the operator knows a user is a minor, do all of the following:

- Disclose to the user that they are interacting with AI.
- Provide by default a clear and conspicuous notification to the user at least every three hours for continuing companion chatbot interactions that reminds the user to take a break and that the companion chatbot is artificially generated and not human.
- Institute reasonable measures to prevent its companion chatbot from producing visual material of sexually explicit conduct or directly stating that the minor should engage in sexually explicit conduct.

While SB 243’s provisions will likely not directly impact the work of school agencies, we know many curriculum platforms utilize interactive chatbots to assist students with learning. As these new provisions come online, it will be important for vendors to ensure their services are in compliance with the new law.

The outcomes of these two bills notwithstanding, the issue of how to regulate interactions between AI and children could go to California voters. Common Sense Media CEO, Jim Steyer, and former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy have announced they intend to file a ballot initiative around child safety and AI chatbots. It is likely this initiative will be much more closely aligned to, if not go further in its restrictions than, AB 1064. Additionally, we anticipate numerous bills to surface on the topic again next year. You may recall [SB 1288](#) (Becker, Statutes of 2024) required the California Department of Education to establish a working group to examine AI in schools, specifically, and to develop, by January 1, 2026, guidance for schools on the safe use of AI in education. With the Legislature returning for the 2026 Legislative year just days after the guidance is due, look for some of these bills to potentially impact schools directly.

Social Media Regulation also a Recurring Theme in Sacramento.

Another issue policymakers in the Capitol continue to try to address is the rise in mental health issues related to social media use and addiction in children. Mounting evidence suggests prolonged use of social media can lead to increased risks of anxiety and depression symptoms. In fact, in 2024, former Surgeon General Murthy called for safety warning labels on social media:

“It is time to require a surgeon general’s warning label on social media platforms, stating that social media is associated with significant mental health harms for adolescents. A surgeon general’s warning label . . . would regularly remind parents and adolescents that social media

has not been proved safe. Evidence from tobacco studies show that warning labels can increase awareness and change behavior.”

Aligning to this effort, Assembly Member Bauer-Kahan authored, and Governor Newsom signed, [AB 56](#). For users that are not reasonably determined to be over the age of seventeen, the bill requires covered platforms to do all of the following:

- For each calendar day a user initially accesses the platform, display a black box warning label detailing the Surgeon General’s warning about social media use and its significant associated mental health risks.
- Display the same warning label after three hours of cumulative use of the platform.
- Display the same warning label after each hour of cumulative use thereafter.

The warning label would be required to be displayed for a duration of no shorter than thirty seconds, occupy at least seventy five percent of the screen, and not be bypassable or be able to be clicked through.

In authoring the bill, Assembly Member Bauer-Kahan noted:

“We are in the midst of a global mental health crisis. In the last decade or so, young people around the world, have experienced a dramatic spike rates of depression, anxiety, self-harm, and suicide. The crisis is real, urgent, and getting worse. Mounting evidence shows that online addiction in children is a widespread problem, with troubling implications for their mental health and well-being... With AB 56 we’re responding to the U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy’s call that all users of social media be warned about the risks associated with heavy social media use.”

AB 56’s provisions become operative on January 1, 2027.

More Time to Respond to Public Records Act (PRA) Requests During a Cyberattack.

We continue to hear that school agencies are receiving PRA Requests more frequently and that these requests are increasingly onerous. Current law requires, within ten days of receipt of a PRA request, public agencies to determine whether the request, in whole or in part, seeks copies of disclosable public records in the possession of the agency and to promptly notify the person making the request of the determination and the reasons therefor. If the agency determines that the request seeks disclosable public records, the agency shall also state the estimated date and time when the records will be made available.

The law, however, provides for an extension in response time of up to fourteen days if a public agency can demonstrate an “unusual circumstance.” As written today, the law defines an unusual circumstance to mean any of the following:

- The need to search for and collect the requested records from field facilities or other establishments that are separate from the office processing the request.
- The need to search for, collect, and appropriately examine a voluminous amount of separate and distinct records that are demanded in a single request.
- The need for consultation, which shall be conducted with all practicable speed, with another agency having substantial interest in the determination of the request or among two or more components of the agency having substantial subject matter interest therein.
- The need to compile data, to write programming language or a computer program, or to construct a computer report to extract data.

[AB 370](#), authored by Assembly Member Juan Carrillo (D-Palmdale) addresses the fact that today, records are frequently kept electronically. Specifically, the bill adds to the list of “unusual circumstances” that qualify for an extension: *the inability of the agency, because of a cyberattack, to access its electronic servers or systems in order to search for and obtain a record that the agency believes is responsive to a request and is maintained on the servers or systems in an electronic format.*

It is important to note that this new unusual circumstance does not relieve an agency of its obligation to comply with the request if the requested record is maintained in a location other than on the electronic servers or systems affected by the cyberattack, or maintained in a nonelectronic format. It further only applies until the agency regains its ability to access its electronic servers or systems and search for and obtain records that may be responsive to the request.

