

Significant Education Bills Pending with Governor Newsom

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The Legislature adjourned the 2025-26 Legislative Session on Tuesday, September 1, sending a number of high-profile bills to the Governor during their final days that could affect schools – some of which would have particularly outsized impacts on small schools. All eyes are now on Governor Newsom, who has until the end of September to act on bills in what will be some of his final actions as Governor.

The final days of this year's session saw last minute deals impacting schools that had varying success, including compromises to address the fiscal impact of childhood sexual assault claims on public entities, and liability in the aftermath of wildfires (a deal that stalled in the waning hours of session). Below we highlight these as well as other major bills that are pending on the Governor's desk.

AB 218 Liability

In the closing days of session, the Legislature put together a compromise to address the fiscal impact of AB 218 childhood sexual assault claims on public entities, including local educational agencies (LEAs). The deal, contained in [SB 577](#) by Senator John Laird (D-Santa Cruz), would, among other things, change evidentiary requirements for older plaintiffs, establish additional ways for schools to pay damages, impose penalties on attorneys who bring bad faith claims, and require public entities to adopt codes of conduct and sexual assault prevention plans. While the bill would make changes that could help LEAs facing these claims, concerns remain that the bill does not go far enough to help public entities potentially facing multi-million dollars in damages. During negotiations, public agency advocates had pushed for limiting or capping jury awards and settlement amounts but, according to the bill's author, that was deemed “a bridge too far” for some legislators. In a statement on the bill, Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas (D-Hollister) wrote, “California stands with survivors, whose voices have shaped this process every step of the way, and the Legislature is taking action to defend and preserve survivors’ path to justice – that is not negotiable.”

Budget Follow-up

The Legislature sent multiple budget clean-up bills to the Governor, including [SB 133](#), the K-12 Budget Trailer Bill Clean-up, and [AB 2467](#), the general K-12 Omnibus bill. We've provided more detailed information about the major pieces of these bills in previous updates (see: [K-12 TBL](#), [K-12 Omnibus](#)), which include clarification regarding the declining enrollment hearing required under the \$5 billion discretionary block grant, additional flexibility in the use of state meal reimbursement dollars, and revisions to charter school accountability and oversight. The Governor is expected to sign both bills. As a budget bill and an urgency statute, respectively, the changes in both bills would take effect immediately upon the Governor's signature, unless otherwise stated.

Other Major Education Bills

Other notable education bills that are sitting on Governor Newsom's desk include:

- **Permanent Status** ([AB 917](#), Ávila Farias): Would remove the current exemption for LEAs with an average daily attendance of 250 or less from the requirement to make a certificated employee permanent after being reelected for a third consecutive school year. Would also require, beginning July 1, 2027, service as an instructor at a regional occupational center or program run by any district or county office of education to count towards establishing the instructor's permanent status. That requirement currently only applies to ROCP operated by a single school district.
- **School Safety Plan** ([AB 1721](#), Muratsuchi): Would require the Education Commissioner, in consultation with the SBE and stakeholders, to develop recommendations on the development and approval process for school safety plans, including defining the goals and purpose of the safety plan and reviewing the required elements of a plan for their alignment with those goals and purpose.
- **Report Sunset** ([AB 2008](#), Patel): Would require, beginning January 1, 2027, a bill that requires an LEA to complete a plan or report to include a provision that repeals the planning or reporting requirement, or makes the requirement inoperative, no later than four years following the date upon which the bill becomes operative if the planning or reporting requirement has an undefined end date, or four years after the final due date of any plan or report.
- **Short-Term Classified Employees** ([AB 2142](#), Garcia): Would establish a rebuttable presumption that a school district must convert a short-term position to classified service if: the employee works beyond 75% of the school year; the employee separates after working 50-75% of the year and is rehired the next year for at least 50%; or the position is used at least 50% of the year in three of five consecutive years.
- **70-Day Substitute** ([AB 2490](#), Valencia): Would expand the Commission on Teacher Credentialing's emergency career substitute teaching permit to cover additional circumstances and authorize a permit holder to serve 70 days in any one assignment, if the permit holder completes orientation training, at least five hours of relevant professional development, and works with an assigned credentialed mentor for the duration of their assignment.
- **English Learner Reclassification** ([AB 2555](#), Patel): Commencing July 1, 2027, would make changes to the system of reclassifying English learners (ELs) as English proficient, including requiring ELs be reclassified as English proficient only if they meet the

necessary score for reclassification on the ELPAC or, for students with IEPs, by showing proficiency in one or more of the domains of the ELPAC through alternate pupil work and performance tasks.

- **K-2 Math Assessment** ([SB 1067](#), Weber Pierson): Would require the State Board of Education (SBE), by July 31, 2027, to approve criteria and guidance for selecting mathematics diagnostic assessments for K-2 pupils. Also requires CDE to post a list of approved assessments, by January 31, 2028, and the governing board or body of an LEA serving K-2 pupils, by June 30, 2028, to adopt one or more assessment from the list published by CDE or self-certify it has adopted an assessment meeting the criteria established by the SBE.
- **Egregious Misconduct** ([SB 1083](#), Pérez): Would makes various changes to state law governing the investigation, reporting, and disclosure of egregious misconduct by classified school employees, including establishing investigation timelines, and expands background check and misconduct-reporting requirements for contractors providing services to pupils.