

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS 202

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Roadmap for Today's Session

- Welcome & Context
- The California Budget Process
- The Legislative Cycle
- Pending Legislation
- Advocacy
- Q&A and Discussion

Welcome & Context

Welcome / Back!

- Theme: Elevating the Classified Voice in Sacramento
- Building on Last Years “Government Relations 101”
- Objectives:
 - To gain a top-level understanding of the California budget, legislative cycle, and current legislative calendar
 - To discuss pending legislation that could affect Classified Professionals
 - To touch on advocacy that will ensure the classified perspective is heard in Sacramento.
- How I got here

CCLC | “THE LEAGUE”

- The **Community College League of California** (often called "**The League**") is a powerful support network and advocacy group for California's public community colleges.
- It is a non-profit organization based in Sacramento, that **acts like a trade association for the colleges themselves**, ensuring they have the funding, training, and political backing they need to serve nearly two million students.
- **Who does the League represent**
 - The League brings together the two groups of people who actually run California's 73 local community college districts (which span 116 campuses):
 - **The Trustees (CCCT):** The locally elected board members who vote on district budgets and policies.
 - **The CEOs (CCCCEO):** The chancellors and presidents who manage day-to-day campus operations.
 - By uniting these local leaders, the League gives them a massive, unified voice.

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**Amplify your voice
for California's
Community
Colleges.**



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Advocacy

Advocacy is essential to strengthening and supporting California's community colleges. It can help transform policies, practices, and services both at the state and national level.

Current Advocacy

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Legislative Progress Continues on Priority Measures for Community Colleges

Important legislative updates impacting community colleges



Reforming the Fifty Percent Law to Support Student Success



2025–26 Budget Brief

The Legislative Analyst Office provided a brief about the projected budget for California Community Colleges.



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Search for California Senate and Assembly bills here.

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BILL SEARCH

When searching legislation by bill number, include the abbreviated text "AB" for assembly bills or "SB" for senate bills along with the bill number. Example: AB 456

What are you looking for?



Keyword



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2025 - 2026



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Government Relations Webinars

Join the League's Government Relations Team for our monthly webinars. Receive important information regarding legislation and proposals discussed in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. that will impact you, your students, and your institution. Webinars take place every third Tuesday of the Month, from 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Be sure to register in advance for this meeting. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the webinar.

[Register now](#) for the League's 2026 monthly Government Relations webinars (note: you must re-register to join the 2026 webinars).



View Past Webinars

May 19, 2026 – PPT

Recording

April 21, 2026 – PPT

Recording

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The California Budget Process

The State Budget

- The budget is more than numbers—it reflects the state's actual values and priorities.
- California operates on a fiscal year that runs from July 1 to June 30.
- Unlike the federal government, California is constitutionally mandated to pass a balanced budget.
- It directly dictates funding levels for classified positions, school sites, and community colleges.

Timeline of the Budget Cycle

Month	Milestone Event
January 10	The Governor's Proposed Budget is released, setting the baseline.
Feb – May	Budget Subcommittees meet in both houses to review proposals and hear public testimony.
May 14	The May Revision ("May Revise") updates spending based on actual tax revenues.
June 15	Constitutional Deadline for the Legislature to pass the final budget bill.

The "May Revise" and Trailer Bills

- The May Revision: The absolute most critical window for advocacy, as revenue projections shift drastically.
- Budget Bill vs. Trailer Bills: The main budget bill contains the macro funding numbers.
- Trailer Bills contain the specific statutory language required to implement budget policies (e.g., changes to education code).
- Why this matters: Classified initiatives can be won or lost in trailer bill language.

CCLC Comments on the 2026 May Revise

- **May Revise Proposes Increased COLA, Paid Pregnancy Leave**
- On May 14, Governor Newsom introduced his revised \$349.4 billion spending plan, reflecting General Fund spending of \$246.6 billion. Of considerable interest to the League, **the May Revise would reduce the proposed Proposition 98 Settle Up obligation for 2025-26 from \$5.6 billion to \$3.96 billion** and would project a balance in the Public School System Stabilization Account, the special Rainy-Day Fund for Proposition 98, of \$10.3 billion.
- Highlights of the proposed revised funding for community colleges include:
- **Increased COLA percentage from 2.41 to 4.31** amounting to \$197.7 million, of which 1.4 percent is discretionary over the new statutory level of 2.87 percent. The categorical programs selected for a COLA in the January budget would also receive an increase to 2.87 percent.
- **Required paid pregnancy disability leave of up to 14 weeks for all employees beginning in 2026-27.** According to the Department of Finance, the costs of this benefit are absorbable within the 1.4 percent discretionary COLA.
- Ongoing increase of \$2 million to maintain the Governor's proposed 0.5 percent enrollment growth.
- Ongoing increase of \$122.8 million offsetting decreased local property tax revenues.
- One-time increase of \$9.7 million over three years to fund the Adult Learner Demonstration Project helping assist low-income adult workers move into stable and higher-paying jobs.
- One-time increase of \$607,000 over the January budget for the flexible Student Support Block Grant.