With both the frequency and intensity of PRAs on the rise, we anticipate there could be more movement on this issue next year. However, any changes to PRAs will likely need to be narrowly tailored and highly focused.

The Governor signed the following technology bills:

Artificial Intelligence

[AB 853 \(Wicks\) - California AI Transparency Act.](#)

This bill requires large online platforms to develop a way for users to easily access provenance data of uploaded content. The bill also requires capture device manufacturers to include features on their products that enable users to include provenance data in the content that they capture. These requirements, coupled with [SB 942](#) (Becker, Statutes of 2024), create a comprehensive disclosure and detection framework that enable the large-scale classification of content as either authentic or artificial.

Chapter 674, Statutes of 2025

[AB 979 \(Irwin\) - California Cybersecurity Integration Center: artificial intelligence.](#)

AB 979 requires the California Cybersecurity Integration Center, in coordination with the Office of Information Security, the Government Operations Agency, and relevant industry groups, to develop a California AI Cybersecurity Collaboration Playbook. This initiative will facilitate information sharing about threats to AI systems to promote safe deployment. Critically, the bill mandates reporting mechanisms for state contractors and vendors providing AI services, requiring them to disclose known threats and vulnerabilities.

Chapter 285, Statutes of 2025

[SB 53 \(Wiener\) - Artificial intelligence models: large developers.](#)

This bill requires large AI developers to publish safety frameworks, disclose transparency reports, and report critical safety incidents to the OES. Additionally, this bill creates enhanced whistleblower protections for employees reporting AI safety violations and establishes a consortium to design a framework for “CalCompute,” a public cloud platform to expand safe and equitable AI research.

Chapter 138, Statutes of 2025

[SB 243 \(Padilla\) - Companion chatbots.](#)

SB 243 imposes new requirements on operators of companion chatbots. For all users, the bill clarifies that if a reasonable person interacting with a companion chatbot would be misled to believe that the person is interacting with a human, an operator shall issue a clear and conspicuous notification indicating that the companion chatbot is artificially generated and not human. Further, if the operator knows a user is a minor, it shall do all of the following:

- Disclose to the user that the user is interacting with AI.
- Provide by default a clear and conspicuous notification to the user at least every three hours for continuing companion chatbot interactions that reminds the user to take a break and that the companion chatbot is artificially generated and not human.
- Institute reasonable measures to prevent its companion chatbot from producing visual material of sexually explicit conduct or directly stating that the minor should engage in sexually explicit conduct.

Chapter 677, Statutes of 2025

[SB 524 \(Arreguín\) - Law enforcement agencies: artificial intelligence.](#)

This bill requires every law enforcement agency to maintain a policy that requires an AI-generated official report to identify the type of AI program used to generate the report and include the signature of the officer who prepared the official report.

Chapter 587, Statutes of 2025

Data Privacy

[SB 446 \(Hurtado\) - Data breaches: customer notification.](#)

Current law requires an individual or a business that conducts business in California, and that owns or licenses computerized data that includes personal information, to disclose a breach of the security of

the system following discovery or notification of the breach in the security of the data to a resident of California whose unencrypted personal information was compromised and requires that disclosure to be made in the most expedient time possible and without unreasonable delay, consistent with the legitimate needs of law enforcement or any measures necessary to determine the scope of the breach and restore the reasonable integrity of the data system. This bill requires that data breach disclosure to be made within 30 calendar days of discovery or notification of the data breach but authorize s an individual or business to delay the disclosure to accommodate the legitimate needs of law enforcement or as necessary to determine the scope of the breach and restore the reasonable integrity of the data system.

Chapter 319, Statutes of 2025

Technology

[AB 56 \(Bauer-Kahan\) - Social media: warning labels.](#)

This bill enacts the Social Media Warning Law that requires a covered platform to display a black box warning to users not reasonably believed to be over the age of seventeen each day the user initially accesses the social media platform, again after three hours of cumulative active use, and thereafter at least once per hour of cumulative active use.

Chapter 671, Statutes of 2025

[AB 370 \(Carrillo\) - California Public Records Act: cyberattacks.](#)

The California Public Records Act requires state and local agencies to make their records available for public inspection. Current law requires each agency, within 10 days of a request for a copy of records, to determine whether the request seeks copies of disclosable public records in possession of the agency and to promptly notify the person of the determination and the reasons therefor. Current law authorizes that time limit to be extended by no more than 14 days under unusual circumstances. This bill expands the definition of unusual circumstances to include the inability of the agency, because of a cyberattack, to access its electronic servers or systems in order to search for and obtain a record that the agency believes is responsive to a request and is maintained on the servers or systems in an electronic format.

Chapter 34, Statutes of 2025

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