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California State Senate

EDUCATION



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AGENDA

Wednesday, April 8, 2026
9 a.m. -- 1021 O Street, Room 2100

MEASURES HEARD IN FILE ORDER

1. SB 1048 Becker State Seal of Climate Literacy.
- *2. SB 1107 Stern School facilities: shade structures.
- *3. SB 1188 Archuleta Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps: home instruction, independent study, and private schools.
4. SB 1262 Archuleta Education finance: community colleges: general fund balance.
5. SB 1347 Niello Pupil health: emergency stock albuterol inhalers.
6. SB 1154 Reyes Public contracts: best value procurement: community college districts.
7. SB 1255 Reyes Postsecondary education: Designation of California Hispanic-Serving Institutions.
8. SB 1222 Choi Career Technical Education Technical Assistance and Equity Pilot Program Act.
9. SB 1378 Ochoa Bogh California Excellence in Service Learning Designation Program.
10. SB 1101 Pérez Postsecondary education: sharing personal information: notice.

*Consent Items

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 1048	Hearing Date:	April 8, 2026
Author:	Becker		
Version:	April 6, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Therresa Austin		

Subject: State Seal of Climate Literacy.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes the voluntary State Seal of Climate Literacy (SSCL) to be affixed to the diploma of qualifying high school graduates and requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to recommend criteria under which participating local educational agencies (LEA) may award said seal to qualified students. This bill also requires participating LEAs to collect and annually submit to the California Department of Education (CDE) specified data related to SSCL participation.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Office of Education and the Environment (OEE) in the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) and requires the OEE to implement a statewide environmental education program. (Public Resources Code (PRC) § 71300)
- 2) Requires the OEE, under the direction of CalRecycle and in cooperation with the CDE and the State Board of Education (SBE), to develop and implement a unified education strategy of the environment for elementary and secondary schools that does all of the following:
 - a) Coordinate instructional resources and strategies for providing active pupil participation in onsite conservation efforts.
 - b) Promote service-learning opportunities between schools and local communities.
 - c) Assess the impact of the unified education strategy on the achievement and resource conservation of participating pupils. (PRC § 71300)
- 3) Requires the CDE and SBE, in cooperation with CalRecycle, to develop and implement, to the extent feasible, a teacher training and implementation plan that guides the phased implementation of the unified education strategy in elementary, middle, and high school programs, for the education of pupils, faculty, and administrators on the importance of integrating environmental concepts and programs in schools. (PRC § 71300)

- 4) Requires the OEE, as part of the unified education strategy, to develop education principles for the environment for elementary and secondary school pupils, in cooperation with the Secretary for Environmental Protection, the Natural Resources Agency, the CDE, and the SBE. (PRC § 71301)
- 5) Requires that the environmental principles and concepts be aligned to the academic content standards adopted by the SBE in the subjects of English language arts, science, history-social science, health, and, to the extent practicable, mathematics, and shall not conflict with any academic content standards. Requires that the environmental principles and concepts be used to do all of the following:
 - a) To direct state agencies that include environmental education components for elementary and secondary education in regulatory decisions or enforcement actions.
 - b) To align state agency environmental education programs and materials that are developed for elementary and secondary education.
 - c) For provision, by the office, of technical assistance to state agencies involved in the integration of the environmental principles and concepts in programs they operate, and in the integration of the environmental principles and concepts into state curriculum standards, frameworks, and instructional materials, as specified. (PRC § 71301)
- 6) Establishes the voluntary State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE), affixed to the diploma or transcript of an eligible student, to encourage, and create pathways for, students in elementary and secondary schools to become civically engaged in democratic governmental institutions at the local, state, and national levels. (Education Code (EC) § 51475)
- 7) Requires the SPI, in developing criteria for the SSCE, to incorporate the Six Proven Practices for Effective Civic Learning, and to consult with a diverse group of credentialed, current classroom teachers who teach the subject of history-social science, including government, in secondary schools. Requires the SPI to also consider including criteria based on each of the following:
 - a) Successful completion of history, government, and civics courses, including courses that incorporate character education;
 - b) Voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities; and
 - c) Any other related requirements as deemed appropriate. (EC § 51470)
- 8) Requires the SPI, on or before January 1, 2020, to recommend to the SBE criteria for awarding a SSCE to students who have demonstrated excellence in civics education and participation and have demonstrated an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government. (EC § 51470)

- 9) Requires the SBE, on or before January 31, 2021, to adopt, reject, or modify the SSCE criteria recommended by the SPI. (EC § 51471)
- 10) Establishes the State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB), affixed to the diploma or transcript of an eligible student, to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. Establishes criteria that graduates must meet in order to be eligible for the SSB. (EC § 51461)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Establishes the SSCL for the purpose of giving high school pupils personal agency to help them and their communities understand and adapt to the effects of climate change.
 - a) States that an LEA's participation in awarding the SSCL is voluntary.
- 2) Requires the SPI, on or before March 15, 2027, to recommend to the SBE criteria for awarding the SSCL to pupils who have demonstrated mastery in climate literacy disciplines, green skills or technical green skills, and any and all other best practices for climate literacy. Requires the SPI to consider, in the development of criteria, the following:
 - a) Successful completion of at least two approved courses in the area of climate literacy, including but not limited to:
 - i) High-school-level or advanced placement courses that cover physical science, life science, or earth science.
 - ii) Dual or concurrent enrollment, career technical education, or high-school-level courses that integrate climate literacy.
 - iii) Courses that integrate the state's environmental principles and concepts, as specified.
 - b) Successful completion and presentation of a climate literacy final experiential learning project focused on the causes and effects of climate change in the pupil's local community and demonstrates an academic understanding of climate literacy through the practical application of climate literacy that addresses local climate issues present in the pupil's community. Final projects may include, but are not limited to:
 - i) A capstone project centered on the pupil's community and the community's effect on climate change.
 - ii) Field experiences or practica related to specified climate literacy coursework.

- iii) Internships, externships, or employment with climate literacy or green career experiential learning providers.
 - iv) One or more community projects with a climate literacy experiential learning provider.
 - v) Hands-on laboratory experiments.
 - vi) Original artwork or writing.
 - vii) Pupil-led and designed programming that has an effect on the pupil's community and other pupils.
- 3) Requires the SPI to also recommend the criteria necessary for a participating LEA to additionally award to a pupil who meets the requirements for the SSCL, one or both of the following distinctions:
- a) A SSCL with Industry Distinction to recognize a pupil who demonstrates proficiency in technical green skills through coursework or the pupil's final experiential learning project.
 - b) A SSCL with Higher Education Distinction to recognize a pupil who earns college credit in attaining the SSCL.
- 4) Requires the SPI to ensure, to the greatest extent feasible, that the criteria developed pursuant to #2 and #3 above adhere to all of the following:
- a) Provides all pupils with an opportunity to earn the SSCL.
 - b) Recognizes pupil excellence and outstanding achievement.
 - c) Is not based primarily on pupil achievement that is already recognized through grades or other standard measures of pupil achievement.
 - d) Results in a seal that confers a benefit to pupils beyond high school.
- 5) Requires the SBE, on or before May 1, 2027, to adopt, or adopt with modifications, the SSCL criteria recommended by the SPI.
- 6) Requires the SPI to do all of the following:
- a) Prepare and deliver to participating LEAs, an appropriate insignia to be affixed to the diploma or transcript of the pupil indicating that the pupil has been awarded an SSCL by the SPI.
 - b) Provide other information the SPI deems necessary for LEAs to successfully participate in awarding the SSCL to pupils.
- 1) Authorizes the SPI to partner with nonprofit organizations to provide such information, which may include any of the following: guidance or

criteria to support implementation; sample project frameworks; professional development resources; and guidance for developing partnerships with community-based organizations, industry leaders, or institutions of higher education.

- c) Provide information to pupils who earn a SSCL about post secondary opportunities and career pathways that leverage the knowledge and skills that pupils develop through earning the SSCL.
 - 1) Authorizes the SPI to partner with nonprofit, labor, or private sector organizations to provide such information.
- 7) Requires a participating LEA, after the SBE adopts criteria for the SSCL, to do the following:
 - a) Maintain appropriate records in order to identify pupils who have earned an SSCL.
 - b) Affix the appropriate insignia to the diploma or transcript of each pupil who earns an SSCL.
 - c) Provide information to pupils about available options and supports, including, but not limited to, approved courses, experiential learning, or final projects that pupils may complete to meet the criteria to earn an SSCL.
 - d) Establish a process for determining if a pupil has met the criteria necessary to earn an SSCL.
 - e) On or before September 15, 2027, and on or before September 15 of each year thereafter, provide CDE with the following data:
 - 1) The names of schools that awarded the SSCL.
 - 2) The number of pupils from each school of an LEA that received a SSCL.
 - 3) Evidence of how pupils who received a SSCL met the adopted criteria, including, but not limited to, any final projects, coursework, or providers that the pupils worked with.
- 8) Establishes the following definitions:
 - a) “Climate literacy” means an understanding of the essential principles of Earth’s climate system, assessing scientifically credible information, learning to communicate about the climate in a meaningful manner, and making informed and responsible decisions regarding actions that may affect the climate.
 - b) “Climate literacy experiential learning provider” means a provider that facilitates a pupil’s final project, including, but not limited to, a school

organization or club, local media outlet, business, nonprofit organization, or industry focused on green skills or technical green skills.

- c) “Green jobs” or “green career” means occupations or employment positions that reduce harmful effects on the climate, adapt processes to minimize their effect on the climate, recognize and mitigate the disproportionate social effects of climate change, support the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of communities, or contribute to the well-being and resilience of present and future generations.
- d) “Green skills” means the knowledge, abilities, values, and attitudes to live in, develop, and support a sustainable and resource-efficient society.
- e) “Local Education agency” means a school district, county office of education, or charter school.
- f) “Technical green skills” means skills that fulfill the requirement of green jobs and that support the transition to a low-carbon sustainable economy.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “California has long led the nation in climate action. SB 1048 ensures we are also leading in climate education by preparing the next generation with the knowledge and real-world experience they need to meet the challenges of a changing climate.”
- 2) ***California’s Environmental Principles and Concepts.*** In 2003 and 2005, the Legislature passed AB 1548 (Pavley, Chapter 665, Statutes of 2003) and AB 1721 (Pavley, Chapter 581, Statutes of 2005), which ultimately established the OEE under CalRecycle to develop education principles for the environment for elementary and secondary school pupils. The resulting [California Environmental Principles and Concepts](#) (EP&Cs) are comprised of five environmental principles and 15 supporting concepts that highlight the deep relationship between humans and the natural world and serve as “big ideas” intended to inform standards-based instruction and fuel student inquiry. These EP&Cs have been integrated into several state curriculum frameworks for California public schools serving kindergarten through grade twelve, including the 2016 History and Social Science Framework, the 2016 Science Framework, and the 2019 Health Education Framework.
- 3) ***California Environmental Literacy Task Force (ELTF).*** In 2014, the SPI assembled the ELTF to create a blueprint for achieving environmental literacy for all California students. The Blueprint, titled *A Blueprint for Environmental Literacy: Educating Every Student In, About, and For the Environment*, was published in 2015. The Blueprint highlights the need for expanded environmental literacy education by referencing a recent survey of 520 California school principals. This survey showed that 13% of schools have integrated environmental education into their curricula, and 77% spend less than \$5,000 on field trips, professional development, and curricular materials for environmental education. In addition, the Blueprint states, “A false perception persists from the

No Child Left Behind accountability era that environmental and outdoor programs are non-academic and not connected to the core curriculum. Research shows, however, that in schools where environmental content is integrated as a primary part of instruction, student achievement has improved.”

To improve environmental literacy among California’s students, the Blueprint identified the following six strategies:

- a) Systematically integrate environmental literacy concepts into statewide educational priorities.
- b) Strengthen collaboration across the state between key stakeholders.
- c) Leverage the SPI’s influence and create a public awareness campaign to build broad support for the importance of environmental literacy, and encourage and support increased allocation of state and locally controlled funding to environmental literacy programs.
- d) Implement changes to relevant state law and policy and ensure that relevant existing laws are funded and effectively implemented.
- e) Create an Environmental Literacy Steering Committee (ELSC) to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the Blueprint.
- f) Develop a coherent strategy for funding environmental literacy across the state.

In 2016, SPI appointed the ELSC to create an implementation plan for environmental literacy. The ELSC is comprised of 30 educational leaders and nonprofit stakeholders, and includes representatives from the CDE, CalRecycle, University of California (UC), and the SBE.

- 4) ***Existing California State Seal Programs.*** The state has established three State Seals—the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma (GGSMD), the State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB), and the State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE):

The GGSMD was established in 1997 to provide recognition to public high school graduates who have demonstrated mastery of the high school curriculum in six subject areas four of which are English, history, mathematics and science the remaining two are selected by the student. When originally authorized in the 1990’s, Governor Wilson argued that this diploma would serve as an ambitious goal that would both shape teaching and inspire students. It was envisioned as California version of the New York’s Regent’s Diploma, conferring advantages in University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) admission. The state created a series of assessments, called the Golden State Merit Examinations, which were taken by hundreds of thousands of students, who spent time and resources preparing to take the exams. These examinations were eliminated in 2009, and now the GSSMDs are awarded based on grades, Smart Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) scores, and, in some cases, local assessments.

The SSB was established in 2011 with the goal of recognizing high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing one or more languages in addition to English. In his 2021 letter to LEAs on the Importance of the SSB, Superintendent Tony Thurmond noted that fluency in more than one language has always been an admirable skill and biliteracy is increasingly important to employment in an international and global context to prepare students for the jobs of tomorrow. In its first year, more than 10,000 graduating high school students across California earned recognition for achieving proficiency in multiple languages. Most recently, the CDE reports for the 2024-25 school year, 75,911 SSBs have been awarded to graduating seniors across 515 participating school districts.

