

Small School Districts' Association Annual Spring Conference



Charting the Course to Success

March 9-11, McClellan Conference Center



Matt Jones



Kevin Gordon



Jack O'Connell



Deb Sigman



Patrick O'Donnell



Dan Walters

Wednesday, March 9

- 8:30 – Golf tournament
- 12:30 – Pre-conferences
- 4:00 – Trade show/reception
- 6:45 – Keynote speaker:
Patrick O'Donnell
- 7:30 – Dessert & Apertif crawl

Thursday, March 10

- 7:30 – Buffet breakfast/Trade show
- 8:30 – Keynote speaker: Deb Sigman
- 9:30 – Workshop sessions
- 11:45 – General session/lunch
- 12:30 – Keynote speaker: Matt Jones
Binderup Award presentation
- 2-4:00 – Workshop sessions
- 4:00 – Trade show/reception

Friday, March 11

- 7:30 – Buffet breakfast/Trade show
- 8:00 – Keynote speaker: Dan Walters
- 9:00 – Workshop sessions
- 11:00 – Keynote speakers: Kevin Gordon,
Jack O'Connell
- 11:45 – Conclusion



For more information, visit www.ssda.org/events

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March 9-11, 2016

33rd Annual Spring Conference

McClellan Conference Center~5411 Luce Avenue~McClellan~CA~95652

GOLF TOURNAMENT

March 9, 2016 - 8:30 am - Haggin Oaks Golf Course

2 Pre-Conferences - 12:30 - 3:30 pm



“7 Habits of Highly Effective Instructional Leaders!” - Julie Adams

A powerful session for administrators and instructional leaders focusing on research concerning the achievement gaps, elements of effective instruction, content area literacy, supporting effective instruction on campus, the four types of teachers, strategic conversations, and peer-coaching models that promote a culture of collaboration, instructional responsibility and data driven instruction that boosts student achievement.



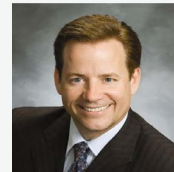
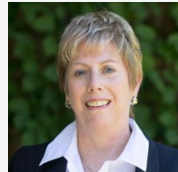
“Standards and Targets and Claims Oh My!” - Erin Walker

Participants will:

- Conduct a thorough analysis of the Math and English Language Arts blueprints
- Gain an understanding of how to read and utilize CAASPP Claim Data
- Understand how targets and standards are associated with each CAASPP Claim
- Increase their knowledge of performance tasks requirements related to Math
- Preview and utilize an intuitive online resource that allows teachers to generate targeted material by claim, target and standard
- Learn how to access key - often hidden - resources from the SBAC and CAASPP website

This is an interactive workshop designed to give participants practical knowledge that can be easily utilized and shared after the conference. Be sure to bring your smart device.

5 Keynote Speakers



**From left to right - Assemblyman Patrick O'Donnell, Deb Sigman, WestEd, Matt Jones, Motivational Speaker, Dan Walters, Political Columnist, Kevin Gordon, Legislative Advocate and Jack O'Connell, Legislative Advocate*

Workshops for Thursday, March 10, 2016

From Zero to Hero - Creating a District of Tech Rock Stars ~ Catching Up with CAASPP ~ Future Ready Schools - Great Idea if Planned & Implemented Correctly ~ Next Generation Math Solutions ~ Brown Act, Technology & Public Records Request Fundamentals for Board Members ~ Using Multi-Year Projections to Get the Word Out ~ Nightmare on Board Night ~ Avid Elementary: The Foundation Component of Complete Readiness System ~ Multi-Tier Systems of Support (RTI on Steroids) ~ Getting to Yes: Collective Bargaining and the Small School District ~ Conflicts of Interest: Practical Solutions and Guidance ~ Career and College Ready through CTE/STEM Integrated Curriculum ~ Building and Sustaining a Positive School Culture Using the PBIS Framework ~ Develop an Action Plan for Your Facilities Within Your Means ~ Legal Updates on Current Issues in Education ~ Understanding School Climate & Strategies on How to Address Them in Your LCAP ~ Is Your Students' Data Safe from Advanced Cyber Threats? Best Practices for Securing Your School's Networks and Data ~ The GPS for ROP & CTE ~ Small School Districts and Effective Charter Administration: From Approval to Oversight ~ A Year of STRS/PERS Reform: Lessons Learned and How to Navigate the Minefield Moving Forward ~ Getting Technology Right: What Every Board Member Should Know