CCLC May Revise Comments

- While the League is grateful for the increased amounts in the May Revise, it will **continue to urge higher levels of funding for enrollment growth, COLA for the Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) Program, and enhanced support for Deferred Maintenance, among others.**
- Further, while the League does not object to the policy of paid pregnancy leave, it has provided policymakers with a list of issues related to the implementation and will request that these be addressed through the longer window of the legislative process and not the budget.
- **Both the Assembly and Senate are conducting hearings on the May Revise and will be voting on a final package by June 15.**
- With the state's fiscal year beginning July 1, the Legislature retains the ability to modify the budget by June 30.
- *Please take time to review the [May Revise Summary on Higher Education](#), [LAO Analysis of the May Revise](#), [Joint Analysis of the May Revise](#), and related [budget trailer bills](#).*

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The Legislative Cycle

How a Bill Moves Through Sacramento

- Introduction & First House: Bill is introduced, sent to Policy Committee, and then Fiscal/Appropriations Committee (if it has a state cost).
- Floor Vote: Needs a simple majority (or 2/3 for urgency/tax measures) to pass the full house.
- Second House: The entire process repeats in the opposite chamber (Assembly to Senate or vice versa).
- Concurrence & Governor's Desk: Houses must agree on identical language before sending the bill to the Governor to sign or veto.

Key Dates & Deadlines for the 2026 Legislative Cycle

- ~~• February 20: Last day for new bills to be introduced.~~
- ~~• April 24 / May 1: Deadlines for policy committees to hear and report bills out of their house of origin.~~
- ~~• May 29: House of Origin Deadline—bills must pass their initial chamber or they die.~~
- July 2: Summer Recess begins; last day for policy committees to pass bills from the second house.
- August 31: The Final Curtain. Last day for each house to pass any bills.
- September 30: Governor's deadline to sign or veto passed legislation.

Pending Legislation

CCLC 2026 Legislative Status

- Thursday, May 14, was a busy and significant day in Sacramento, with Governor Newsom releasing the May Revision while both the Senate and Assembly Appropriations Committees held their annual Suspense File hearings.
- These hearings are a major milestone in the legislative process, as they determine which bills with significant fiscal impacts will continue advancing through the Legislature and which measures will be held in committee for the year.
 - The Senate Appropriations Committee considered 332 measures on suspense and advanced 242 bills to the Senate Floor.
 - The Assembly Appropriations Committee reviewed 637 measures and advanced 468 bills to the Assembly Floor for debate and votes in the coming days.
- **Several high-priority measures impacting California community colleges continue to move forward, including:**
 - **AB 1871 (Fong)** – Expands access to dual enrollment programs, allowing more high school students to take community college courses and accelerate progress toward college completion.
 - **AB 2236 (Berman)** – Focuses on articulation agreements, aiming to improve transfer pathways and clarify how courses count between colleges and universities.
 - **AB 2301 (Soria)** – Establishes a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) pilot program for California community colleges to help address the nursing workforce shortage.
 - **AB 2694 (Alvarez)** – Modernizes the California Community Colleges Baccalaureate Degree Program, allowing more community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees in workforce-focused fields.
 - **SB 960 (Cabaldon)** – Also addresses expansion of the community college bachelor's degree program.

CCLC 2026 Legislative Status

- **A number of bills the League opposed were held in committee and will not advance this year, including:**
 - **AB 1730 (Fong)** – Relates to Title IX, likely addressing campus responsibilities, compliance, or procedures connected to sex discrimination and harassment protections in educational settings.
 - **AB 2019 (Gipson)** – Addresses support for faculty who have been deported, focusing on restoring access to academic employment pathways and institutional engagement where possible, and recognizing the impacts of immigration enforcement on higher education staffing and continuity.
 - **SB 1262 (Archuleta)** – Sets parameters for California Community Colleges' budget reserve levels, establishing guidance or limits on how districts may build and maintain reserves to ensure fiscal stability while promoting the use of funds for student-facing needs.
 - One League-supported measure, **SB 961 (Ashby)**, related to CalFresh student eligibility, was also held in committee.
- **Several additional opposed bills remain active and continue through the legislative process, including:**
 - **AB 1564 (Ahrens)** – Protects the confidentiality of certain communications, reinforcing privacy standards in specified professional or institutional settings.
 - **AB 1796 (Jackson)** – Establishes licensure requirements for interior designers, defining the scope of practice and regulatory standards for the profession.
 - **AB 2142 (Garcia)** – Addresses issues related to community college classified employees, including employment conditions, roles, or workforce protections within the California community colleges.
 - **SB 951 (Reyes)** – Requires advance notice for specified actions or processes, including provisions addressing issues related to the use or deployment of artificial intelligence.