The SSCE was established in 2017 with the goal of recognizing students who have demonstrated excellence in civics education and participation, and an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government. In furtherance of this recognition, statute required the SPI to recommend criteria to the SBE, with specific consideration of a student's successful completion of history, government, and civics courses, including courses that incorporate character education and voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities. The final criteria adopted statewide are meant to provide LEAs with a framework for making determinations of student qualifications required to earn the SSCE, based on their own local contexts. These include requirements for students to do the following:

- a) Be engaged in academic work in a productive way;
- b) Demonstrate a competent understanding of the United States and California constitutions; functions and governance of local governments; tribal government structures and organizations; the role of the citizen in a constitutional democracy; and democratic principles, concepts, and processes;
- c) Participate in one or more informed civic engagement project(s) that address real-world problems and require students to identify and inquire into civic needs or problems, consider varied responses, take action, and reflect on efforts;
- d) Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions through self-reflection; and
- e) Exhibit character traits that reflect civic-mindedness and a commitment to positively impact the classroom, school, community and/or society.

According to the CDE, the criteria are written to ensure that no student is excluded from an opportunity to earn an SSCE based on academic ability, alternative school setting, or unique or unconventional expressions of civic engagement. As civic engagement may look different from community to community, the CDE encourages LEAs to work with local and statewide organizations to develop local criteria and to design and implement impactful

civic engagement programs and pathways that reflect community interests, needs, and resources.

The CDE reports that for the 2024-25 school year, 23,040 seals have been awarded across 492 participating schools.

- 5) ***Equity in Access to Climate Literacy Opportunities.*** This bill borrows the model of SSCE to create the SSCL. Specifically, it requires the SPI to recommend to the SBE criteria that would allow LEAs to recognize students who have demonstrated mastery in climate literacy disciplines, green skills or technical green skills, and any and all other best practices for climate literacy. In the development of criteria, the bill requires the SPI to consider factors such as the completion of courses in the area of climate literacy and the completion and presentation of a climate literacy final experiential learning project, as specified.

While the SSCL is intended to serve as a voluntary program, its implementation relies heavily on an LEA's ability to leverage partnerships with state and local climate literacy nonprofits, as well as labor and private sector entities engaged in the green economy. There are certainly areas of the state that have an abundance of local entities that are engaged with LEAs and have the capacity to partner with schools to provide learning opportunities for students; however, without careful attention to expanded access, such opportunities cannot be guaranteed for all students across the state. As a result, the SSCL may have the unintended consequence of highlighting LEAs that have the means to provide an environment where students can meet eligibility criteria, and leaving students at LEAs without such means behind.

This bill requires the SPI, in the development of recommended criteria, to ensure that to the greatest extent feasible, the recommended criteria provides all pupils with an opportunity to earn the SSCL and results in a seal that confers a benefit to the pupil beyond high school. The bill also authorizes the SPI to work with nonprofit organizations in furtherance of these priorities and others.

- 6) ***Prior and related legislation.***

SB 720 (Allen, Chapter 374, Statutes of 2018) revised provisions relating to the education principles for the environment by, among other things, (1) renaming them the environmental principles and concepts; (2) revising the process for, and entities involved in, updating the environmental principles and concepts; and (3) requiring the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) to ensure that the environmental principles and concepts are integrated into content standards and curriculum frameworks whenever those standards and frameworks are revised.

AB 1142 (Medina, Chapter 208, Statutes of 2017) updated the English language arts and English language development assessments used to determine recipients of the SSB.

AB 2072 (Chang, 2016) would have established the State Seal of STEM to recognize high school graduates who have attained proficiency in STEM content. *AB 2072 was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.*

AB 815 (Brownley, Chapter 618, Statutes of 2011) established the SSB to recognize high school graduates who what attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English.

AB 1721 (Pavley, Chapter 581, Statutes of 2005) placed decision making authority, regarding the incorporation of environmental principles into academic content standards and instructional materials, with the SPI and the SBE.

AB 1548 (Pavley, Chapter 665, Statutes of 2003) established the OEE within the California Environmental Protection Agency and required it to develop environmental education principles and a model curriculum.

SUPPORT

California State PTA (co-sponsor)
Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action (co-sponsor)
Ten Strands (co-sponsor)
UndauntedK12 (co-sponsor)
State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond
350 Bay Area Action
7th Generation Advisors
Adolfo Camarillo High School
American River Natural History Association dba Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Arc
Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education
Bay Tree Design
Bluesky Consulting
Burbank Eco Council
Cadman Cooking and Garden Education Program
California Academy of Sciences
California Outdoor Recreation Partnership
California State Parks Foundation
Camp Chrysalis
Canopy
Center for Ecoliteracy
CFT
Children Now
Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation
Citizens' Climate Lobby San Mateo County Chapter
City and County of San Francisco
City of Mountain View
Climate Action Campaign of the Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Climate Action Pathways for Schools
Climate Justice Committee, Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley
Common Vision
Dfusion Inc.
EdTrust-West
Elder Climate Action Northern California Chapter

Elders Climate Action Southern California Chapter
Environmental Education Collaborative
Environmental Nature Center
Equity Meets Design
Exploring New Horizons Outdoor Schools
Fremont Union High School District
Fresno Chaffee Zoo
Friends of the LA River
Friends of the Lost Coast
Green Schoolyards America
HED
iCrest Education Foundation
Inner City Bliss
Life Lab
Living Classroom
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Los Gatos Almaden Pollinator Garden
Master Gardener Association of San Diego County
Menlo Spark
National Marine Educators Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
Nurture Nature
Oakland Goes Outdoors
People, Food and Land Foundation
Richmond Outdoors Coalition
Roots to Branches Education
Sacramento Splash
Samuel Lawrence Foundation
San Diego Pediatricians for Clean Air
San Francisco Climate Literacy Advocates
SanDiego350
Santa Clara County Medical Association
Steam Learning Institute
Strategic Energy Innovations
Sustainable Marin Schools
Sustainable Mill Valley
SustainConsulting, LLC
The Escondido Creek Conservancy
The Friends of Daley Ranch
Three Oaks Outdoor Science School, Inc.
Tomorrow's Talent
TreePeople
trubel&co
UC Davis Center for Community and Citizen Science
United Teachers Los Angeles
Western Municipal Water District
YES Nature to Neighborhoods
Youth v. Oil
Three individuals

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 1107 **Hearing Date:** April 8, 2026
Author: Stern
Version: March 23, 2026
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Ian Johnson

Subject: School facilities: shade structures.

SUMMARY

This bill expands an existing exemption from accessible path-of-travel requirements under the California Building Standards Code (Building Code) for certain freestanding shade structures to also apply to shade structures that are integrated into playground equipment.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Defines “construction or alteration” for purposes of school facilities projects to include any construction, reconstruction, or alteration of, or addition to, any school building.
- 2) Requires the Department of General Services (DGS) to pass upon and approve or reject all plans for the construction or, if the estimated cost exceeds \$100,000, the alteration of any school building.
- 3) Generally requires the governing board of each school and community college district, before adopting construction or alteration plans, to submit the plans to DGS for approval and pay all associated fees.
- 4) Requires construction projects over \$209,208 (cost threshold) to provide “an accessible path of travel” from the building entrance to the project location.
- 5) Specifies that an area that has been altered without providing an accessible path of travel to that area, and subsequent alterations of that area or a different area on the same path of travel are undertaken within three years of the original alteration, the total cost of alterations for the preceding three-year period shall be considered in determining whether the cost threshold has been met.
- 6) Limits the cost of complying with the requirement to provide an accessible path of travel to a free-standing, open-sided shade structure project to 20% of the adjusted construction cost, as defined, of the shade structure project.

ANALYSIS

This bill expands an existing exemption from accessible path-of-travel requirements under the Building Code for certain freestanding shade structures to also apply to integrated shade structures attached to playground equipment that are included on the Division of the State Architect's (DSA's) approved pre-check design list.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "Spending time outside plays a vital role in supporting children's overall health and academic achievement. Regular access to outdoor environments can reduce stress and inattentiveness while strengthening cognitive growth and emotional well-being. However, students in urban areas face greater exposure to extreme temperatures, which can undermine the benefits of outdoor play by increasing their vulnerability to heat-related illnesses and diminishing their ability to focus and learn. Proper shading structures are essential to lower surrounding temperatures and protect children from dangerous heat.

"We are proud to continue the important work SB 515 had started by expanding its provisions to include overhead playground structure shading, further empowering our schools to quickly and cost-effectively provide schoolyard shading that keeps our children cool while they play."

- 2) ***Plan review for construction projects.*** The DSA reviews plans for public school construction and certain other state-funded building projects to ensure that plans, specifications, and construction comply with California's building codes (Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations). The majority of DSA's plan review and construction oversight focuses on new construction and alteration projects for California school and community college districts. DSA's plan review ensures the project's compliance with code requirements related to:
 - a) Structural safety, ensuring that facilities meet the high standards set in the Field Act to withstand an earthquake.
 - b) Fire and life safety, addressing the safety of occupants in buildings, as related to fire resistive building materials, fire alarms, fire suppression equipment, safe occupant egress, and firefighting equipment access.
 - c) Access compliance, ensuring that public schools and state-funded construction projects meet accessibility requirements for people with disabilities.
 - d) Energy efficiency, including compliance with applicable California Green Building Standards Code requirements for sustainability.
- 3) ***The Field Act.*** All school facilities must be built in compliance with specified earthquake safety standards, commonly known as the "Field Act." The Field Act was enacted following a severe earthquake in Long Beach in 1933. The Field Act requires a comprehensive design specification and construction inspection

process for K-12 public school educational facilities. Community college facilities may be constructed in accordance with either the Field Act or the Building Code.

The Field Act requires the DSA (within DGS) to review the construction plans for school buildings and requires school districts to hire onsite construction inspectors to ensure compliance with the structural safety standards. School and community college construction contracts may only be awarded after DSA approval of the plans and specifications on which the contracts are based.

- 4) ***State Architect's pre-check approval process.*** The DSA maintains a pre-check design list that includes over 25 "off the shelf" shade structures that schools and community colleges can install according to an expedited review and approval process. The pre-check approval process is intended to streamline DSA plan review by providing a procedure for approving the design of commonly used structures prior to the submittal of plans to DSA for construction projects. The pre-check approval process allows designers to incorporate designs for structures that have already been "pre-checked" by DSA into their plans for actual site-specific construction projects.
- 5) ***Expanding SB 515's exemption for shade structures.*** SB 515 (Stern, Chapter 489, Statutes of 2023) created a narrow exception to accessible path-of-travel requirements under the Building Code for freestanding, open-sided shade structures included DSA's pre-check design list. That measure was intended to reduce project costs and facilitate the installation of shade structures on school campuses in response to increasing concerns about extreme heat exposure for students during outdoor activity.

Under the Building Code, alterations to existing school facilities that exceed a specified valuation threshold (currently \$209,208) must also include the provision of an accessible path of travel to the area being altered. Smaller projects that fall below the valuation threshold are generally exempt from these requirements. However, if additional projects or repairs at the same campus within a three-year period cause the cumulative cost of alterations to exceed the threshold, the path-of-travel improvements may be required retroactively for the earlier project. According to the author, this framework may result in relatively small projects, such as playground shade structures, triggering broader accessibility upgrades if other campus work has occurred during the prior three years.

This bill proposes to extend the exemption created by SB 515 to integrated shade structures attached to playground equipment, allowing these projects to remain subject to the 20% path-of-travel cap regardless of whether the valuation threshold would otherwise be exceeded.

- 6) ***Balancing climate adaptation with accessibility improvements.*** School districts and advocates increasingly view playground shade structures as an important strategy for protecting students from extreme heat during outdoor activity. For example, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) reports that approximately 380 schools lack shade over play structures. With a \$40 million budget dedicated to shade shelters, LAUSD estimates it can install structures at approximately 49 schools, prioritizing campuses using its Student Equity Need

Index to target investments toward communities most vulnerable to extreme heat. According to LAUSD, reducing project costs associated with accessibility triggers allows available funding to reach a greater number of campuses.

At the same time, accessible path-of-travel requirements serve an important policy purpose: ensuring that accessibility improvements are incorporated into existing school facilities over time as campuses undergo alterations. For students, staff, and visitors who use wheelchairs or have other mobility challenges, these incremental upgrades can determine whether new or improved spaces on campus are reachable. Expanding exemptions from these requirements may allow new amenities to be installed without triggering broader accessibility improvements that might otherwise occur during facility upgrades. As the Committee considers expanding the exemption created by SB 515, it may wish to weigh the benefits of facilitating additional shade installations against the potential for fewer accessibility improvements to be made on aging school campuses.

SUPPORT

Los Angeles Unified School District (sponsor)

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 1188 **Hearing Date:** April 8, 2026
Author: Archuleta
Version: February 19, 2026
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Ian Johnson

Subject: Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps: home instruction, independent study, and private schools.

NOTE: This bill has been referred to the Committees on Education and *Military and Veterans Affairs*. A "do pass" motion should include referral to the Committee on *Military and Veterans Affairs*.

SUMMARY

This bill codifies in state law a federal requirement that local educational agencies (LEAs) operating Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) programs allow participation by homeschooled students residing in the area served by the LEA. The bill also expands access by requiring LEAs to provide participation opportunities for other students residing within the LEA's attendance area who are not enrolled at the school offering the program, including students enrolled in private schools, independent study, or another public school. Lastly, the bill requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to post information about JROTC programs and provide implementation guidance to LEAs.