Workshops for Friday, March 11, 2016

How to Win a Certificated Dismissal Case ~ Facilities and Politics Construction Options While You Wait ~ Lobbying 101: How to Better Represent Your School District and all Small Districts in California



Dessert & Aperitif Crawl



Golf Tournament



Scavenger Hunt

For more information, visit www.sdda.org/events/



CalSTRS Funding Plan Not Going As Planned



Barrett Snider, Parther
Capitol Advisors Group, LLC

In February, the non-partisan Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) released a review of the STRS funding plan that was enacted as part of the 2014 state budget. The LAO's findings are remarkable in that they determine the implementation of the law

has differed from widely held expectations. While the LAO says CalSTRS appears to be implementing the law in "good faith," their report reflects the opinion that the STRS funding plan implementation "may no longer reflect the intent of the Legislature when it passed the law."

Background

Established in 1913, CalSTRS has been less than fully funded for most of its 103-year history. With the Legislature expressing concern about CalSTRS long-term funding needs (it was expected to exhaust its assets in the mid-2040s), CalSTRS submitted a report to the Legislature in 2013 detailing options for addressing its unfunded liability and the Legislature held hearings in 2013 and 2014 to evaluate those options as well as other proposals. Ultimately, Governor Brown's May 2014 revised budget included a plan to fully fund STRS over a 30-year period by increasing contributions from the state, districts and teachers. The final 2014-15 budget package adopted the Governor's proposal with minor modifications.

LAO Review of the CalSTRS Funding Plan

In its review, the LAO noted that while the funding plan seemed to be relatively simple when it was passed, with districts and the state sharing investment gains and loses roughly in proportion to the amounts they owe, in practice the plan actually relies on an abstract calculation where state and district shares of the unfunded liability change annually. As the LAO initially understood the plan, both the district and state shares would have slightly decreased but, proportionally, they would still have roughly the same responsibility for the unfunded liability. However, under the more-complex approach STRS has taken, the districts' share has gone up while the state's responsibility has decreased.

Below are the LAO's key findings:

1. State's contribution has gone down \$5 billion. The complicated formula used to determine the State's contribution to the plan has resulted in it being reduced from \$20 billion to \$15 billion.
2. School district share up \$11 billion. The formula that has driven down the State's share, in combination with the CalSTRS treatment of the teacher portion, has resulted in a ballooning of the school districts' share from \$47 billion to \$58 billion.
3. The goal of the law to "share" responsibility may not materialize. Under the LAO's findings, the state is unlikely to contribute more under the funding plan than it would have otherwise under the prior law under the current STRS' return assumptions.
4. CalSTRS uses "staggeringly" complex" policy to implement funding law. The LAO opines that the "CalSTRS program has become one of the most complex programs in state government" and suggest that complexity may hinder the ability to effectively manage the public program.

The LAO also had recommendations for how the Legislature could address the issues raised by their finding:

1. Legislature should adopt a "proportional sharing" approach to STRS funding law. In an effort to bring the funding plan back into the realm of Legislative intent, the LAO suggest abandoning the current complex calculation that has resulted in the shifting of unfunded liability to school districts and instead opt for a simpler proportional share approach. At a minimum, the LAO suggests eliminating the amount by which the state's rates can decrease in a single year.
2. Legislature should prioritize simplicity. Any changes the Legislature may make to the STRS funding law should prioritize simplicity, which they argue will allow lawmakers and public to better understand the problem and solution.

What's Next?

The Legislature will likely take this under advisement in the short term. Under current law, the STRS funding plan is scheduled for review in 2019. CalSTRS will also likely issue revised assumption data and look at other factors impacting the fund in early 2017. For political reasons (it's an election year), there is little political appetite for a major conversation in 2016 about changes to the funding plan that was enacted in 2014.



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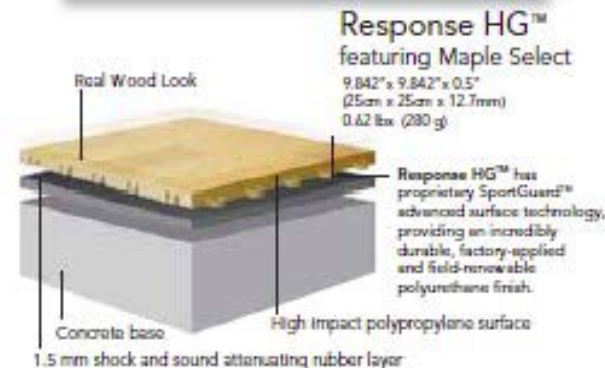
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Helping Every Student Meet California's ELA/ELD Standards



As school districts strive to meet the goals of California's ELA/ELD Curriculum Framework, it's important to keep in mind the ultimate goals: to ensure that by the time our students complete high school, they would have developed readiness for college, career, and civic life; attained the capacities of literate individuals; become broadly literate; and acquired the skills for living and learning in the 21st century.