Policies that Matter to Classified Professionals

- Classified Professionals represent the foundational backbone of California's educational ecosystem.
- Key Policy Arenas:
 - Workplace Safety and Health Standards, Job Security, Layoff Protections, and Merit Systems.
 - Fair Compensation, Pension Security, and Healthcare Benefits.
 - Professional Development and Career Pathways
- Current Areas of Concern
 - The 50% Law
 - Prop 98
 - Title 5

The 50 Percent Law

- Established in 1961 under California Education Code Section 84362, the law mandates that California community college districts must spend at least 50% of their current expense of education each fiscal year on the salaries and benefits of classroom instructors and instructional aides.
- The formula used by the state is straightforward:
 - $$\text{Percent of Current Education Expense} = \frac{\text{Salaries \& Benefits of Classroom Instructors}}{\text{Total Current Expense of Education}}$$
 - Instruction: Salaries and medical benefits for full-time and part-time classroom teachers, prorated salaries for administrators when they are actively teaching, and instructional aides.
 - Current Expense (Denominator): Unrestricted general fund expenditures. It excludes things like student transportation, food services, community services, and capital outlays (like building projects).

50 Percent Law: Current Status

- The higher education landscape has changed dramatically since 1961, making the 50 Percent Law a massive point of friction between **faculty unions, student advocates, and college administrators.**
 - **The 2025 State Audit**
 - A major California State Auditor report found that oversight of the 50 Percent Law has been ineffective and that **the law is holding back modern student support.** Critics point out that **because the law defines "instruction" so narrowly, districts are heavily restricted from using general funds to hire: Academic counselors, Librarians, Mental health professionals, Basic needs coordinators (food/housing support)**
 - **Administrative Growth vs. Faculty Decline**
 - Data from the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges (FACCC) highlights a frustrating trend: despite the law, **administrative spending and hiring have outpaced faculty hiring over the last decade.**
 - **Pushes for Reform**
 - Both the Student Senate for California Community Colleges and various academic senates have advocated for updating the law. **The current legislative push centers on redefining "instructional costs" to include vital student support staff like counselors and librarians, while potentially raising the 50% benchmark slightly to ensure classroom teaching remains heavily protected.**

CA Prop 98

- California Proposition 98 is a landmark constitutional amendment approved by state voters in November 1988.
- It established an annual minimum funding guarantee for California's public K-12 schools and community colleges (collectively referred to as K-14 education).
- Before Prop 98, school funding was highly vulnerable to the whims of the state Legislature and economic downturns.
- Prop 98 took school financing out of standard politics by creating a constitutional floor.

The Prop 98 Guarantee

- The minimum funding level is not a fixed number. Instead, it is recalculated every year using a complex set of formulas known as "The Three Tests."
- The state applies whichever test fits the current economic climate, factoring in variables like state General Fund revenues, per capita personal income, and student attendance:
- Prop 98 determines the total pie allocated for K-14 education. It does not protect individual school programs or line items from being cut or eliminated by the Legislature.

Prop 98: Key Provisions & Exceptions

- The Prop 98 guarantee is met using a combination of state General Fund revenues and local property taxes.
- Suspension Clause: The Legislature can suspend the Prop 98 minimum funding requirement for one year, but it requires a two-thirds vote of both houses.
- The Prop 98 Reserve: Established by voters in 2014 (via Proposition 2), the Public School System Stabilization Account acts as a rainy-day fund specifically for education. The state deposits money here during flush years to help stabilize school funding during economic downturns.

Prop 98: 89/11 Split

- Passed by voters in 1988, Proposition 98 established a minimum funding guarantee for public education. However, the State Constitution is entirely silent on how that money should actually be shared between the two educational systems.
- To solve this, the state historically defaulted to an uncoded (not officially written into statutory law) formula based on actual spending from the 1989–90 fiscal year:
 - K-12 Education (and county offices): Receives roughly 89% of the funding.
 - California Community Colleges (CCC): Receives roughly 11% of the funding.

Adding Classified Professionals to Ed Code (Title 5)

- A long-term Initiative of 4CS
- A Lot of work going on behind the scenes

Advocacy

Ensuring the Classified Perspective is Heard

- Now:
 - Follow the League on your Socials
 - Sign up for CCLC Updates
 - Register/Watch CCLC Government Relations Webinars
 - Watch for 4CS Government Relations Updates
 - Participate on the 4CS Government Relations Committee
- Future:
 - Letters of Support/Opposition: Submitting formal organizational positions into the official legislative portal.
 - Grassroots Power: Activating members locally through email campaigns, phone banks, and local district office visits.
 - Lobby Days & Capitol Visits: Meeting face-to-face (or virtually) with lawmakers and their legislative staff.
 - Committee Testimony: Providing real-world context directly to committees during public comment lines.

Best Practices for Effective Advocacy

- Be Concise: State the bill number and your position (Support/Oppose) immediately.
- Explain exactly how the bill affects constituents in their home legislative district.
- Offer Solutions: If you are opposing a bill, explain what language changes would make it acceptable.
- Follow Up: Always thank the staff and offer to serve as a resource for future education issues.

Q&A and Discussion