BACKGROUND

Existing federal law:

- 1) Establishes the JROTC program within the U.S. Department of Defense, with the purpose of promoting citizenship, leadership, and service among secondary school students.
- 2) Authorizes JROTC units to be established at public and private secondary schools that meet specified federal requirements, including minimum enrollment, facilities, and course of instruction.
- 3) Requires participating schools to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the applicable military department and comply with federal standards related to instructor qualifications, program oversight, and student eligibility.
- 4) Provides federal support for JROTC programs, including assignment or certification of instructors, provision of curriculum materials and equipment, and partial reimbursement of instructor salaries, with remaining costs typically borne by the LEA.

- 5) Requires each public secondary school operating a JROTC unit to permit participation by homeschooled students residing in the area served by the school who are otherwise qualified for participation but for lack of enrollment at the school.

Existing state law:

- 1) Authorizes the governing board of a school district maintaining a secondary school to establish courses in military science and tactics that comply with federal law governing Reserve Officers' Training Corps units.
- 2) Prohibits requiring a student to enroll in a course in military science and tactics.

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Authorizes LEAs to establish JROTC programs consistent with federal law.
- 2) Requires LEAs that operate JROTC programs to ensure equal access for homeschooled pupils residing within the LEA's attendance area who are otherwise eligible, consistent with federal law.
- 3) Requires LEAs that operate JROTC programs to ensure equal access for other pupils who reside within the LEA's attendance area, including pupils enrolled in private schools, independent study, or another public school, if those pupils meet all other eligibility requirements.
- 4) Requires CDE to post information about existing JROTC programs, including eligibility and application requirements, on its internet website and to provide annual implementation guidance to LEAs.
- 5) Defines "ensure equal access to the JROTC program" as providing the same opportunities in relation to the JROTC program as provided to the pupils enrolled in the school offering the program.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "Many military families opt to homeschool their children; nearly twice the rate of civilian families. They face unique challenges associated with military life which create instability and at times effect families' abilities to adapt to new surroundings and routines. State policies that streamline access to educational resources such as extracurricular activities and sports better support students and their families. Prioritizing clarifying participation requirements for Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps, JROTC, can contribute to greater stability for military families, which supports retention efforts. Allowing homeschooled students to participate in JROTC programs maintains military cultural connections and leadership development opportunities. California can facilitate access by clarifying in state policy that pursuant to federal law, homeschool children are required access to JROTC

programs. SB 1188 ensures local education agencies provide clear and accessible guidance to schools and information for parents. This bill supports military family values while providing structured programs that complement homeschool education.”

- 2) ***JROTC is a federally structured program operating through local educational agencies.*** The JROTC is a federally authorized program administered by the U.S. Department of Defense and implemented through cooperative agreements with LEAs. Federal law establishes the purpose, structure, and minimum requirements for the program, including curriculum, instructor qualifications, and unit viability standards.

While the program is delivered at the schoolsite level, it is not solely a local program. Instead, it reflects a shared federal-local model in which the federal government provides curriculum, equipment, and partial funding for instructors, while LEAs employ instructors, provide facilities, and integrate the program into the school day.

The JROTC is one of the largest youth development programs in the country, serving hundreds of thousands of students annually and offering multi-year coursework in leadership, civics, and life skills, along with extracurricular components such as drill teams and community service. These features distinguish JROTC from traditional academic courses and place it closer to a structured program with defined staffing and operational requirements.

- 3) ***Program structure and funding create inherent capacity constraints.*** Unlike traditional academic courses, JROTC programs operate within fixed structural constraints tied to federal requirements, staffing models, and funding levels. Each unit typically requires a minimum of two instructors, often retired military personnel certified by the applicable service, and must maintain minimum student participation levels to remain viable.

At the national level, the number of JROTC units is constrained by federal appropriations, and military services generally operate at or near capacity, maintaining waiting lists of schools seeking to establish new units. As a result, program expansion is limited, and participation within existing units is bounded by available instructor staffing, facilities, and program design.

These features suggest that JROTC programs function more like capacity-limited instructional programs or specialized pathways than open-enrollment offerings. This distinction is relevant when considering how access requirements operate in practice.

- 4) ***Federal law establishes a narrow access requirement limited to homeschooled students.*** Federal law requires that public secondary schools operating JROTC units permit participation by homeschooled students residing in the area served by the school, provided those students meet all other eligibility requirements, but for lack of enrollment at the school.

This requirement is narrowly framed and reflects a specific policy choice to ensure access for students who are not enrolled in the host school due to the nature of their educational setting. Federal law does not extend this requirement to students enrolled in private schools, charter schools, or other public schools.

- 5) ***Homeschooled students can encompass multiple pathways.*** While federal law refers to “homeschooled students,” California does not use a single, uniform definition of that term. Instead, pupils educated at home may do so through several distinct legal pathways.

These include enrollment in a public school independent study program (either through a school district or charter school), enrollment in a private school that offers home-based or remote instruction, or instruction through a home-based private school established by a parent through a private school affidavit. In some cases, students may also receive instruction from a credentialed tutor.

These pathways differ in meaningful ways, particularly with respect to whether a pupil is formally enrolled in a public school, a private school, or not enrolled in a traditional school setting. As a result, the term “homeschooled” can encompass a range of students with different legal statuses under state law.

Understanding these distinctions may be important for purposes of implementing the federal requirement that homeschooled students be permitted to participate in JROTC programs. This bill assigns CDE responsibility for making information about JROTC programs, including eligibility and application requirements, available on its website and for distributing implementation guidance to LEAs on an annual basis. In doing so, the bill appears to contemplate that CDE will provide guidance regarding which pupils qualify as “homeschooled” for purposes of JROTC participation.

- 6) ***Committee amendments to align the bill with federal law.*** As currently drafted, this bill goes beyond existing federal law in two key respects. First, the bill requires LEAs to “ensure equal access” to JROTC programs, which could be interpreted to create an entitlement to participate. This language does not appear in federal law and may be read to limit the ability of programs to manage participation based on capacity constraints, including instructor staffing and facilities.

Second, the bill extends access to pupils who reside within the attendance area of the LEA but are enrolled in a private school, independent study program, or another public school. This provision would significantly expand participation requirements beyond federal law, which is limited to homeschooled students.

To bring the bill into conformity with federal law and avoid creating unintended expansion of access or operational challenges for LEAs, *staff recommends amending the bill* as follows:

- a) Replace “ensure equal access” with “permit membership” to more closely track federal law and preserve the ability of programs to operate within

existing capacity constraints, and make conforming changes, including striking the definition of “ensure equal access”.

- b) Strike subdivision (c)(2) to remove the broader access requirement for students who are not homeschooled.
- c) Clarify that “homeschooled pupil” for purposes of this section is intended to align with the meaning of “homeschooled student” in federal law.

SUPPORT

U.S. Department of Defense (sponsor)
California Family Council

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 1262	Hearing Date:	April 8, 2026
Author:	Archuleta		
Version:	February 19, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Michelle Nguyen		

Subject: Education finance: community colleges: general fund balance.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes an annual 50% reserve cap for a community college district (CCD), unless the district participates in specified employee benefit programs and has at least 75% of instruction taught by full-time faculty.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Part-Time Community College Faculty Health Insurance Program to encourage CCDs to offer health insurance for part-time faculty. CCDs that establish a program must negotiate with the exclusive bargaining representative on the share of the premium payments not covered by the state. (Education Code (EC) § 87860.5 and 87866)
- 2) Establishes the Community College Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program to encourage CCDs to compensate part-time faculty who hold office hours related to their teaching load. To establish a program, a district must negotiate with the exclusive bargaining representative or with faculty, if there is no bargaining unit. (EC § 87881 and 87884)
- 3) Requires the Board of Governors (BOG) of the California Community Colleges (CCCs) to adopt regulations regarding the percent of credit instruction taught by full-time faculty and authorizes districts with less than 75% of credit instruction hours taught by full-time instructors to apply a portion of their “program improvement” funds toward reaching a 75% goal. Although the state has stopped providing program improvement funds, the BOG requires CCDs to provide a portion of their growth funds to hiring more full-time faculty when it is determined that sufficient funding has been provided in the state budget for full implementation of districts’ full-time faculty hiring obligations. (EC § 87482.6 and California Code of Regulations § 51025)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Prohibits a CCD's annual unrestricted general fund balance for a fiscal year from exceeding 50% of its unrestricted general fund expenditures for that year, unless the CCD does all of the following:
 - a) Participates in the Part-Time Community College Faculty Health Insurance Program;
 - b) Participates in the Community College Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program;
 - c) Has at least 75% of hours of credit instruction taught by full-time faculty.
- 2) Prohibits a CCD from transferring unrestricted general funds to another fund for the purpose of complying with this bill if either of the following applies:
 - a) The receiving fund has an existing balance of 33% or more of the CCD's unrestricted general fund expenditures for that fiscal year.
 - b) The transfer of the unrestricted general funds would cause the receiving fund to have a balance of 33% or more of the CCD's unrestricted general fund expenditures for that fiscal year.
- 3) Specifies that, for a CCD that violates the provisions of this bill, the amount of the annual unrestricted general fund balance that exceeds 50% shall be proportionally distributed to the nonsupervisory and nonmanagement employees of the CCD based solely on the number of hours worked by those employees in the preceding fiscal year, as determined by a collective bargaining agreement between those employees and the governing board of the CCD.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, in spite of the state providing "significant financial support for community college districts to provide part-time faculty health insurance, to provide part-time faculty compensation for providing students office hours, and to ensure that most teaching hours are being performed by full time faculty... the programs which provide community college districts these financial resources or reimbursements are undersubscribed or under-utilized." At the same time, "in 2021, several districts had over 70% of their annual budget in reserve. These unused funds, or unrestricted balance, indicate that community colleges are not fully utilizing their funding to benefit student learning and faculty stability, a determinative component to student learning."
- 2) ***Local reserves remain important for CCDs to hedge against uncertainty.*** A Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) report from 2021 describes why local reserves for community colleges are critical:

"Local reserves allow community colleges (as they do other local agencies) to sustain their operations even if their annual funding drops due to economic recessions. Local reserves also allow colleges to handle lower-than-budgeted local property tax receipts or unexpected drops in enrollment. Additionally, local

reserves help colleges manage their cash flow and pay their bills while awaiting receipt of funds... especially helpful during times when the state is deferring payments, as colleges might not receive their state funding until many months after they have incurred operating costs. ... Reserves help too in covering unexpected costs. For example, [when] campuses moved to remote operations [during the pandemic], they have incurred higher technology and professional development costs. Though campuses in some cases ultimately might be reimbursed for certain costs, they might need to cover costs upfront. Colleges also use reserves to pay for large, planned, one-time purchases (such as a large-scale upgrade of instructional equipment).”

Many factors mentioned in the LAO’s 2021 report remain relevant for CCDs planning for uncertainty and potential loss of funding, including:

- a) The state has seen persistent General Fund deficits in recent years, and the Administration and the LAO both project outyear deficits in their multi-year forecasts, with the deficits ranging between \$22 billion and \$35 billion for each year of 2027-28, 2028-29, and 2029-30.
- b) Actions taken by the federal government have created uncertainty at CCDs and on their campuses, including the sudden termination of certain discretionary federal grants in September 2025, including Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Grants, Minority Serving Institution (MSI) Grants, and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) Grants. These grants had been provided to selected colleges and are projected to be a loss of \$60 million statewide over the next 5 years.
- c) In February 2026, Long Beach Community College District (LBCCD) agreed to pay \$18 million in a settlement for a class-action lawsuit filed by more than 1,450 part-time faculty who alleged they were forced to work unpaid hours outside the classroom, grading papers and tests, meeting with students, preparing lessons, and other duties. Though this settlement still needs to be approved by the judge overseeing the matter, news outlets expect that the judge will approve the deal during a hearing scheduled for July 1. This expected settlement would reduce LBCCD’s reserves by 10 percentage points. There are multiple districts facing similar litigation or who are expecting to face similar litigation to be filed by part-time faculty in their districts.

Finally, in accordance with guidelines from the Government Finance Officers Association, the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) recommends that colleges maintain a minimum reserve level of two months of operating expenses, which is 16.7%. The CCCCCO does not provide a recommendation for a maximum reserve level. However, as noted in the section below, many districts have reserves that are much higher than two months of operating expenses.

- 3) ***An influx of recent federal and state funding has boosted reserve levels for CCDs.*** CCDs are primarily funded with general purpose apportionment funding earned based on the state’s Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF), which

considers factors like enrollment and student outcomes. Since the pandemic, unrestricted reserves have grown substantially, from nearly \$2 billion (23% of statewide expenditures) in 2019-20 to an estimated \$3.8 billion (34% of expenditures) in 2024-25. This increase has come from an influx of federal COVID relief funds as well as increased state funding since 2021-22, including a base increase to the SCFF in 2022-23, significant cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), and funding provided through the SCFF's hold harmless / funding floor provision.

Data supports the argument that the pandemic has likely had a lasting impact on unrestricted reserves, even now. In 2019-20, there were three CCDs with unrestricted reserves over 50%. In each year since 2020-21, there have been 12 to 15 CCDs each year with unrestricted reserves over 50%. There have been 12 CCDs with reserves above 50% for at least three consecutive years during this period. In 2024-25 specifically, there were 15 CCDs with unrestricted reserve levels over 50% and six CCDs with unrestricted reserve levels in excess of 80%.