California's integration of the Common Core ELA/Literacy standards and the California ELD standards sets a high bar for students and educators. Students are required to be proficient in understanding complex text and ideas, reasoning, analyzing, persuading, and problem solving. To help them achieve these goals, the Framework indicates that the context for learning should be integrated, motivating, engaging, respectful, and intellectually challenging.

In addition, California wraps the standards in five key organizing themes intended to influence instruction: meaning making, effective expression, foundational skills, content knowledge, and language development.

Adoption of these standards has also raised the bar for providers of educational content. As districts prepare to select standards-based materials during California's adoption period, the Framework guides the process to ensure that all students' needs are met.

Supporting every student in achieving success is paramount for global learning company Houghton Mifflin Harcourt™. In November, the California State Board of Education approved all five ELA and ELD programs from HMH® for the 2016–2017 reading adoption.

Continued on page 7

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California SUCCESS

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Program	Pre-K	TK/K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
HMH Family Engagement														
BIG DAY for PreK														
iRead®														
Program 2 / California Journeys														
Program 2 / California Collections														
Program 3 / California Journeys Pathway to Biliteracy														
Program 4 / READ 180® Universal														
Program 5 / California Escalate English™														
Program 5 / English 3D®														
ACCESS® (Newcomer)														
HMH Professional Services														

Learn more about HMH's California offerings by visiting our booth or at learn.hmhco.com/CASuccess

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Helping Every Student Meet California's ELA/ELD Standards



Continued from page 6

With foundational reading programs such as CA Journeys and CA Collections plus the recent acquisition of flagship programs CA Read 180® and CA English 3D®, HMH now offers the most comprehensive solution for ELA students and English learners available in the market today.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, over 20% of K–12 students in California are designated as English learners, making English Language Development programs critical to supporting student achievement statewide. To address this crucial need, HMH offers two ELD programs. CA Escalate English™ is designed for students (Grades 4–8) who are at risk of falling behind due to language barriers and increases grade-level English language skills via listening, speaking, reading and writing exercises. CA English 3D® (Grades 4–12) was developed in partnership with Dr. Kate Kinsella, one of the nation's leading scholars on secondary English language instruction, and teaches high-level academic speaking, listening, and writing skills by engaging students with rigorous and increasingly complex texts.

"After years of research, I finally feel we have what it takes to engage these students and help them develop as proficient, bi-literate academics who are prepared for their futures," said Dr. Kinsella. "We can inspire not only a passion for learning, but also a greater capacity for learning in all of our students."

In addition, HMH's unique CA Journeys Pathway to Biliteracy addresses the requirements for bilingual learning identified by the State of California and will be available to school districts statewide. The program was built on California's bilingual ELA/ELD framework and empowers students with multilingual academic proficiency.

Finally, HMH's celebrated core ELA programs, CA Journeys (K–6) and CA Collections (6–12), together offer a complete K–12 language arts solution that

supports all students throughout their academic careers. Students engage with complex texts and sharpen close reading and analysis skills, while a rigorous instructional path helps them draw deep connections across genres.

"HMH's ELA curricula are among the most rigorous and engaging programs I have seen for developing skills and a passion for reading and writing," said Carol Jago, Program Consultant for Journeys and Collections. "Our approach encourages students to think deeply about text and media and will strengthen their ability to communicate effectively and interpret the world around them, both in the classroom and beyond."

For intensive reading intervention, READ 180 leverages the strongest blended learning approach on the market, which has proved effective in helping struggling readers close achievement gaps. A recent report commissioned by the Institute for Education Sciences found statistically significant gains in students using READ 180, as defined by the What Works Clearing House (WWC) evidence standards. These gains were unique to READ 180; out of the 10 interventions evaluated, only Read 180 was found to have statistically significant positive effects on reading achievement.

HMH provides districts with implementation and professional learning support for all programs. Combining robust services with quality content infused in core K–12, intervention, and ELD programs, HMH offers California a single partner with a comprehensive approach that addresses the instructional shifts in the California standards and prepares students to succeed in a multicultural, multilingual world.

