CLAIMS AND ACTIONS AGAINST THE DISTRICT

The Governing Board desires to conduct district operations in a manner that minimizes risk, protects district resources, and promotes the health and safety of students, staff, and the public. Any and all claims for money or damages against the district shall be presented to and acted upon in accordance with the Government Claims Act or other applicable state or district procedures, as well as the district's Joint Powers Authority (JPA) agreement or other insurance coverage.

(*cf. 3530 – Risk Management/Insurance*)
(*cf. 5143 – Insurance*)

Any claim for money or damages not governed by the Government Claims Act (Government Code 810-996.6) or specifically excepted by Government Code 905 shall be presented and acted upon in accordance with district-established procedures consistent with the manner and time limitations specified in this Board policy. (Government Code 935)

Unless otherwise provided by law, a written claim shall be presented to and acted upon by the Board in accordance with such procedures prior to filing a lawsuit against the district for money or damages.

Upon notice to the district of a claim, the Superintendent and/or ~~designee~~ Assistant Superintendent Business Services shall take all necessary steps to protect the district's rights under any applicable contractual agreements, including the right to indemnification from its insurance or other coverage provider.

Time Limitations
The following time limitations apply to the presentation of claims for money or damages against the district:

1. Claims relating to a cause of action for death or for injury to a person, personal property, or growing crops shall be presented to the Board not later than six months after the accrual of the cause of action (Government Code 911.2)

2. Claims relating to any other cause of action subject to the Government Claims Act shall be filed not later than one year after the accrual of the cause of action (Government Code 911.2)

3. Claims relating to childhood sexual assault and other causes of action which are specifically excepted from the Government Claims Act by Government Code 905, that are subject to a claims presentation procedure in another statute or regulation, shall be presented to the Board in accordance with the applicable governing statute or regulation (Government Code 905)

4. Claims relating to any cause of action which is specifically excepted from the Government Claims Act by Government Code 905 but is not governed by any other claim presentation statute or regulation shall be presented to the Board within the time limits specified in Items #1 and 2 above, depending on the applicable cause of action (Government Code 911.2, 935)

Receipt of Claims

A claim shall be deemed presented and received when delivered to the district office or deposited in a post office, mailbox, sub-post office, substation, mail chute, or other similar facility maintained by the U.S. government, in a sealed envelope properly addressed to the district office with postage paid, or when otherwise actually received in the district office or by the Board secretary or clerk. (Government Code 915, 915.2)

A claim may be submitted electronically in the manner specified by the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent of Business Services. (Government Code 915, 915.2)

Upon receipt of a claim against the district pursuant to the Government Claims Act, the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent of Business Services shall promptly provide written notice to the district's JPA or insurance carrier in accordance with the applicable conditions of coverage.

Review of Contents of the Claim

The Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent of Business Services shall review any claim received to ensure that the claim contains all of the following information as specified in Government Code 910 and 910.2:

1. The name and post office address of the claimant

2. The post office address to which the person presenting the claim desires notices to be sent

3. The date, place, and other circumstances of the occurrence or transaction which gave rise to the claim asserted

4. A general description of the indebtedness, obligation, injury, damage, or loss incurred insofar as it may be known at the time of presentation of the claim

5. The name(s) of the district employee(s) causing the injury, damage, or loss, if known

6. The amount claimed if it totals less than $10,000, including the estimated amount of any prospective injury, damage, or loss, insofar as it may be known at the time of the claim, together with the basis of computation of the amount claimed

   If the amount claimed exceeds $10,000, the dollar amount shall not be included in the claim and the claimant shall indicate whether the claim is a limited civil case as specified in Code of Civil Procedure 85 and 86.

7. The signature of the claimant or the person acting on the claimant's behalf

Notice of Claim Insufficiency

If a claim is found insufficient or not to satisfy the form requirements under Government Code 910 and 910.2, the Board or Superintendent shall, within 20 days of receipt of the claim, provide a notice in the manner specified in Government Code 915.4 that states the particular defects or omission in the claim. (Government Code 910.8)

The Board shall not act upon the claim until at least 15 days after such notice is given.