In the early years of the pandemic, it is likely that CCDs were spending down their federal pandemic relief funds first, given an expenditure deadline for these funds of June 30, 2023, and this likely created larger than normal state fund balances. In the years since this deadline, it seems fair to conclude that the source of swelling district reserves likely comes from prior years of built-up reserves, as well as the significant revenue growth and state investment in the CCCs through growth in the Proposition 98 guarantee.

- 4) ***CCDs' true reserve balances may be somewhat overstated in the data.*** CCDs report data on both unrestricted and restricted general fund reserves to the CCCCCO, this data is publicly available on the CCCCCO's website once finalized. Restricted reserves typically consist of categorical program funds and other one-time funding from the state, both of which are allocated for a specific purpose. In contrast, unrestricted reserves are, by definition, funds that are not allocated for a specific purpose and largely consist of ongoing general purpose apportionment funding from the SCFF, and these funds are used for general district operations and educational programming. This also includes recent federal COVID relief funds that were not allocated for a specific purpose, as well as unrestricted lottery funds.

An important nuance to note is that unrestricted resources may be designated by the board for an intended purpose (such as for capital outlay for academic buildings or student housing), but these funds continue to be considered unrestricted because the board can change that designation at any point. In addition, unrestricted general funds that are encumbered for a specific purpose or contract are still considered unrestricted, which could make reserves seem higher than they are if the district intends to spend the encumbered funds on a multi-year basis.

As a hypothetical example, a district with significant unrestricted reserves may have plans to build several capital outlay projects on its campus. Though these projects may be receiving state bond funds through Proposition 2, the district must provide a local match for each project, and the state dollars are planned to be allocated to the district over a three-year period. As a result, the district must keep

unrestricted reserves on its ledger for the next several years, thereby significantly inflating that district's unrestricted reserves.

Staff notes that because the unrestricted reserves data does not separate out funds that may be designated or encumbered for a specific purpose, districts' true reserve balances may be overstated in the current data and would require additional information from districts to better explain and understand their balances. Though the author's intent to address high reserve levels is understandable, staff notes concerns that this bill—which could potentially have significant punitive fiscal consequences for CCDs in the millions of dollars—relies on data that may be potentially overstating reserve levels. Would it make more sense to focus instead on reserves that are specifically designated by the district's governing board as reserves for economic uncertainties?

5) **Part-time Community College Faculty Health Insurance and Office Hours Programs: questionable reserve cap triggers.** Existing law establishes two programs aimed at supporting part-time faculty in community colleges: the Part-Time Community College Faculty Health Insurance Program and the Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program. This bill seeks to mandate CCDs' participation in these programs, under the threat of a reserve cap.

- a) The Part-Time Community College Faculty Health Insurance Program incentivizes districts to offer health coverage for part-time faculty. Districts receiving allocations negotiate with bargaining representatives regarding premium payment shares not covered by the state. Since the 2022 Budget Act, the state has appropriated \$200.5 million on an ongoing basis for this program. In 2024-25, 49 out of 73 CCDs participated in this program, with \$69.5 million disbursed to districts out of \$200.5 million.
- b) Similarly, the Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program encourages districts to compensate part-time faculty for office hours related to their teaching load. Compensation negotiations occur either with bargaining representatives or directly with faculty if no bargaining unit exists. Part-time faculty participating in the program must be compensated for a minimum of one office hour per every two classes taught per week or 40% of the district-defined full-time load. Additionally, compensation is provided for each 20% of the district-defined full-time faculty load. The annual budget act has typically provided roughly \$23.6 million for this program, though there have occasionally been one-time appropriations for this purpose, including \$90 million one-time appropriated in the 2021 Budget Act. In 2024-25, 60 out of 73 CCDs participated in this program, with \$84.9 million disbursed to districts, with the amount in excess of the state appropriation of \$23.6 million covered by the leftover funds from the 2021 Budget Act's one-time appropriation.

Staff notes that participation in these programs entails ongoing costs, unlike reserve balances, which are one-time in nature, and the state funding allocated for these programs does not reimburse all district costs. Should districts have the autonomy to evaluate their financial priorities and make decisions accordingly, ensuring fiscal sustainability and flexibility given uncertain budgetary and fiscal

circumstances? Would maintaining local bargaining as the forum for considering district participation in these programs make more sense?

- 6) **Goal for full-time faculty to teach 75% of credit instruction: not being met, yet also a questionable reserve cap trigger.** Since 1988, AB 1725 (Vasconcellos, Chapter 973, Statutes of 1988) has aimed for community colleges to have full-time faculty teach 75% of credit instruction hours. Recent state funding initiatives have infused a total of \$900 million thus far (with \$150 million ongoing) into bolstering full-time faculty hiring since 2018-19, which is allocated based on student enrollment to aid districts in reaching the 75% target.

Despite these initiatives, districts have grappled with meeting the 75% goal. Tracking progress through the percentage of full-time-equivalent faculty, the CCCCCO noted in 2023 that only 18 districts have hit the 75% mark since 1999, with none sustaining this level for more than five years. According to fall 2025 data, only one district met this goal. To address this, the trailer bill language from the 2023 Budget Act mandated the CCCCCO to compile an annual report starting in 2024 on CCDs' progress towards the goal.

Like the part-time faculty programs discussed previously, this bill also seeks to mandate CCDs meet the 75% target, under the threat of a reserve cap. Because only one district meets this target, nearly every district in the state with reserves over 50% would currently be subject to the reserve cap proposed by this bill.

Similarly, staff notes that using the 75% goal as a reserve cap trigger is questionable. An ongoing reporting process has been established to address progress towards the 75% goal, suggesting that the issue is being actively monitored and managed through channels that are more appropriate than the proposed reserve cap.

- 7) **Though this bill may be identifying a problem, concerns about this bill's impact on community college fiscal management.** Though local reserves are important for districts' fiscal planning and management, concerns about excessive reserve levels are legitimate. This is especially true if high reserve levels persist over multiple years without a plan to spend down these balances. In the face of growing unaffordability in this state, supporters of this bill may view high balances as a signal that districts can accommodate increased employee benefits or compensation. As noted above, the pandemic has had a lasting impact on unrestricted reserves, and since 2020-21, there have been 12 districts with reserves above 50% for at least three consecutive years during this five-year period. In 2024-25, there were 15 districts with unrestricted reserve levels over 50% and six districts with unrestricted reserve levels in excess of 80%. These reserve levels should be examined, given their magnitude.

However, as currently drafted, this bill raises several concerns that could impact the operational flexibility and financial stability of CCDs. First, including the "unrestricted general fund balance" as reserves subject to the cap is broad. Districts rely on these funds for day-to-day operations and to address various financial obligations, such as unfunded retirement liabilities, other post-employment benefits (OPEB) liabilities, capital outlay, deferred maintenance, and

IT projects. A more prudent approach would be to only consider the unrestricted general fund balance that has been specifically designated by the district's governing board as reserves for economic uncertainties. This targeted approach would ensure that essential operational needs are not compromised while still addressing the intent of the bill. However, as noted in the comments above, this data is not readily publicly available, and the current data overstates what true reserve levels are.

Second, the bill's restriction on transfers of unrestricted general fund dollars could inadvertently hinder the operational capacity of districts acting responsibly. By limiting transfers to receiving funds with existing balances of 33% or more of the district's unrestricted general fund expenditures, even when these transfers are transparent and necessary for operational purposes, districts may face unnecessary constraints. This limitation could impede districts from efficiently managing their finances and responding to evolving needs, potentially hindering their ability to provide quality education and support services to students.

Third, allocating any reserves beyond the cap to nonsupervisory and nonmanagement employees based solely on the number of hours worked raises questions about the efficacy and alignment with the overall goals of the district. Though employee recognition and retention are important, distributing excess reserves as one-time bonuses may not necessarily address the underlying financial challenges facing the district, and it may not further initiatives and investments aimed at improving educational outcomes and institutional effectiveness.

8) ***Prior and Related Legislation.***

SB 1388 (Archuleta, 2024) would have established an annual 16.7% reserve cap for a CCD, unless the district participates in specified employee benefit programs and has at least 75% of instruction taught by full-time instructors. The text for SB 1388 is the same as the text for SB 1262, except that the annual reserve cap was 16.7% for SB 1388. SB 1388 was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SUPPORT

California Federation of Teachers (sponsor)
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO
California School Employees Association
Teamsters California

OPPOSITION

Association of California Community College Administrators
Chief Executive Officers of the California Community Colleges Board
MiraCosta Community College District
Sierra Community College District

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 1347	Hearing Date:	April 8, 2026
Author:	Niello		
Version:	April 6, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	No
Consultant:	Therresa Austin		

Subject: Pupil health: emergency stock albuterol inhalers.

SUMMARY

This bill extends the authorization for school districts, county offices of education (COEs), and charter schools to provide and administer emergency stock albuterol inhalers, to apply to childcare programs operated by or under contract with a local educational agency (LEA), as specified, as well as their trained employees.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Authorizes school districts, COEs, and charter schools to provide emergency stock albuterol inhalers, including, if necessary, single-use disposable holding chambers, to school nurses or trained personnel who have volunteered, as specified. Authorizes school nurses or trained personnel to use as emergency stock albuterol inhaler to provide emergency medical aid to persons suffering, or reasonably believed to be suffering, from respiratory illness. (Education Code (EC) § 49414.7)
- 2) Authorizes private elementary and secondary schools in the state to voluntarily determine whether or not to make emergency stock albuterol inhalers and trained personnel available at its school. Specifies that in making this determination, a school shall evaluate the emergency medical response time to the school and determine whether initiating emergency medical services is an acceptable alternative to stock albuterol inhalers and trained personnel. (EC § 49414.7)
- 3) Authorizes each public school and private elementary and secondary school in the state to designate one or more volunteers to receive initial and annual refresher training based on the standards, as specified, regarding the storage and emergency use of a stock albuterol inhaler from the school nurse or other qualified person designated by an authorizing physician and surgeon. (EC § 49414.7)
- 4) Authorizes a pupil who is required to take, during the regular school day, medication prescribed for the pupil by a physician or surgeon, to be assisted by the school nurse or other designated school personnel or may carry and self-administer inhaled asthma medication if the school district receives the appropriate written statement from the physician or surgeon detailing the name of

the medication, method, amount, and time schedules by which the medication is to be taken and a written statement from the parent, foster parent, or guardian of the pupil requesting that the school district assist the pupil in the matters set forth in the statement of the physician or surgeon. (EC § 49423.1)

- 5) Specifies in order for a pupil to carry and self-administer prescription inhaled asthma medication, the school district shall obtain both a written statement from the physician or surgeon detailing the name of the medication, method, amount, and time schedules by which the medication is to be taken, and confirming that the pupil is able to self-administer inhaled asthma medication, and a written statement from the parent, foster parent, or guardian of the pupil consenting to the self-administration, providing a release for the school nurse or other designated school personnel to consult with the health care provider of the pupil regarding any questions that may arise with regard to the medication, and releasing the school district and school personnel from civil liability if the self-administering pupil suffers an adverse reaction by taking medication pursuant to this section. (EC § 49423.1)
- 6) Requires the governing board of any school district to give diligent care to pupils' health and physical development and authorizes it to employ properly certified persons to conduct this work. (EC § 49400)

ANALYSIS

This bill adds childcare programs that are operated by or contracted under an LEA, as well as their employees who have volunteered and received appropriate training existing list of entities authorized to receive emergency stock albuterol from an LEA and use said emergency stock albuterol to provide emergency medical aid to persons suffering, or reasonably believed to be suffering, from respiratory distress. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Changes references from "school district, COE, or charter school" to "local educational agency."
- 2) Defines "childcare program" to mean "a state or federally subsidized childcare program operated by, or under contract with, an LEA, including, but not limited to, a California state preschool program or Head Start program pursuant to Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 8200) of Part 6 of Division 1 of Title 1, or a childcare program, including, but not limited to, general childcare and development programs pursuant to Part 1.8 (commencing with Section 10207) of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code."
- 3) Changes references from "private elementary and secondary school" to "private school."
- 4) Amends the definition of volunteer or trained personnel, authorized to administer stock albuterol under specified conditions, to include employees of a childcare program who have volunteered, received training, and are subject to liability limitations pursuant to existing law.

- 5) Authorizes childcare programs operated by or under contract with an LEA to designate one or more volunteers to receive initial and annual refresher training, as specified.
- 6) Adds childcare programs to the existing entities to which LEAs electing to utilize stock albuterol inhalers for emergency aid must distribute specified biannual notices.
- 7) Recasts the requirement for a qualified supervisor of health of a LEA electing to utilize stock albuterol inhalers for emergency aid to obtain from an authorizing physician and surgeon a prescription for stock albuterol inhaler for each site, to include childcare programs.
 - a) Requires those prescriptions to, at a minimum, include appropriate doses of available stock albuterol inhalers for the ages and weights of individuals at each site including any childcare programs.
- 8) Adds childcare programs operated by or contracted under LEAs to the existing provisions regarding liability for civil damages resulting from any act or omission, other than an act or omission constituting gross negligence or willful and wanton misconduct, in the emergency administration of an albuterol inhaler by any of its school nurses or trained volunteers who have volunteered, as specified.
- 9) Adds employees of childcare programs that are operated by or under contract with an LEA to the type of employees that shall be provided defense and indemnification by an LEA for any and all civil liability, as specified.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “In 2023, the Legislature passed on a bi-partisan basis AB 1283 (Chen), which authorized stock albuterol in public schools. This measure has helped safeguard children and has ensured our school health professionals have the necessary medication on hand at school to provide lifesaving treatment.