To learn more, please visit

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Budget Perspectives Workshops

May Revision & Budget Act

SAVE THE DATE

Workshop Locations

Alameda County Office of Education
Butte County Office of Education
Contra Costa County Office of Education
Fresno County Office of Education
Imperial County Office of Education
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Madera County Office of Education
Merced County Office of Education
Monterey County Office of Education
Orange County Department of Education
Placer County Office of Education
Sacramento County Office of Education
San Bernardino County Spt. of Schools
San Diego County Office of Education
San Joaquin County Office of Education
San Luis Obispo County Office of Education
Santa Barbara County Education Office
Santa Clara County Office of Education
Santa Clarita/Wm. S. Hart UHSD
Santa Cruz County Office of Education
Sonoma County Office of Education

May Revision Workshop

May 18, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
May 23, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
May 19, 2016 - 9-11:30am
May 24, 2016 - 9-11:30am
May 17, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
May 26, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
May 24, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
May 25, 2016 - 9-11:30am
May 17, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
May 26, 2016 - 9-11:30am
May 16, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
May 23, 2016 - 9-11:30am
May 17, 2016 - 9-11:30am
May 18, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
May 25, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
May 23, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
May 27, 2016 - 9-11:30am
May 18, 2016 - 9-11:30am
May 19, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
May 17, 2016 - 9-11:30am
May 19, 2016 - 2-4:30pm

Budget Act Workshop

June 29, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
July 7, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
June 30, 2016 - 9-11:30am
July 7, 2016 - 9-11:30am
June 28, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
June 30, 2016 - 9-11:30am
July 7, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
July 6, 2016 - 9-11:30am
June 28, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
June 29, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
June 27, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
July 7, 2016 - 9-11:30am
June 29, 2016 - 9-11:30am
June 28, 2016 - 9-11:30am
July 6, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
July 6, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
July 6, 2016 - 9-11:30am
June 29, 2016 - 9-11:30am
June 30, 2016 - 2-4:30pm
June 28, 2016 - 9-11:30am
June 30, 2016 - 2-4:30pm



For more information, please go to:
www.CapitolAdvisors.org



Oxnard School District's New Norma Harrington Elementary School



Caldwell Flores Winters, Inc. Client Showcase:

Caldwell Flores Winters, Inc. (CFW) is pleased to showcase Norma Harrington Elementary School, a recently completed 28 classroom K-5 facility in Oxnard that is quickly becoming recognized as one of the most innovative, state-of-the-art school facilities in California.

Every learning space of the new school was meticulously planned by CFW to provide students and teachers with functionality that delivers a new dimension of interactivity for 21st century learning. Inside each classroom, wall-to-wall, floor-to-ceiling whiteboards allow any surface to be written upon to help spark creativity and critical thinking, while multiple high definition monitors allow educational content to be wirelessly broadcast and shared instantly from handheld computing devices, providing a 360 degree learning experience. Comfortable, flexible furnishings are just as essential to the design, with scientific research on brain activity and attention span informing selections on student chairs, and collaboration

and mobility considerations influencing choices on mobile desks and storage units, all of which has been carefully selected to enable educators full control over every inch of the learning environment.

Reinvention extends to the school's support facilities, which includes a library/media-center where visitors are greeted by a technology wall that features a high definition screen nearly seven feet long and four feet tall, delivering a truly life-sized representation of digital audio and video media. Not to be outdone, the school's multipurpose room accommodates a broad range of indoor cafeteria, athletic, and performance uses thanks to its voluminous 24 foot high ceilings and clerestory windows that provide natural daylighting. The new campus also includes a high-tech piano keyboarding lab for music education as well as a Maker's Room for hands-on creative activities or project based learning.

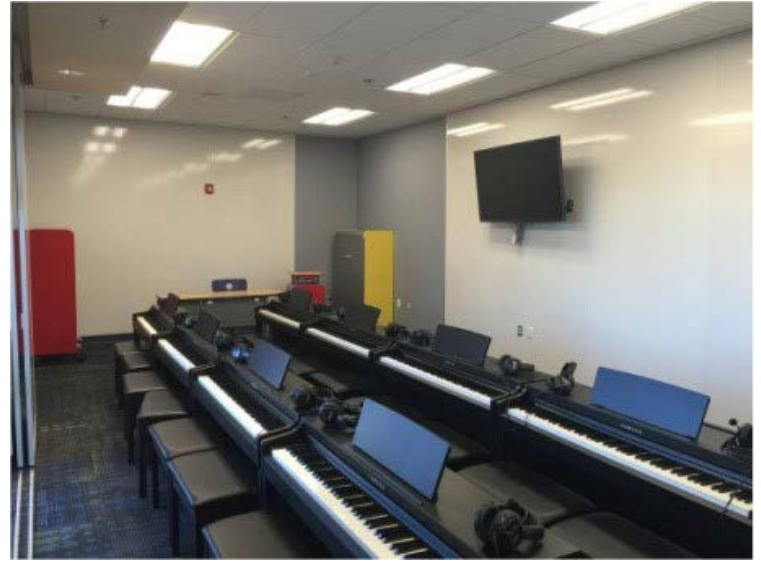
Continued on page 10



New Norma Harrington Elementary Entry (left) and Courtyard Area (right)



