

ACSA's Advocacy in Action

During the first year of the 2023-24 legislative session, ACSA heavily influenced state budget and policy outcomes on behalf of students and school leaders with the help of unprecedented levels of member engagement. The legislative victories advance ACSA's student-centered mission and [One Voice for Students Legislative Platform](#). The Advocacy in Action document details just a sampling of ACSA's advocacy success from the past legislative year.

Robust and Stable School Funding

a. Full Funding of the Local Control Funding Formula

The slowing economy and restrictive spending proposals posed risks to fully funding the LCFF and providing schools with the greatest amount of flexible, ongoing funds.

OUR ADVOCACY | ACSA successfully advocated for full funding of the Local Control Funding Formula with an 8.22 percent Cost of Living Adjustment.

b. Saved \$2.4 Billion in Proposed Cuts

The Governor proposed two retroactive cuts to largely discretionary school funds: \$1.7 billion to the Arts, Music, and Instructional Materials Block Grant; and \$2.5 billion to the Learning Loss Block Grant.

OUR ADVOCACY | ACSA members mobilized statewide to inform policymakers of how consequential these proposals would be on student offerings, which resulted in the preservation of \$2.4 billion for schools.

c. \$14 Billion School Facilities Bond

School facilities needs have exhausted existing state bond revenues. Schools still need more than \$8 billion to support safe and modern TK-12 school sites.

OUR ADVOCACY | ACSA was a lead proponent in legislative proceedings of a \$14 billion bond poised for the November 2024 ballot.

Staff Shortage: Recruitment and Retention

a. 60-Day Substitute Extension

A COVID-era executive order that allowed a substitute teacher to serve in an assignment for up to 60 cumulative days expired on July 1, 2023.

OUR ADVOCACY | ACSA worked with a coalition to secure the 60-day flexibility for substitute employment in general education, career technical education, and special education assignments through July 1, 2024.

b. Hiring Retired Educators Flexibilities

Retired educators were able to fill classroom and leadership staffing needs without CalSTRS penalties under a COVID-era flexibility. Schools shared how helpful this was to meet staffing needs, but these flexibilities have since expired.

OUR ADVOCACY | In collaboration with CDE, ACSA secured a temporary staffing solution through [SB 765 \(Portantino\)](#) so retirees can be hired expeditiously and with higher compensation limits.



c. Classified Position Hiring Restrictions

AB 1699 (McCarty) would have imposed major restrictions and delays on classified staff hiring as well as undermined schools' ability to hire the best candidates.

OUR ADVOCACY | ACSA led a coalition of over 110 local agencies and statewide associations to stop AB 1699. In his veto message, the Governor cited the focus of ACSA's opposition—that the proposal would not be in the best interest of students.

d. Transitional Kindergarten Staffing

AB 1192 (McCarty) would have required the second adult in TK classrooms to meet stringent requirements and made it more difficult to implement universal TK.

OUR ADVOCACY | ACSA was able to prevent this proposal from reaching the Governor's desk by making it clear that the proposed requirements would create additional hurdles to staffing TK classrooms, particularly during a staffing shortage.

Student Wellness and Mental Health

a. Mental Health Funding

The Governor proposed an overhaul of Prop. 63, the Mental Health Services Act, which would have eliminated all set-asides for youth, resulting in the reduction or complete elimination of Prop. 63 funded school-based mental health programs.

OUR ADVOCACY | ACSA partnered with child advocacy groups to secure a set-aside in ongoing funds for youth and to secure school representation on every county mental health board that makes local Prop. 63 fund allocation decisions.

The Fight for Students and Educators

a. Increased Transparency and School Stability

A rash of sudden superintendent dismissals without cause, during hastily-called board meetings, produced major disruptions and caused fear in affected school communities.

OUR ADVOCACY | ACSA sponsored SB 494 (Newman) to promote greater transparency and stability by requiring school boards to observe a 30-day "cooling off period" following elections and blocks the use of special 24-hour noticed meetings for superintendent dismissals without cause. This new law takes effect January 1, 2024.

b. Preserving School Transportation Services

SB 88 (Skinner) would have eliminated transportation services that schools rely on to serve vulnerable student populations by prohibiting schools to contract with private companies and requiring anyone transporting students — including coaches, teachers, and other staff members — to meet commercial driver requirements.

OUR ADVOCACY | ACSA led a large coalition to negotiate the removal of the prohibition on utilizing private companies and minimize new requirements on school districts employees, including exempting staff transporting students to sports, field trip, and extracurricular activities.

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