“Albuterol is a prescribed medicine used to prevent and treat wheezing, difficulty breathing, chest tightness, and coughing caused by lung diseases such as asthma. Albuterol is in a class of medications called bronchodilators and works by relaxing and opening the air passages to the lungs to make breathing easier.

“Since the passage of AB 1283 (Chen, 2023), the state has made access to preschool a priority and is now expanding to Universal Preschool. This prioritization means the traditional definitions of “school” hasn’t always been clear in the education code whether it included preschool. Some school districts have expressed confusion if they are supposed to be providing the stock albuterol in their preschool programs. Clarity in statute is needed for schools to ensure they do not have any exposed liability for their preschool students. This is consistent with the passage of SB 568 (Niello) in 2025 which clarified the stock epinephrine in schools program also applied to preschool.”

- 2) ***Asthma prevalence in children.*** According to Tracking California, a program of the Public Health Institute partnered with California Breathing, in 2021-2022, an estimated 9.9% of California children ages 0-17 had been diagnosed with asthma at some point in their lives. For those aged 0-4, that number stands at an estimated 2.9%. While asthma does not result in hospitalization for most children, there were 6822 hospitalizations for asthma among children ages 0-17 statewide in 2023, with roughly 3223 of those involving children ages 0-4.

Asthma is one of the most common chronic diseases among children in the U.S. and a leading cause of pediatric hospitalization. It is also the top reason for missed school days, accounting for more than 5.2 million absences annually. Asthma rates vary by region, demographics, environment, physician diagnostic practices, and access to care. Although identifying the impact of independent risk factors for asthma is difficult, children of color and those from low-income families are disproportionately at high risk for severe symptoms, missed school days, and hospital visits.

- 3) ***What is albuterol?*** According to the Mayo Clinic, albuterol is an adrenergic bronchodilator that is used to treat or prevent bronchospasm in patients with asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, and other lung diseases. It is also used to prevent bronchospasm caused by exercise. Adrenergic bronchodilators are medicines that are breathed in through the mouth to open up the bronchial tubes (air passages) in the lungs. They relieve cough, wheezing, and trouble breathing by increasing the flow of air through the bronchial tubes. Albuterol is available in powder, solution, and suspension dosage forms.
- 4) ***The management of asthma in California schools.*** The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) “Guidelines for the Management of Asthma in California Schools” and “Asthma Action Plan for Schools and Families” assist schools in effectively managing this chronic disease. The “Guidelines for the Management of Asthma in California Schools” were developed jointly by health professionals in the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Asthma Public Health Initiative in statewide collaboration with asthma experts and stakeholders.

Further, the CDPH, in partnership with the CDE and the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), has issued a statewide standing order for albuterol to provide emergency medical aid to persons suffering, or reasonably believed to be suffering, from respiratory distress in California schools. Using the online form, LEAs can generate a standing order to use as a prescription for albuterol to ensure the safety and well-being of persons experiencing respiratory distress in schools or during school activities. CDPH states in its [Albuterol Standing Order Frequently Asked Questions](#) page that existing law authorizes some preschools to develop a stock albuterol program if they are co-located on a TK–12 site.

Finally, according to its website, CalRx, in partnership with the CDPH Office of School Health, has announced plans to launch a centralized ordering system to supply California’s TK–12 schools with albuterol inhalers and single-use disposable spacers at no cost over a three-year period beginning in Summer 2026.

- 5) ***The California State Preschool Program, Head Start, and General Child Care and Development programs.*** This bill seeks to extend the existing authorization for LEAs to provide emergency stock albuterol inhalers to school nurses and trained volunteers, to include childcare programs and their employees who have volunteered and received specified training. The bill also seeks to extend the authorization for school nurses and trained volunteers at LEAs to use stock albuterol inhalers to provide emergency medical aid to persons suffering, or reasonably believed to be suffering, from respiratory distress, to trained volunteer childcare employees at childcare programs the LEA contracts with or operates. These childcare programs include the CSPP, Head Start, and General Child Care and Development programs.
- The CSPP provides both part-day and full-day services to eligible three- and four-year-olds. These services include developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate curriculum, meals and snacks, parent education, and referrals to health and social services for families.
 - Head Start is a federally funded early childhood education program that provides comprehensive services—including education, health, nutrition, and family support—to low-income children (ages 0-5) and their families.
 - General Child Care and Development programs, as defined in Part 1.8 (commencing with Section 10207) of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, are state and federally funded programs that provide child development services for children from birth through 12 years of age and older children with exceptional needs. These programs provide an educational component that is developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate for the children served, as well as services like meals and snacks, parent education, and referrals to health and social services for families.

While many of these programs can be administered by either public or private agencies, this bill would only extend the existing LEA related authorizations to child care programs that are operated or contracted by an LEA.

- 6) ***Dosage considerations for small children.*** This bill expands the stocking and provision responsibilities of an LEA that elects to utilize emergency stock albuterol inhalers, to include provisions for childcare programs that it operates or contracts with. Among these responsibilities is the requirement to obtain the necessary prescriptions from an authorizing physician or surgeon for stock albuterol inhalers that, at a minimum, include appropriate doses of available inhalers for the ages and weights of individuals at each site including any childcare programs.

Albuterol dosage is typically determined based on a combination of factors, including age, weight, dosage forms, and strength of medicine. The following are typical prescribed dosages, according to the Mayo Clinic:
Inhalation aerosol dosage form (inhaler) for prevention of exercise-induced bronchospasm:

- Adults and children 4 years of age and older—Two puffs taken 15 to 30 minutes before exercise.
- Children younger than 4 years of age— Use and dose must be determined by a child’s doctor.

Inhalation powder dosage form (inhaler) for prevention of exercise-induced bronchospasm:

- Adults and children 4 years of age and older—Two puffs taken 15 to 30 minutes before exercise.
- Children younger than 4 years of age— Use and dose must be determined by a child’s doctor.

Inhalation solution dosage form (used with a nebulizer) for prevention of bronchospasm:

- Adults and children older than 12 years of age—2.5 milligrams (mg) in the nebulizer 3 or 4 times per day as needed.
- Children 2 to 12 years of age—0.63 to 1.25 mg in the nebulizer 3 or 4 times per day as needed.
- Children younger than 2 years of age—Use and dose must be determined by your child’s doctor.

By extending existing authorizations that LEAs have to the childcare setting, this bill inherently extends the age ranges of children who may be administered emergency stock albuterol inhalers by a school nurse or trained volunteer if they are suffering, or reasonably believed to be suffering, from respiratory distress. This bill requires that the prescriptions retained by the LEA, at a minimum, include appropriate doses of available stock albuterol inhalers for the ages and weights of individuals at each participating child care site.

7) ***Related Legislation.***

SB 1443 (Senate Education Committee, 2026) includes two provisions of this bill: (1) the change of the phrase “school district, county office of education, or charter school” to “local educational agency”, and (2) the change of the phrase private primary and secondary school” to “private school”. *SB 1443 is currently in the Senate Education Committee and will be amended to remove those provisions.*

SB 568 (Niello, Chapter 322, Statutes of 2025) updates terminology from “epinephrine auto-injectors” to “epinephrine delivery systems” in sections of Education Code related to an LEAs requirement to provide emergency epinephrine to school nurses or trained personnel; (2) specifically includes programs operated by or under contract with LEAs in existing provisions; and, (3) expands existing provisions to also apply to state or federally subsidized child care programs operated by or under contract with LEAs.

AB 1283 (Chen, Chapter 574, Statutes of 2023) authorizes a LEA to make emergency stock albuterol inhalers available at school districts, COEs, and charter schools, and authorizes school nurses or trained personnel who have volunteered to administer an albuterol inhaler to persons suffering from, or reasonably believed to be suffering from, respiratory distress.

SB 738 (Huff, Chapter 132, Statutes of 2015) requires a school district to accept the written statement from a physician who is contracted with a binational health plan for the purposes of authorizing a pupil to carry and self-administer inhaled asthma medication that the pupil is required to administer during the regular school day.

AB 2132 (Reyes, Chapter 832, Statutes of 2004) authorizes a pupil to carry and self-administer medication, including inhaled asthma medication, or to receive assistance from school personnel, if the school district receives written statements, as specified.

AB 2185 (Frommer, Chapter 711, Statutes of 2004) requires specified health care service plans to provide coverage for equipment for treating pediatric asthma and coverage for pediatric asthma outpatient self-management training and education.

AB 2367 (Chan, 2004) would have required school districts that receive an asthma action plan to maintain the plan on file and provide it to teachers. *This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.*

SUPPORT

American Medical Response West
California School Nurses Organization
California Society for Respiratory Care
Small School Districts Association

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 1154 **Hearing Date:** April 8, 2026
Author: Reyes
Version: February 18, 2026
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** No
Consultant: Ian Johnson

Subject: Public contracts: best value procurement: community college districts.

SUMMARY

This bill authorizes community college districts to use the best value procurement method for public works projects over \$1 million until December 31, 2030, establishes related procedural requirements, and requires participating districts to submit a report to the Legislature by January 1, 2030.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires school districts and community college districts to competitively bid contracts for equipment, materials, or supplies exceeding \$50,000 and award to the lowest responsible bidder, or reject all bids.
- 2) Authorizes school districts, until December 31, 2030, to use the best value procurement method for public works projects exceeding \$1 million.
- 3) Permanently authorizes the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to use best value procurement.
- 4) Requires school districts using best value procurement under the statewide pilot to submit a report to the Legislature by January 1, 2030.
- 5) Allows other public entities, including the University of California (UC), to use best value procurement methods.

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Authorizes the governing board of a community college district to use the best value procurement method for public works projects exceeding \$1 million until December 31, 2030.
- 2) Requires community college districts using this method to adopt and publish procedures and guidelines for evaluating bidder qualifications that ensure a fair and impartial process.

- 3) Requires contracts to be awarded to the bidder representing the best value, or else all bids must be rejected.
- 4) Establishes procedural requirements for bid solicitations, evaluation criteria, and selection processes consistent with existing best value statutes applicable to school districts.
- 5) Requires community college districts using best value procurement to submit a report to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature on or before January 1, 2030.
- 6) Repeals these provisions on January 1, 2031.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “California’s Community College Districts play a critical role in preparing our workforce, supporting economic mobility, and serving millions of students across the state. The quality, safety, and functionality of campus facilities directly impact student learning, program access, and overall student success. Unfortunately, when it comes to delivering major construction projects, community colleges are held to a procurement standard that limits their ability to select contractors based on overall quality and long-term value.

SB 1154 addresses this issue by allowing community college districts to use a best value procurement method for public works projects exceeding one million dollars, allowing contracts to be awarded based on a combination of price and objective qualitative criteria, not simply the lowest bid. This grants them with same flexibility already provided to K–12 school districts, the University of California, and the California State University.

Best value procurement helps ensure that projects are completed on time, built to high standards, and designed to support long-term functionality. By allowing districts to evaluate contractor experience, safety records, technical expertise, and life-cycle costs, SB 1154 promotes durable, high-quality facilities that enhance learning environments and support innovative instruction. These projects are essential to preparing students for transfer, career pathways, and participation in California’s evolving workforce and will ensure we are setting up our infrastructure for their long-term success.”

- 2) ***Aligning K–14 procurement authority.*** With the enactment of AB 361 (Schultz, Chapter 144, Statutes of 2025), school districts now have statewide authority, on a pilot basis, to use best value procurement, while LAUSD has permanent authority. Community college districts remain outside this framework despite managing significant capital outlay programs. This bill brings community college districts into alignment with the K-12 system, creating a more consistent procurement structure across publicly funded education segments.

- 3) **Revisiting the “lowest responsible bidder” model.** California’s traditional procurement model emphasizes awarding contracts based on the lowest responsible bid. While straightforward, this approach can undervalue contractor experience, safety records, and demonstrated ability to deliver projects on time and within budget. Best value procurement reflects a broader definition of value that incorporates qualitative factors alongside cost. This bill extends that policy shift to community college districts, raising similar questions considered in prior legislation: whether upfront cost savings should continue to outweigh long-term project performance.
- 4) **Evidence from K-12 and higher education entities.** The Legislature has already authorized best value procurement for several entities, including LAUSD and the UC. Evaluations of LAUSD’s use of best value procurement have found reductions in change orders, project delays, and claims. These findings suggest that incorporating non-cost factors into procurement decisions can produce more predictable project outcomes. Extending this authority to community college districts allows the state to test whether these benefits translate to a different segment of the education system with its own governance structures and project delivery needs.
- 5) **Guardrails and accountability.** Consistent with the K-12 pilot, this bill includes procedural safeguards to promote fairness and transparency, including requirements for published evaluation criteria and formal bid processes. It also requires community college districts to report to the Legislature on their use of best value procurement by January 1, 2030. These reporting requirements will provide important data to assess whether the method improves project delivery and cost outcomes in the community college context.
- 6) **A parallel pilot structure.** By aligning the sunset date (January 1, 2031) and reporting deadline (January 1, 2030) with the K-12 best value pilot, this bill creates an opportunity for the Legislature to evaluate procurement outcomes across both systems simultaneously. This parallel structure may support a more comprehensive statewide assessment of best value procurement and inform future decisions about whether to expand, modify, or make permanent these authorities.
- 7) **Capacity and implementation considerations.** Best value procurement requires more administrative capacity than traditional low-bid contracting, including the ability to design evaluation criteria, review qualifications, and conduct structured scoring processes. While some community college districts, particularly larger ones, may be well-positioned to implement these requirements, smaller districts may face challenges. As with the K-12 pilot, the effectiveness of this authority may depend in part on local capacity and the availability of technical assistance or model procurement frameworks.