(Government Code 910.8) **Amendment to Claims**

Within the time limits provided in "Time Limitations" above or prior to final action by the Board, whichever is later, a claim may be amended if, as amended, it relates to the same transaction or occurrence which gave rise to the original claim. (Government Code 910.6)

Late Claims

When a claim that is required to be presented not later than six months after the accrual of the cause of action, as specified in "Time Limitations" above, is not presented within that time, an application to present a late claim may be presented to the Board, in the manner specified in Government Code 915 and 915.2, within a reasonable time not to exceed one year after the accrual of the cause of action. The application shall include the proposed claim and shall state the reason for the delay in presenting the claim. (Government Code 911.4)

If the claim is presented late and is not accompanied by an application to present a late claim, the Board or Superintendent shall, within 45 days, give written notice, in the manner specified in Government Code 911.3, that the claim was not presented timely and that it is being returned without further action. (Government Code 911.3)

The Board shall grant or deny the application to present a late claim within 45 days after it is presented. This 45-day period may be extended by written agreement of the claimant and the Board provided that such agreement is made before the expiration of the 45-day period. (Government Code 911.6)

The Board shall grant the application to present a late claim where one or more of the following conditions are
applicable: (Government Code 911.6)

1. The failure to present the claim was through mistake, inadvertence, surprise, or excusable neglect and the district was not prejudiced in its defense regarding the claim by the claimant's failure to present the claim within the time limit

2. The person who sustained the alleged injury, damage, or loss was a minor during all of the time specified for presentation of the claim

3. The person who sustained the alleged injury, damage, or loss was physically or mentally incapacitated during all of the time specified for presentation of the claim and the disability was the reason the person failed to present the claim

4. The person who sustained the alleged injury, damage, or loss died before the expiration of the time specified for the presentation of the claim

If the application to present a late claim is denied, the claimant shall be given notice in substantially the same form as set forth in Government Code 911.8 and in the manner specified in Government Code 915.4.

If the Board does not take action on the application to present a late claim within 45 days, the application shall be deemed to have been denied on the 45th day unless the time period has been extended, in which case it shall be denied on the last day of the period specified in the extension agreement. (Government Code 911.6)

Action on Claims

Within 45 days after the presentation or amendment of a claim, the Board shall take action on the claim. This time limit may be extended by written agreement between the district and the claimant before the expiration of the 45 day period. If the 45-day period has expired, the time limit may be extended if legal action has not commenced or been barred by legal limitations. (Government Code 912.4)

The Board may act on the claim in one of the following ways: (Government Code 912.4, 912.6)

1. If the Board finds that the claim is not a proper charge against the district, the claim shall be rejected

2. If the Board finds that the claim is a proper charge against the district and is for an amount justly due, the claim shall be allowed

3. If the Board finds that the claim is a proper charge against the district but is for an amount greater than is justly due, the Board shall either reject the claim or allow it in the amount justly due and reject it as to the balance

4. If legal liability of the district or the amount justly due is disputed, the Board may reject or compromise the claim

5. If the Board takes no action on the claim, the claim shall be deemed rejected

In accordance with Government Code 935.4, the Board delegates to the Superintendent the authority to allow, compromise, or settle claims of $50,000 or less pursuant to any conditions of coverage in the district's JPA agreement or insurance coverage.

If the Board, or Superintendent when appropriate, allows the claim, in whole or in part, or compromises the claim and the claimant accepts the amount allowed or offered to settle the claim, the Board may require the claimant to accept it in settlement of the entire claim. (Government Code 912.6)

The Board or Superintendent shall transmit to the claimant written notice of action taken or of inaction which is deemed rejection. The notice shall be in the form set forth in Government Code 913 and shall be provided in the manner specified in Government Code 915.4. (Government Code 913)

Registry of Public Agencies

Within 10 days of any change in the full, legal name of the district, the mailing address of the Board, or the names, title, and address of the Board president, the Board clerk or secretary, or other Board members, the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent of Business Services shall file the updated information with the Secretary of State and the County Clerk. (Government Code 53051

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

35200	Liability for Debts and Contracts
35202	Claims Against Districts; Applicability of Government Code

CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE

340.1	Damages Suffered as Result of Childhood Sexual Abuse

GOVERNMENT CODE

800	Cost in Civil Actions
810-996.6	Claims and Actions Against Public Entities
6500-6536	Joint Exercise of Powers
53051	Information Filed with Secretary of State and County Clerk

PENAL CODE

72	Fraudulent Claims

COURT DECISIONS

City of Stockton v. Superior Court, (2007) 42 Cal. 4th 730

Connelly v. County of Fresno, (2006) 146 Cal. App. 4th 29

CSEA v. South Orange Community College District, (2004) 123 Cal. App. 4th 574 CSEA v. Azusa Unified School District, (1984) 152 Cal. App. 3d 580

Management Resources:

WEB SITES

California Secretary of State's Office: http://www.sos.ca.gov