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**officers**

**president** Rafael Plascencia **president-elect** Daryl F. Camp, Ed.D. **vice president** Rene Rickard, Ed.D.

**vice president for legislative action** Gina Potter, Ed.D. **past president** Parvin Ahmadi **executive director** Edgar Zazueta, Ed.D.

May 23, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Scott Wiener, Chair  
Senate Budget Committee  
1020 N. Street, Room 502  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel, Chair  
Assembly Budget Committee  
1021 O Street, Suite 8230  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable John Laird, Chair  
Senate Budget Sub. 1  
1020 N. Street, Room 502  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable David Alvarez, Chair  
Assembly Budget Sub. 3  
1021 O Street, Suite 8230  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: ACSA's Response to Governor's Proposed TK-12 Education Budget in May Revision**

On behalf of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) and our more than 18,000 members, we commend the Governor for upholding his previous commitments despite declining revenues. However, lingering uncertainty from the federal government and California's projected structural deficit underscore the need to create long-term fiscal stability within education.

ACSA appreciates the intent behind the Governor's budget proposals, particularly the effort to preserve core education spending during a difficult fiscal year. However, we are concerned with the May Revise proposal's reliance on deferrals and one-time funds for ongoing commitments. These short-term strategies may pose fiscal vulnerabilities that threaten the stability of California's schools. For example, the \$1.8 billion deferral of LCFF apportionments from June to July 2026 shifts the financial burden to the following fiscal year and effectively creates a debt that must be repaid. If state revenues fail to materialize as projected, these obligations could snowball, forcing cuts or further deferrals—a scenario that would place immense strain on schools and their ability to serve students. As we weigh current budget decisions, we urge the Governor and legislature to carefully consider sustainability and prioritize investments that maintain fiscal stability in future years.

## **Proposition 98**

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Underfunding the Guarantee by \$1.3 billion for 2024–25 undermines the core intent of Prop. 98, which is to provide stable and predictable funding for public education. With "settle-up" and "true-up" provisions already in place to adjust for revenue fluctuations, this preemptive under-appropriation is not only unnecessary but also disrupts schools' ability to manage rising costs and sustain critical services for students.

**Position:** ACSA strongly urges the Governor and the Legislature to fully appropriate Prop. 98 funds.

## **Local Control Funding Formula**

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Research shows that the LCFF has helped close achievement gaps and enabled districts to more effectively address local needs. Continued investment in the LCFF is a proven strategy for advancing educational equity and improving student outcomes. As districts confront rising fixed costs—including pensions, healthcare, and insurance—sustained and increased funding is essential to preserve educational quality. While funding the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is a vital step, increasing the LCFF base grant is critical to ensuring all districts can cover core operational expenses and continue providing targeted support to the students who need it most.

**Position:** ACSA supports the Governor's proposal to apply a COLA to the LCFF and strongly urges the Administration and Legislature to prioritize a meaningful increase to the LCFF base grant.

## **Stand-Alone Categoricals**

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Programs outside of the LCFF, such as Special Education, Child Nutrition, Adult Education, State Preschool, and the LCFF Equity Multiplier, serve critical functions within our educational system. However, their impact is increasingly compromised by rising operational costs. Applying COLA is essential to help these programs keep pace with inflation and continue meeting the needs of students.

**Position:** ACSA supports the Governor's proposal of applying a 2.3% COLA to programs outside of the LCFF, but urges that its application also be extended to the California State Preschool Program.

### **Proposition 98 Split**

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The Prop. 98 funding split will support the successful implementation of Universal Transitional Kindergarten (TK), as it ensures that the dollars rebench for TK expansion are directed to the TK-12 schools delivering the program. As schools grapple with associated costs, redirecting these funds back to TK-12 schools is critical to meeting the state's universal access goal.

**Position:** ACSA supports the Governor's proposal to shift full TK expansion funding to the TK-12 side of the Proposition 98 budget.

### **Universal Transitional Kindergarten**

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ACSA supports the Governor's TK proposals in the May Revision, recognizing the critical importance of early childhood education in laying the foundation for long-term academic success.

**Position:** ACSA remains committed to working closely with the state to address implementation barriers, ensuring all children have access to a high-quality early learning experience. ACSA supports the following proposals:

1. The proposal to rebench the Proposition 98 Guarantee to reflect the final cohort of children eligible for TK in the 2025–26 school year.
2. The inclusion of \$1.2 billion to support the lowering of the TK student-to-adult ratio from 12:1 to 10:1.
3. The proposed \$7.5 million in supplemental and concentration grant funds to mitigate reductions resulting from recent English language assessment policy changes.
4. The \$10 million in one-time funding for an English language proficiency screener for TK students.