SUPPORT

San Bernardino Community College District (sponsor)

OPPOSITION

Associated General Contractors, California Chapters

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 1255	Hearing Date:	April 8, 2026
Author:	Reyes		
Version:	April 6, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: Postsecondary education: Designation of California Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

NOTE: This bill has been referred to the Committees on Education and *Governmental Organization*. A “do pass” motion should include referral to the Committee on *Governmental Organization*.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes, upon appropriation, criteria and procedures for postsecondary educational institutions in California to receive a designation as a California Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) for the purposes of recognizing institutions that excel at providing academic resources to Latino students.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the California State University (CSU), under the administration of the Trustees of the CSU, the University of California (UC), under the administration of the UC Regents, the California Community Colleges (CCC), under the administration the Board of Governors of the CCC, and independent institutions of higher education, as defined, as 4 segments of postsecondary education in the state. (Education Code (EC) §66600, §70901, § 66010.4 et al, and Article IX, § (9)(a) of the California Constitution)
- 2) Establishes criteria and procedures for postsecondary education institutions in California to receive a designation as a California Black-Serving Institution (BSI). It designates the CSU Central office for Advancement of Black Excellence to serve as the managing entity and authorizes the office to process applications for the designation. An eight-person governing board is established to determine through a 2/3 vote whether a college or university is qualified for the BSI designation. (EC § 66076 et al.)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Establishes, upon appropriation, the Designation of California HSI for purposes of recognizing colleges and universities that excel at providing academic

resources to Latino students enrolled in degree or certification programs offered by colleges and universities. The designation is to be only awarded to qualifying applicants by a 2/3 vote of approval from the governing board.

Eligibility

- 2) Authorizes the designation for a period of five academic years and permits a recipient to apply for renewal after five years.
- 3) Specifies that an applicant is eligible for the designation if the applicant meets all of the following requirements:
 - a) Has at least 25 percent of the college or university's graduation rate identifying as Latino students.
 - b) Meets the application deadline established by the managing entity.
 - c) Has either submitted an initial or renewal application that meets specified criteria.
 - d) Posts the initial or renewal application on the applicant's website.

Initial Application Process

- 4) Requires that the initial application include, at a minimum, all of the following:
 - a) A certification by the institution's chief administrator of their commitment to address Latino student success that is consistent with the institution's mission.
 - b) Academic goals for the institution to achieve within the five-year period for which the initial designation is valid. The goals described in the application are to improve retention, time-to-degree or time-to-certificate completion, and graduation rates of Latino students and the overall student population based on data submitted by the applicant, as applicable.
 - c) Academic equity goals for the applicant to achieve within the five-year period for which the initial designation is valid. The goals described by the applicant are to reduce the academic equity gaps in the retention, time-to-degree or time-to-certificate completion, and graduation rates between the applicant's Latino students and the overall student population based on data submitted by the applicant, as applicable.
 - d) A strategic plan for the five-year period for which the initial designation is valid. The strategic plan is to describe how the applicant intends to meet their stated academic goals and academic equity goals. The strategic plan is to include at a minimum all of the following:
 - i) A mission statement that addresses the applicant's commitment to serve Latino students.

- ii) Outreach services to Latino students to encourage them to enroll.
 - iii) Academic and basic needs support services to assist in the workforce development success of Latino students, which may include affinity centers, corequisite coursework, or concurrent support activities.
 - iv) An outline of the planned allocation of resources during the five-year period for which the initial designation is valid to ensure that the strategic plan can be implemented.
 - v) An outline of how the applicant will use existing resources to provide culturally relevant professional development to the applicant's faculty and staff.
- e) A four-year college or university applicant is to include graduation rates for the previous three academic years for all students, and for Latino students, within the normal time and up to 150 percent of the normal time to degree completion, yield, retention, and graduation rate.
- f) A community college applicant is to include for the previous five academic years:
- i) The number of degree and certificate programs completed by all students, as well as by Latino students.
 - ii) The number of all students and of Latino students who completed degree and certificate programs within the normal time and up to 300 percent of the normal time to degree completion yield, retention, and graduation rate.
 - iii) The student transfer rates for all students and for Latino students, to four-year colleges and universities.

Renewal Application Process

- 5) Requires that upon expiration of an application, the renewal application include all of the following:
- a) Resubmission of the applicable application.
 - b) Demonstration of the applicant's progress to achieve academic goals, academic equity goals, and strategic plan implementation stated in the previous application.
 - c) Changes made to the mission statement in the strategic plan and/or in the description of campus resources.
 - d) A written certification by the institution's chief administrative officer of the

applicant's continual commitment to address Latino student workforce development success that is consistent with the applicant's mission.

- e) Academic goals for the applicant to achieve within the five-year period for which the renewal designation is valid. The goals described are to improve retention, time-to-degree or time-to-certificate completion, and graduation rates of Latino students based on the data submitted by the applicant.
- f) Academic equity goals for the applicant to achieve within the five-year period for which the renewal designation is valid. The goals described are to reduce academic equity gaps in the retention, time-to-degree or time-to-certificate completion, and graduation rates between the applicant's Latino and overall student population based on data submitted by the applicant.
- g) A strategic plan for the five-year period for which the renewal designation is valid on how the applicant intends to meet the academic goals and academic equity goals submitted. The strategic plan is to include, but is not limited to, all of the following:
 - i) Outreach services to Latino students to encourage them to enroll.
 - ii) Academic and basic needs support services to assist in the academic success of Latino students, which may include campus affinity centers and corequisite coursework or concurrent support activities.
 - iii) An outline of the planned allocation of resources for the five-year period for which the renewal designation is valid, to ensure that the strategic plan described can be implemented.
 - iv) An outline of how the applicant will use existing resources to provide culturally relevant professional development to the applicant's faculty and staff.
- h) A four-year college or university applicant is to include graduation rates for the previous three academic years for all students, and for Latino students, within the normal time and up to 150 percent of the normal time to degree completion, yield, retention, and graduation rate.
- i) A community college applicant is to include for the previous five academic years:
 - i) The number of degree and certificate programs completed by all students and by Latino students.
 - ii) The number of all students, and of Latino students, who completed degree and certificate programs within the normal time and up to 300 percent of the normal time to degree completion, yield, retention, and graduation rate.

- iii) The student transfer rates for all students, and for Latino students, to four-year colleges and universities.
- 6) Provides that if a renewal application is denied by the governing board, the applicant is only authorized to apply to receive an initial designation.

Managing Entity

- 7) Makes CSU the managing entity for the designation and requires CSU to act as a neutral administrative body charged with duties related to accepting applications, establishing annual deadlines, processing applications biannually, notifying applicants of approval or denial of their application by the governing board, preparing, and delivering the appropriate insignia to approved applicants.

Governing Board

- 8) Establishes the governing board of the Designation of California HSI for the purpose of awarding colleges and universities with the designation based on applications presented by CSU.
- 9) Requires that the governing board be subject to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act and be comprised of the following eight members:
- a) The Lieutenant Governor, or their designee.
 - b) One member of the public, to be appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.
 - c) One member of the public, to be appointed by the President pro Tempore of the Senate.
 - d) A UC President designee.
 - e) A CSU Chancellor designee.
 - f) A CCC Chancellor designee.
 - g) A designee of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities.
 - h) The California Latino Legislative Caucus chair, or their designee.
- 10) Deems any designee of an appointed governing board member qualified to make decisions on behalf of that appointed position.
- 11) Limits board service of a public member appointed by either the Assembly Speaker or the Senate President pro Tempore to a two-year term. The bill further requires that the appointing authority of a public member make every effort to ensure that the board membership includes persons who have a strong interest

in the further development and improvement of the academic success of Latino students.

- 12) Requires, for purposes of the first two years of the governing board's operations, the chair to be the Lieutenant Governor or their designee. Thereafter the governing board is authorized to select a chairperson from within its membership by a two-thirds vote, as specified.
- 13) Requires the governing board to convene twice a year to vote on the approval or denial of applications by a two-thirds vote by those present for the vote.

Miscellaneous

- 14) Defines various terms for the purposes of the bill, including:
 - a) "Applicant" to mean an eligible college or university that applies for a designation.
 - b) "College or University" to mean a University of California, California State University, or California Community College campus, or an independent institution of higher education.
- 15) States various legislative findings and declarations relating to the importance of supporting Latino students in higher education, historic barriers faced by Mexican American and other Latino students in California public schools, and the uncertainty surrounding the federal HSI program.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "Since the federal designation was established, Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) have played a critical role in California's higher education system. California is home to the most HSI in the country, with 171 colleges and universities holding this designation.

"These HSIs, spanning both public and private colleges and universities, not only build the capacity to better serve Latino and low-income students, but leverage the resources they receive to develop programming that helps all students on campuses. HSI funding has helped institutions provide tutoring, mental health services, career counseling, and modern learning facilities that directly improve persistence and graduation rates. Data shows that these institutions provide large economic returns for all the students they enroll, and in turn fuel local economies and the workforce. Despite this work, many HSIs are currently in jeopardy due to political and legal battles, which threaten their ability to sustain the equity strides they have made for students.

"California's strength comes from the success of our diverse students. By formally recognizing Hispanic-Serving Institutions in state law, we are acknowledging the campuses that are doing the hard work to close opportunity gaps and help Latino students thrive in college and beyond. This designation will

shine a light on what works and encourage continued investment in student success.

“We cannot allow our students to become collateral damage in political and legal battles. SB 1255 sends a clear message: we will defend college access, protect educational quality, and stand firmly behind the students who represent the future of our state.”

- 2) ***Federal Minority-Serving Institutions program uncertainty.*** Federally, the Minority-Serving Institutions program supports higher education institutions that serve high concentrations of minority and low-income populations by assisting these institutions in strengthening their academic, administrative, and fiscal capacity. The Minority-Serving Institution Program consist of several types of programs, including the HSI Program. Eligible institutions may apply for competitive grants. To qualify for a federal HSI designation, a qualifying institution must have an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic. The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities reports that nationally 171 of the 615 institutions meeting the federal HSI enrollment criterion in 2023 are located in California. At the federal level, Minority-Serving Institutions programs, including HSI, face uncertainty regarding ongoing funding and program structure, which has prompted consideration of state-level recognition.
- 3) ***Creates California HSI designation.*** This bill aims to establish an independent HSI designation for California institutions defined as CCC, CSU, UC, and independent higher education institutions. When applying for the designation, institutions are required to provide information on the outcomes of Latino students, as well as a detailed description of academic resources available to support their academic success. Applicants must fulfill several additional criteria. The designation is valid for a period of five years, after which a campus may apply for renewal. Unlike the federal program, the proposed state designation does not offer financial assistance to successful applicants.
- 4) ***Modeled after BSI designation.*** This bill’s provisions appear to be modeled after SB 1348 (Bradford, Chapter 627, Statutes of 2024), which created California’s BSI designation, the first of its kind, to recognize colleges and universities that excel at providing academic resources to Black and African American students. CSU’s Statewide Central Office for Advancement of Black Excellence serves as its managing entity, with determinations made by a separate governing board. The BSI governing board convened its inaugural meeting in December of 2025 and approved an initial cohort of 31 campuses for the designation, including two UC campuses, three CSU campuses, 25 CCCs, and one independent institution of higher education. Information regarding subsequent meetings is not available on the BSI’s governing board website. Similar to SB 1348, this bill creates a statewide designation, establishes a managing entity (CSU) and governing board, and requires institutions to apply and demonstrate efforts to improve student success, including for a historically underserved student populations, such as Latino students.

- 5) ***Clarification needed on eligibility metric.*** This bill additionally, includes a 25 percent threshold tied to Latino students and references a “graduation rate” metric. However, it is unclear whether that threshold is intended to measure the proportion of Latino students among graduates or the graduation rate of Latino students, which may create ambiguity about how the threshold is to be applied. *Moving forward, the author may wish to consider clarifying the graduation rate eligibility metric or consider an alternative approach such as using degree completion data to establish eligibility as follows:*
- *For a community college, the community college demonstrates that, over the three most recent academic years for which completion data are available, Latino students comprise at least 25 percent of the combined total of degrees and certificates awarded and students who transfer to a four-year university.*
 - *For a four-year university, the university demonstrates that, over the three most recent academic years for which completion data are available, Latino students comprise at least 25 percent of undergraduate degrees awarded by the university.*
- 6) ***Related legislation.***

AB 2374 (Fong, 2026) would establish criteria and procedures for postsecondary education institutions in California to receive a designation as a California Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution for the purposes of recognizing institutions that excel at providing academic resources to Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander students. Similar to this bill, AB 2374 creates a statewide designation (AANAPSI), establishes a governing board, and requires institutions to apply and demonstrate efforts to improve student success, including for a historically underserved student population. AB 2374 is pending hearing in the Assembly Higher Education Committee.

SUPPORT

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (sponsor)
 Antelope Valley Community College District
 Association of Independent California Colleges & Universities
 California Community College Independents
 California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
 Campaign for College Opportunity
 Cerritos College
 Contra Costa Community College District
 EDvance College
 El Camino Community College District
 Foothill-De Anza Community College District
 Kern Community College District
 Lake Tahoe Community College
 Los Rios Community College District
 Mt. San Jacinto Community College District

National University
San Bernardino Community College District
San Diego Unified School District
Santa Monica Community College District
Southern California University of Health Sciences
Southwestern Community College District
State Center Community College District
University of California Chicanx Latinx Alumni Association
University of California Office of the President
Victor Valley Community College District
Two Individuals

OPPOSITION

None received

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- 6) Establishes the California Education Interagency Council within the Government Operations Agency to serve as a statewide forum for coordinating education and workforce policy across K-12 education, higher education, and labor and workforce development systems. The council is tasked with aligning education pathways with workforce demand, improving access to CTE and college-to-career pathways, and developing recommendations to the Legislature and Governor regarding CTE, workforce alignment, and student transitions across systems.

