

The Education Coalition

April 15, 2020

Memorandum

TO: CA State Policymakers

FM: The Education Coalition

RE: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impact on K-12 Education

Working together to support and improve California's public schools

Association of California School Administrators (ACSA)

representing more than 17,000 school administrators

California Association of School Business Officials (CASBO)

representing more than 23,000 school business officials

California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA)

representing all 58 county superintendents throughout California

California Federation of Teachers (CFT-AFL-CIO)

representing nearly 120,000 education employees

California School Boards Association (CSBA)

representing nearly 1,000 K-12 school districts and county offices of education throughout California

California School Employees Association (CSEA)

representing more than 250,000 classified school employees

California State PTA

representing 700,000 parents, teachers, and students in California

California Teachers Association (CTA)

representing over 325,000 educators

Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

representing more than 50,000 school employees in California

Legislative Consultant:

Dale Shimasaki

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The Education Coalition is comprised of the nine statewide K-12 education associations to provide consensus positions protecting the integrity of Proposition 98 and funding in the budget for K-12 public education.

The nine statewide organizations include:

- Association of California School Administrators [ACSA]
- California Association of School Business Officials [CASBO]
- California County Superintendents Educational Services Association [CCSESA]
- California Federation of Teachers [CFT]
- California School Boards Association [CSBA]
- California School Employees Association [CSEA]
- California State Parent Teachers Association [PTA]
- California Teachers Association [CTA]
- Service Employees International Union [SEIU]

Each year, the Education Coalition issues budget position papers and meets with legislative members of the budget and policy committees to share our consensus position on the major budget proposals in education in the state budget.

Attached is the Education Coalition's position paper commenting on concerns regarding the impact of COVID-19. For further information contact Dale Shimasaki, the Consultant to the Education Coalition at 916-441-3909.

Funding K-12 Education in Wake of COVID-19

The state is facing unprecedented challenges in navigating the COVID-19 crisis. Public schools have been on the front lines in responding to this pandemic by providing distance learning, meals and childcare for essential workers. Re-opening public schools safely, even in a distance learning environment, will promote confidence among parents and our communities and will be a key element of re-opening the state and getting Californians back to work and back to a more normal life. As Governor Newsom and the Legislature navigate this crisis and develop the 2020-21 budget, the Education Coalition respectfully requests consideration of the following issues:

- **Maintain the integrity of Proposition 98**

Proposition 98 provides a minimum level of funding that is guaranteed in the State Constitution. The Education Coalition opposes underfunding the Proposition 98 minimum guarantee, including manipulating the constitutionally required funding level. Moreover, as Proposition 98 is a minimum guarantee, there is even more need right now to look at the level of investment that is needed above the guarantee. The Education Coalition believes the state should utilize the state's reserves, including the Budget Stabilization Account (BSA) to mitigate cuts to education during this economic downturn. We urge state leaders to, at a minimum, ensure K-12 schools receive the same level of 2019-20 funding as adjusted for COLA and workload.

- **Base Plus COLA**

To help maintain financial stability during the COVID-19 crisis it is important that districts receive, at minimum, their base funding from 2019-20 plus the cost-of-living adjustment as determined in statute. This gives districts both certainty and the ability to allocate resources within a known funding level.

- **Additional Funding for Essential Services**

As school districts respond to this crisis and prepare to reopen schools, additional funding is immediately necessary for COVID-19 related costs, such as:

- Adequate personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitation supplies, and training
- Professional development for distance learning
- Adequate technology, including devices and internet access, for all students in all areas of the state
- Mental health counseling and support for those suffering from the impacts of the pandemic

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- High school credit recovery for graduation to support students who are trying to catch up with their educational program
 - Tutoring and support services for students adjusting to distance learning and/or those who may have lost instructional time
 - Unreimbursed costs or short-falls from the school meals program
 - Additional investments in summer programs
 - School health services, including school nurses, for enhanced student, family and educator safety
 - Extraordinary special education costs, especially in a distance learning environment and with the need to provide compensatory education services
- **Make One-Time Resources Flexible**

To the extent one-time federal or state funding is provided, this funding should be made flexible to address the unique costs that have emerged from the COVID-19 crisis, including but not limited to the prevention of layoffs for school employees. However, funding allocated to address health and safety needs related to COVID-19 should only be spent for that purpose. Funding for these priorities provides stability for students and confidence for parents in our education system.
 - **No Mid-Year Cuts**

Districts allocate resources on a year-to-year basis. For this reason, mid-year cuts will be both disruptive and difficult to implement.
 - **Attendance**

Even when schools begin to open again, they will likely continue to struggle with student attendance due to illness, quarantine, or parents keeping their kids home out of caution. We request to be held harmless using the 2018-19 ADA calculation, to help districts weather the impacts of declining enrollment and uncertainty created by COVID-19.
 - **Special Education Funding [SPED]**

We are very concerned about special education students receiving adequate services during school closures, and we know that special education funding is woefully inadequate. Therefore, we believe it's important to receive additional resources to provide adequate services to these students during school closures and when they return. We support maintaining the funding provided for special education in last year's budget.
 - **Additional Federal Funds**

While the Education Coalition appreciates the \$1.3 billion [\$295/ADA] school districts will receive from the federal CARES Act, it is important to

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point out that it will not solve the financial impact of COVID-19 on schools. We ask state leaders to support and advocate to our congressional delegation for a fourth COVID-19 relief package, including significant flexible funding for the Education Stabilization Fund. Federal funding should not supplant state funding for education.

We appreciate the Governor and Legislature's leadership in combatting the COVID-19 outbreak. The Education Coalition's goal is to ensure that schools have the necessary support to meet the needs of our students and families. The Education Coalition is committed to working with the Governor and Legislature to ensure that our students and employees are safe during this pandemic.

Sincerely,

*The
Education
Coalition*