### **Extended Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP)**

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As districts work to expand access to high-quality extended learning programs, stable and sufficient resources are essential. Reliable funding allows districts to plan effectively, hire and retain staff, and deliver enriching programs that support student learning beyond the traditional school day.

**Position:** ACSA remains committed to working closely with the state to ensure that districts that remain in Rate 2 receive stabilized funding. ACSA supports the following proposals:

1. The proposal to increase the minimum base grant amount for small districts from \$50,000 to \$100,000.
2. The proposal to lower the ELOP Rate 1 unduplicated pupil percentage threshold from 75% to 55%.
3. The proposal to provide a one-year grace period for districts transitioning from Rate 2 to Rate 1.

### **Student Support and Professional Development Discretionary Block Grant**

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The discretionary block grant remains a priority for ACSA as it provides essential, flexible funding that allows school districts to address local needs amid ongoing fiscal uncertainty. As districts face widespread, increasing cost pressures, maintaining this flexible funding stream is key to providing educational quality and equity.

**Position:** ACSA supports the block grant and its fully discretionary nature and its current apportionment method.

### **Educator Pipeline**

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Statewide, schools continue to face persistent teacher shortages, particularly in high-need and hard-to-staff subject areas. Supporting innovative, research-based approaches to teacher recruitment and retention is essential to ensuring every student has access to a well-prepared, high-quality educator.

**Position:** ACSA supports and makes recommendations on the following:

1. The \$64 million allocation for the Golden State Teacher Grant Program and \$100 million for the Student Teacher Stipend Program.
2. Urges the Legislature to redirect funds intended for the National Board Certification Incentive Program towards proven programs that focus directly on recruitment and retention.
3. Requests that the Golden State Teachers Grant program be restored to its original form, which permitted all candidates to receive grant funds regardless of their income.

### **Literacy Instruction**

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This funding represents a critical opportunity to build educator capacity and improve early literacy instruction statewide, particularly for diverse and multilingual learners.

**Position:** ACSA supports the Governor’s proposal to invest \$200 million in one-time Proposition 98 General Fund dollars to provide evidence-based professional learning aligned with California’s English Language Arts/English Language Development (ELA/ELD) Framework.

### **Ethnic Studies**

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School communities across California have been working diligently to prepare for the implementation of Ethnic Studies courses beginning in the 2025–26 school year. These efforts require substantial investments of time and resources, from hiring qualified staff to adopting instructional materials and adjusting master schedules. The absence of funding to support Ethnic Studies creates uncertainty for districts, making it difficult to plan effectively and meet upcoming requirements.

**Position:** ACSA requests funding to support the implementation of Ethnic Studies so there is a clear, coordinated path forward.

### **Universal Meals**

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Schools across the state of California feed millions of children every day, and the demand continues to grow. With federal threats to child nutrition funding creating uncertainty around long-term support for these critical programs, it is more important than ever for the state to provide robust, reliable funding.

**Position:** ACSA supports the Governor’s proposal to add a \$90.7 million ongoing Proposition 98 General Fund to fully fund the universal school meals program in 2025-26.

### **Career Technical Education (CTE)**

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ACSA recognizes that budget reductions may be necessary during challenging financial years, however, CTE programs affect our students' preparedness for an evolving workforce. We are committed to collaborating with the Administration and the Legislature to prioritize investments that enhance opportunities and improve CTE programs, ultimately leading to employment.

**Position:** ACSA supports the Governor’s proposal to consolidate CTE grant applications and reports and recommends a streamlined, multi-year application for all CTE programs that uses a transparent funding formula, is administered by a single entity, and aligns with existing CALPADS reporting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Hampton", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kordell Hampton  
Legislative Advocate

cc:     Members, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee  
         Members, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee #1 on Education  
         Members, Assembly Budget Committee  
         Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #3 on Education  
         Andrew Medina, Office of Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins  
         Yong Salas, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee  
         Misty Feusahrens, Office of Speaker Anthony Rendon  
         Erin Gabel, Assembly Budget Committee  
         Lynn Lorber, Senate Education Committee  
         Tanya Lieberman, Assembly Education Committee  
         Nichole Munoz-Murrillo, Office of Governor Newsom  
         Brooks Allen, State Board of Education  
         Jessica Holmes, Department of Finance