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Establishes the CTE Technical Assistance and Equity Pilot Program as a 3-year pilot program to provide technical assistance in CTE with a focus on improving access and outcomes for historically underserved student populations.
- 2) Requires the SPI to designate, within 6 months of the bill's effective date, a COE to serve as the lead agency and two pilot regions to receive intensive technical assistance.
- 3) Appropriates \$4 million from the General Fund for the 2026-27 fiscal year and provides that funding for the pilot is subject to the annual Budget Act appropriations, to be allocated to the lead agency.
- 4) Requires the lead agency to:
 - a) Develop and disseminate exemplary models for inclusive CTE pathways, particularly for students with disabilities, English learners, and other historically underserved populations.
 - b) Develop frameworks and toolkits to support industry education partnerships and scalable career pathway models.
 - c) Provide technical assistance, capacity building, and coordination support to COEs within the designated pilot regions.
 - d) Prioritize support to COEs serving high proportions of underserved students or demonstrating significant equity gaps in CTE access and outcomes.
 - e) Develop and maintain a public-facing website to share resources, tools, and promising practices.
 - f) Submit annual reports to the SPI, Governor, and Legislature, and to provide a comprehensive evaluation report prior to the conclusion of the pilot.
 - g) Begin providing services by the start of the fiscal year following designation.

- 5) Encourages COEs within the pilot regions to participate and requires participating COEs to designate staff to coordinate CTE technical assistance within their jurisdiction.
- 6) Requires school districts and charter schools that elect to receive technical assistance to participate in data collection and reporting, share promising practices, and commit to implementing recommendations and improvement strategies.
- 7) Repeals the program on January 1, 2032.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “Improving and expanding Career Technical Education (CTE) has been a priority for the California State Legislature, as CTE continues to lead students into meaningful high-wage, high demand jobs. However, many local education agencies lack the resources and capacity to create and implement CTE programs that serve all student populations.

SB 1222 would create a lead agency that would administer a three-year pilot program to provide technical assistance to local education agencies within two pilot regions designated by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. This bill would assist schools that are struggling with developing and implementing CTE programs.”

- 2) ***Master Plan for Career Education and the role of coordination.*** The recently released *California Master Plan for Career Education* identifies a central challenge facing the state’s career education system: despite significant investments across K-12 education, higher education, and workforce training, programs remain fragmented across multiple agencies, funding streams, and regional initiatives. As a result, efforts often operate in parallel, requiring separate planning processes and placing the burden on educators and students to navigate a complex system.

In response, the plan calls for a more coordinated, statewide approach to career education, including the establishment of a state-level coordinating entity and stronger regional coordination structures to better align existing efforts. These recommendations are reflected in recent legislation establishing the California Education Interagency Council, which is intended to serve as a central forum for aligning education and workforce systems.

In this context, this bill proposes a new technical assistance pilot to improve equity and outcomes in CTE. The Committee may wish to consider how this pilot would align with the state’s broader effort to move toward a more coordinated system, including whether its goals could be achieved through existing or emerging coordination structures.

- 3) ***Existing technical assistance infrastructure and system fragmentation.*** California currently supports a wide range of technical assistance efforts intended to strengthen CTE pathways and workforce alignment. These include, among others, the K-12 component of the SWP, which provides regional technical assistance to support pathway development and employer engagement; the GSPP, which includes dedicated technical assistance providers to support grantees; and additional statewide initiatives such as the California CTE Leadership Project and Perkins-funded support structures. Collectively, these efforts support LEAs in areas such as pathway design, industry partnerships, work-based learning, and data reporting.

The sponsors of this bill note that many of these efforts are tied to specific funding streams or program requirements, which may limit their ability to support broader, cross-program planning. From this perspective, this bill is intended to provide a more flexible and cohesive source of technical assistance to support COEs in coordinating CTE efforts across multiple initiatives, with a focus on improving equity.

At the same time, given the number of existing technical assistance providers, the Committee may wish to consider how the proposed pilot would complement and build upon these efforts.

- 4) ***Existing K-12 CTE funding structure.*** California supports K–12 CTE through several major, ongoing state investments, including three of the state’s largest competitive grant programs: the CTEIG Program, the K–12 Strong Workforce Program (K–12 SWP), and the GSPP. Collectively, these programs provide hundreds of millions of dollars annually to support the development, expansion, and alignment of CTE pathways with postsecondary education and workforce needs.
- a) ***The CTEIG Program.*** Established in 2015 as a \$900 million, three-year investment, the CTEIG program was intended to support LEAs in maintaining and expanding high-quality CTE programs during the transition to full implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), which had absorbed prior categorical CTE funding streams. The program, administered by the California Department of Education (CDE), provides competitive grants to LEAs that meet specified requirements, including a 2:1 local match. Ongoing funding for CTEIG was established at \$150 million annually in 2018 and increased to \$300 million annually in 2021.
- b) ***The K-12 SWP.*** Established in 2018 as part of the CCCs SWP, the K-12 SWP supports the development and alignment of K-12 CTE pathways with regional workforce needs. The program is administered by the CCCCO and is currently funded at approximately \$163.5 million annually, including funding for LEA grants, regional K-12 pathway coordinators, and technical assistance providers. Unlike CTEIG, which is administered at the state level, K-12 SWP funding is allocated to eight regional consortia, each of which administers a competitive grant process and determines funding awards based on regional priorities and labor market needs.

- c) **GSPP.** Established in 2022, the GSPP represents a one-time state investment of \$500 million to support the planning and implementation of integrated college and career pathways in high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand sectors. The program is intended to support seamless transitions from high school to postsecondary education and employment, while aligning educational programs with regional workforce needs.

GSPP requires participating LEAs to implement comprehensive pathway models that combine A-G coursework, dual enrollment opportunities, work-based learning, and student support services, and to partner with postsecondary institutions, employers, and regional stakeholders. The program also includes a dedicated technical assistance component, with up to 5% of funds allocated for regional providers to support program design, implementation, continuous improvement, and coordination across related CTE initiatives. Statute further encourages alignment between GSPP and other CTE programs, including CTEIG and K-12 SWP.

- 5) **Defining CTE.** CTE prepares students for the world of work by integrating academic instruction with technical and occupational skills in a hands-on learning environment. CTE programs typically involve a multiyear sequence of courses that provide students with a pathway to postsecondary education and careers.

In California, CTE is organized into 15 industry sectors encompassing 58 pathways, each designed to reflect the knowledge and skills needed for specific occupations. Programs are often developed through partnerships among K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers, and may include opportunities such as dual enrollment and work-based learning.

CTE courses and pathways may be offered in comprehensive high schools, through regional programs operated by COEs or joint powers authorities, or as part of integrated models such as Linked Learning. Community colleges and other postsecondary institutions also offer CTE programs that build on these pathways.

- 6) **Outcomes associated with CTE participation.** Research indicates that participation in CTE coursework is associated with improved academic and workforce outcomes. Studies have found that students with greater exposure to CTE are more likely to graduate from high school, enroll in postsecondary education, and experience positive employment and earnings outcomes.

CTE concentrators have been shown to graduate at higher rates than their peers, and participation in rigorous CTE coursework alongside academic instruction is associated with improved college and career readiness. Research also suggests that CTE participation may have particularly strong benefits for students from low-income backgrounds and other historically underserved groups.

- 7) **College and career readiness is a state priority.** Under the LCFF, LEAs are required to demonstrate how they are preparing students for college and careers as part of their Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs). The California

School Dashboard includes a College and Career Indicator, which incorporates measures such as completion of a CTE pathway to assess student readiness for postsecondary education and employment.

- 8) ***Budget context and prioritization of new investments.*** This bill proposes a new, ongoing state investment to support a technical assistance pilot focused on improving equity and coordination in CTE programs. As such, the proposal would ultimately be considered within the context of the state's overall fiscal condition and the annual budget process.

The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) has indicated that the state continues to face ongoing fiscal pressure and multiyear budget challenges, with projected spending growth outpacing revenues in future years. In recent budgets, the Legislature has addressed these pressures through a combination of spending reductions, funding delays, and the use of reserves, reflecting a constrained fiscal environment.

Within this context, decisions regarding the affordability and prioritization of new or expanded state programs are typically addressed through the budget and appropriations process. The role of this Committee is to evaluate the policy merits of the proposal, including how it aligns with existing programs and statewide efforts to coordinate and improve CTE pathways.

- 9) ***Structure of the proposed pilot and selection of the lead agency.*** This bill requires the SPI to designate a single COE as the lead agency to administer the pilot. Legislative intent language and sponsor materials indicate that the Orange County Office of Education is anticipated to serve in this role.

The Committee may wish to consider the implications of structuring a statewide pilot around a single, pre-identified local entity. While COEs vary in their experience and capacity to provide technical assistance, statewide initiatives are typically structured to ensure open and competitive selection processes, as well as broad geographic representation, in order to support equity and statewide applicability.

In addition, the bill combines several distinct elements—a single lead provider, two pilot regions, and voluntary participation by local entities—without clearly specifying whether the intent is to test a scalable statewide model, provide targeted regional support, or evaluate the effectiveness of a particular provider's approach. Clarifying the primary objective of the pilot, as well as the rationale for the selection of the lead agency, may help inform how the program would be evaluated and whether it could be expanded or replicated in other regions of the state.

SUPPORT

Orange County Department of Education (sponsor)
Alameda County Office of Education
California Catholic Conference
California Charter Schools Association

California Opportunity Youth Network
California State Council on Developmental Disabilities
Union Roofing Contractors Association

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 1378	Hearing Date:	April 8, 2026
Author:	Ochoa Bogh		
Version:	February 20, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Therresa Austin		

Subject: California Excellence in Service Learning Designation Program.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to establish the California Excellence in Service Learning (CESL) Designation Program to publicly recognize and designate schoolsites and local educational agencies (LEA) that demonstrate excellence in service learning.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the California Serves Program under the CDE in collaboration with CaliforniaVolunteers, to promote access to effective service learning for pupils in grade 12 who are enrolled at participating LEAs, with the goal of expanding access for high school graduates in obtaining a State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE) through service learning. (Education Code (EC) § 51475)
- 2) Establishes the California Serves Program for the purposes of awarding grants to promote access to effective service learning for students in grade 12, with the goal of expanding access for high school graduates in obtaining an SSCE through service learning. Allowable uses for grants include:
 - a) Paid planning time for teachers to increase the use of service learning in instruction.
 - b) Professional development on service learning for administrators and teachers.
 - c) Purchase of instructional materials to help integrate service learning in instruction.
 - d) Participation costs, including materials or travel expenses related to service learning activities.
 - e) Personnel costs for coordinating service learning at the LEA or a school site.

- f) Participation costs associated with grant program evaluation. (EC § 51475)
- 3) Establishes the SSCE, affixed to the diploma or transcript of an eligible pupil, to encourage, and create pathways for, pupils in elementary and secondary schools to become civically engaged in democratic governmental institutions at the local, state, and national levels. (EC § 51475)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires the CDE to establish the CESL Designation Program to recognize and designate schoolsites and LEAs that meet specified criteria related to service learning.
- 2) Requires the CDE to adopt application criteria for the schoolsites and LEAs seeking the CESL designation. Requires the CDE to consider, in the development of said criteria, requirements that the applicants do all the following:
 - a) Demonstrate an active status designation, as identified by the CDE on the CDE's internet website.
 - b) Designate a staff member to serve as a point of contact for service learning.
 - c) Provide professional development opportunities to train staff on service learning.
 - d) Develop a dedicated web page on the applicant's internet website with easily accessible information and resources on service learning.
- 3) Requires LEAs that have applied and been awarded the designation, to display its active status designation on its internet website.
- 4) States that the CESL designation shall be valid for three years, after which an applicant seeking to renew its designation shall reapply pursuant to the application criteria developed by CDE pursuant to #2 above.
- 5) Authorizes CDE to request additional information to verify if an applicant that has earned the CESL designation continues to adhere to the CESL designation criteria it develops.
- 6) States that if the CDE finds that an LEA that has previously earned a CESL designation ceases to comply with the CDE adopted criteria during the three-year period, the applicant shall lose the CESL designation.
- 7) Authorizes an LEA that loses its designation as a result of falling out of compliance with the criteria adopted by CDE to reapply.

- 8) Defines the following terms:
- a) “Applicant” means a schoolsite or a local educational agency.
 - b) “Local educational agency” means a school district, county office of education, or charter school.
 - c) “Schoolsite” means a publicly funded school serving pupils in kindergarten, or any grades 1 to 12, inclusive.
 - d) “Service Learning” means an educational approach that intentionally combines meaningful community service activities with instruction and reflection to support pupil progress toward academic and civic engagement learning objectives while meeting social needs.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “Senate Bill 1378 would establish the California Excellence in Service Learning Designation Program to recognize Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and schools that demonstrate excellence in implementing service learning programs.

“Service learning integrates community service with academic instruction, allowing students to apply classroom knowledge to real-world issues while developing civic responsibility and leadership skills. California already recognizes schools for excellence in other areas through programs such as the California Green Ribbon Schools Award and the Purple Star School Designation, which highlight achievements in environmental sustainability and support for military-connected students.

“California currently lacks a statewide recognition program that highlights schools and LEAs excelling in service learning. SB 1378 addresses this gap by creating a designation that recognizes outstanding programs across the state. By recognizing these efforts, the program will promote student engagement while strengthening connections between schools and their communities.”

- 2) ***California Serves Program.*** The California Serves Program was established through the 2022 State Budget Act as a collaboration between the CDE and CaliforniaVolunteers to promote access to effective service learning for high school students and support them in obtaining an SSCE through service learning.

At the outset of the program, CDE and CaliforniaVolunteers were tasked with reviewing the available evidence on ways to incorporate effective service learning for pupils in grades 9 through 12, and to provide recommendations to the Legislature consistent with the recommended criteria and guidance for the SSCE, on evidence-based strategies to expand access to high-quality service

learning programs. The final report, published in January 2024, issued the following recommendations:

- a) Establish effective standards and indicators to guide the development of equitable, high-quality service learning programs;
- b) Incorporate curriculum and strategies that encourage deep civic learning;
- c) Ensure teacher access to ongoing professional development and learning;
- d) Prioritize efforts to track who earns the SSCE; and
- e) Design meaningful infrastructure that promotes service learning at all levels.

The corresponding California Serves Grant Program was also established in the 2022 Budget Act with an annual ongoing allocation of \$5 million to provide grants to eligible LEAs to help cover specified costs incurred in the development and facilitation of service learning programs and to expand access for high school graduates in obtaining a SSCE. To apply for this grant, applicant LEAs must (1) have at least 55% of their student enrollment be unduplicated pupils as defined in statute and (2) serve students in grade 12. While promoting access to effective service learning for students in grade 12 is the focus and eligibility criteria, the grant program provides LEAs with the flexibility to also support such programming for students as early as grade 9. Allowable uses for grant funds are as follows:

- a) Paid planning time for teachers to increase the use of service learning in instruction.
- b) Professional development on service learning for administrators and teachers.
- c) Purchase of instructional materials to help integrate service learning in instruction.
- d) Participation costs, including materials or travel expenses related to service learning activities.
- e) Personnel costs for coordinating service learning at the LEA or a school site.
- f) Participation costs associated with grant program evaluation.

Since its pilot year in the 2022-23 school year, the California Serves Grant Program has awarded 35 LEAs with award amounts ranging from \$24,000 to \$500,000—the maximum allowable under statute. The grant program is currently in its fourth cycle of funding.

- 3) **State Seal of Civic Engagement.** On September 10, 2020, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted criteria and guidance to award an SSCE to California students who demonstrate excellence in civics education and participation, and an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government. To be eligible for the SSCE, students must:
- a) Be engaged in academic work in a productive way;
 - b) Demonstrate a competent understanding of the United States and California constitutions; functions and governance of local governments; tribal government structures and organizations; the role of the citizen in a constitutional democracy; and democratic principles, concepts, and processes;
 - c) Participate in one or more informed civic engagement project(s) that address real-world problems and require students to identify and inquire into civic needs or problems, consider varied responses, take action, and reflect on efforts;
 - d) Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions through self-reflection; and
 - e) Exhibit character traits that reflect civic-mindedness and a commitment to positively impact the classroom, school, community, and/or society.

Successful completion of the requirements is reflected by a seal affixed to student transcripts, diplomas, or certificates of completion. According to CDE's 2024-25 school year data, 23,040 seals have been awarded to students across 492 schools that participate in the SSCE.

- 4) **California School Recognition Program (CSRP).** The CDE operates several recognition programs known collectively as the CSRP. According to the CDE, "the CSRP gives exceptional schools and school leaders the opportunity to gather and share their Model Programs and Practices and their special skills which have contributed to their success. There are many details that go into the eligibility and selection of these awardees. All of the award programs recognize sustained student achievement, excellence in environmental program design, or superior job performance, and community involvement. CSRP Awardees are recognized at a CSRP Awards Ceremony held during the spring." Qualifications and standards are set by the CDE to ensure the quality of candidates selected to receive these recognitions. Since its inception in 1986, the CSRP recognizes numerous types of schools, including the following:
- a) The Purple Star School Designation
 - b) California Distinguished Schools Program
 - c) California Exemplary Arts Education Award

- d) California Exemplary Dual Enrollment Award
- e) California Green Ribbon Schools
- f) California Teachers of the Year
- g) Classified School Employees of the Year
- h) Model Community Day School Recognition Program
- i) Model Continuation High School Recognition Program
- j) National Blue Ribbon Schools

Most relevant in this discussion is the Civic Learning Award for CA Public Schools, which recognizes and celebrates public kindergarten through grade 12 schools that demonstrate a commitment to providing rich civic learning opportunities for students through instruction, programs, activities, and/or events. Among the criteria for the Civic Learning Award is a measure of how well the school executes the [Six Proven Practices for Effective Civic Learning](#), including service learning linked to civic learning curriculum.

The Civic Learning Awards were first presented in 2012 and have recognized more than 350 public schools of all grade levels across California. The Civic Learning Award program has four levels: Awards of Excellence, Distinction, Merit, and Honorable Mentions.

The Civic Learning Award, like most CSRPs awards, was established by the CDE and the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) using their existing authority to develop programs that advance statewide priorities.

5) ***Author's amendments to be taken as Committee Amendments.***

- a) Strikes the provision requiring the SPI to consider, during the application criteria development process, including criteria that requires an LEA or school to demonstrate an active status designation prior to a designation being awarded.
- b) Requires the SPI to adopt criteria for schools and LEAs to renew their designations upon expiration.

6) ***Related legislation.***

SB 584 (Limon, 2025) would have expanded the existing California Serves Program to promote access to effective service learning for grades 1 through 12; required LEAs to implement a Civic Engagement Pathways Program for pupils in grades 1 through 8; and required the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC), during its next consideration for the revision of the history and social sciences framework, to include civic engagement experiences, as specified. *This bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.*

AB 422 (Jackson, Chapter 692, Statutes of 2025) would require the SPI, by January 1, 2027, to recommend revised criteria to the SBE for awarding the SSCE, including a demonstrated understanding of the importance of preserving democracy and its vital institutions.

SB 920 (Seyarto, Chapter 923, Statutes of 2024) codified the existing Purple Star School Designation Program, which was established by the CDE in 2022 to recognize and designate schools that meet certain requirements and signal which schools are the most committed and best equipped to meet military-connected pupils and their families' unique needs.

ACR 53 (Ward, Chapter 57, Statutes of 2021) requests the CDE to establish and manage a program designating schools as Purple Star Schools when schools support military-connected students in specified ways, and requests the CDE to use the Military Child Education Coalition for resources and information regarding establishing and managing a Purple Star School Program in California.

AB 24 (Eggman, Chapter 604, Statutes of 2017) established the SSCE, to be affixed to the diploma of qualifying high school graduates, based on a demonstration of excellence in civics education and participation.

SUPPORT

Generation Up (co-sponsor)
Jewish Family and Children's Services of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties (co-sponsor)
California Association of Student Councils
California Charter Schools Association
Center for Volunteer & Nonprofit Leadership
National Youth Leadership Council
Youth Service America

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 1101	Hearing Date:	April 8, 2026
Author:	Pérez		
Version:	February 13, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: Postsecondary education: sharing personal information: notice.

NOTE: This bill has been referred to the Committees on Education and *Privacy, Digital Technologies, and Consumer Protection*. A “do pass” motion should include referral to the Committee on *Privacy, Digital Technologies, and Consumer Protection*.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the California State University (CSU) Trustees, the governing board of a community college district (CCD), and a qualifying independent institution of higher education and requests the University of California (UC) Regents to notify faculty, staff, and students if their personal information, as defined, is shared with the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) under the specified circumstances. It further limits the sharing of personal information of faculty, staff, and students with OCR to that which is required by federal and state law.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the UC as a public trust to be administered by the Regents and grants the Regents full powers of organization and governance subject only to legislative control as necessary to ensure the security of funds, compliance with terms of its endowments, and the statutory requirements around competitive bidding and contracts, sales of property, and the purchase of materials, goods, and services. (Article IX, Section 9(a) of the California Constitution)
- 2) Stipulates that no provision of the Donahue Higher Education Act shall apply to the UC unless the UC Regents adopts the provision. (Education Code (EC) § 67400)
- 3) Establishes the CSU system, made of 22 campuses, and bestows upon the CSU Trustees, through the Board of Trustees, the power, duties, and functions with respect to the management, administration, and control of the CSU system. (EC §§ 66606 and 89030 et seq.)
- 4) Establishes the California Community Colleges (CCC) under the administration of the Board of Governors of the CCC as one of the segments of public

postsecondary education in this state. The CCC shall be comprised of community college districts. (EC § 70900)

- 5) Defines “qualifying institution,” for purposes of the Cal Grant program, as a California institution that meets specified requirements, including accreditation, participation in federal financial aid programs, and satisfies cohort default and graduation rate requirements. An independent institution of higher education qualifies only if it satisfies these requirements. (EC § 69432.7 (l)(1))
- 6) Under federal law, establishes the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which sets requirements for the privacy of student education records and generally prohibits disclosure without student consent, except under specified circumstances, including compliance with a lawfully issued subpoena or in response to certain federal audits or evaluations. FERPA also requires institutions to notify students of a subpoena prior to compliance, unless otherwise directed. (20 United States Code § 1232(g); Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 99)
- 7) Under the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), grants California residents rights regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information by businesses, including the right to know what information is collected and how it is shared. For purposes of the CCPA, “personal information” is defined to include information that identifies, relates to, or could reasonably be linked with a particular consumer or household and includes, but is not limited to, specific categories of information. (Civil Code Section 1798.140 (v))

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires, the CSU Trustees, the governing board of a community college district, and an independent institution of higher education that is a Cal Grant qualifying institution and requests the UC Regents to notify faculty, staff, and students if their personal information is shared with OCR when the request for personal information is made as part of an investigative, compliance, or enforcement action.
- 2) Requires that when requests for personal information are made by subpoena, the notification be made as soon as reasonably practicable before complying with the subpoena.
- 3) Requires that the notification include a description of the specific types of personal information shared, including, but not limited to, telephone numbers, email addresses, and physical addresses.
- 4) Limits the sharing of personal information with the OCR to that which is required by federal and state law.
- 5) Defines, for purposes of this bill, “personal information,” to have the same meaning as defined in the CCPA.

- 6) Provides that the provisions of this bill are severable, as specified.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “The U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces federal civil rights laws in education and may request personal information about students, faculty, and staff during investigations. Recent federal inquiries have raised concerns about transparency in how universities disclose such information, especially as the nature of investigations has shifted. While OCR investigations were once prompted by complaints from students or families alleging discrimination, the federal government is increasingly launching “directed investigations” without a formal complaint. These inquiries have focused on issues such as transgender athletes, gender neutral bathrooms, and initiatives viewed as discriminatory toward white students. They also include investigations, such as the California State University system’s association with a project that promotes diversity amongst students and broader allegations of antisemitism, including at University of California campuses. In several cases, federal authorities have issued subpoenas seeking employee information, including personal contact details which have prompted privacy concerns among faculty and students.

“SB 1101 establishes a clear transparency framework governing how institutions share personal information with OCR. It requires public higher education institutions, and requests the University of California, to notify individuals when their personal information is disclosed, including advance notice when responding to subpoenas, specifies the categories of information shared, and limits disclosure to circumstances required by law.”

- 2) ***Information sharing in federal civil rights investigations.*** This bill applies to requests made by OCR. The office is charged with enforcing federal civil rights laws in education, specifically laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities that receive federal assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. OCR often requests access to institutional data to investigate and resolve allegations of discrimination.

As mentioned in the author’s statement, recent requests for information from federal agencies have raised questions regarding whether, and under what circumstances, institutions notify individuals when their personal information is shared in compliance with federal requests. According to the California Faculty Association, the sponsors of the bill, last year, in response to a federal subpoena, CSU shared the personal phone numbers and email addresses of 2,600 Los Angeles campus employees with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. In addition, a recent (October 2025) UC statement reports that, in response to an investigation by the OCR, UC Berkeley provided unredacted records after determining it was legally required to do so under federal law. The files included names and, in some instances, contact details of complainants, respondents, and witnesses. Another example of the types of recent investigations initiated by OCR include an investigation into San Jose State University for suspected Title IX violation related to a transgender student athlete

participation on the women's volleyball team. Staff notes that OCR affirmed the violation and issued a proposed resolution agreement which CSU declined to enter into as it disagreed with OCR's legal position.

This bill seeks to ensure students, faculty, and staff are informed when their data is shared with OCR, to support greater transparency regarding data-sharing practices. *Moving forward, the author may wish to consider whether it is necessary to clarify how notification requirements are applied when confidentiality in OCR investigations is warranted.*

- 3) **Limits data sharing.** This measure defines personal information to have the same meaning as defined by the CCPA, which establishes a broad definition of information that identifies, relates to, or could reasonably be linked to an individual. OCR may request various types of information while conducting an investigation or compliance review, including information related to students, employees, and other institutional data. These requests may not always take the form of a subpoena but can also be informal requests. Under FERPA, the primary federal law governing the privacy of student education records, generally permits but does not require institutions to share certain student information without consent with federal agencies for enforcement purposes. This bill further limits how information can be shared by restricting disclosure of personal information with OCR to only what is required by state or federal law.
- 4) **Notification to impacted individuals.** In addition to providing notice when information is shared, this bill requires providing notice as soon as practicable before complying with a subpoena. Notifications must include a description of the specific types of personal information shared as part of the request. Institutions may need to develop a method to identify impacted individuals and provide notification as prescribed in the bill.

SUPPORT

California Faculty Association (sponsor)
 American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO
 California School Employees Association
 California State University Employees Union
 Oakland Privacy
 Teamsters California
 University of California Student Association
 One Individual

OPPOSITION

None received

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