Oxnard School District's New Norma Harrington Elementary School



New Norma Harrington Elementary Classroom (left) and Piano Lab (right)

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This extraordinary vision of a school to serve students into the mid-21st century and beyond officially became the norm for today's students and staff when the Oxnard School District celebrated Harrington's grand opening in January 2016. Careful planning enabled the construction of the new facility while students continued to utilize the original Harrington school, built in 1955 on the same 8.3 acre site. Immediately following the school's opening, work began to demolish the original school, with select buildings to be reutilized, reconfigured, and modernized into an Early Childhood Development Center.

The entire project was made possible by local support of a General Obligation (G.O.) bond measure approved by voters in November, 2012 and will be further supported by matching State reimbursements grants, given the increase in new permanent classroom facilities the project provides. Additional new schools that follow the Harrington 21st century model are also planned to continue the District's efforts towards improving its educational program and reducing overcrowding.

Throughout planning, design, and implementation, CFW worked with the District to develop a facilities and financing plan driven by an educational vision. With CFW's

guidance, the District transformed its educational program, providing new grade configuration options as well as academy, academic strand, and dual-language immersion choices across the District's schools. Correspondingly, facilities improvements to provide 21st century classrooms were brought to eight existing school sites and handheld digital devices were provided to students and teachers at all school sites by the end of 2014, opening up a new 24x7 world of educational content.

CFW works with school districts to articulate a vision for 21st century learning environments and then provides the guidance, leadership, and training to assist districts in achieving those learning environments. As a full service firm, CFW is committed to meeting the needs of school and community college districts throughout the State. CFW has represented over 200 districts with comprehensive facilities planning, bond election, financial advisory and program management services.

CFW's goal is to provide an integrated project delivery system that anticipates client needs and provides services that guide clients from beginning to end. Should you have any questions or required additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us at (510) 596-8170. 



Advocating for Equity in Education & Health Care, School Health Conference - May 6, 2016



Leaders in education understand the important role health plays in improving students' academic equity. Join other educators that share your commitment to equity at the California School-Based Health Alliance's statewide conference – Advocating for Equity in Education & Health Care - in Sacramento May 6. Network with other educators and children's advocates, learn, and get resources to advance our collective mission to give all kids an opportunity to succeed.

Location: Sheraton Grand Sacramento

Schedule: May 5 (pre-conference): Come early for an optional in-depth pre-conference workshop. Choose from: Creating trauma-informed schools and classrooms; Appropriately applying HIPAA, FERPA, & other confidentiality laws; or SBHCs 101: The nuts and bolts of starting a school-based health center.

In the afternoon, lend us your voice and join the school health field as we fan out across the Capitol for advocacy visits with legislators and key policymakers. Plan to join us in the evening for a welcome reception!

May 6: Attend the full day of workshops, exhibits, and networking. A live performance by student health advocates with The Bigger Picture will energize and inspire you.

Register at www.schoolhealthcenters.org before February 29 to receive discounted rates! Rooms at the Sheraton that are available with our discounted rate are limited so book your room now before it is too late.

Workshops include:

- Connecting Schools & Health: Addressing Disparities to Improve Academic Success
- Building School-Based Support for Unaccompanied Immigrant Youth
- Creating Trauma-Informed Schools
- Comprehensive School-Based Mental Health: A District's Model for Prevention & Intervention
- Parents & Schools Partnering to Improve Student Mental Health
- Does the End of Free Care Mean the Start of Free Money?
- The California Healthy Youth Act: Understanding the New Sex Education Law
- Healthy Students Make Good Learners: Connecting Kids to Coverage & Care

See all workshops and speakers at <http://bit.ly/schoolhealth2016>

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LAO Recommends Legislature Extend State's School District of Choice Program



Caitlin Jung, Research Attorney
Capitol Advisors Group, LLC

The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) recently released its evaluation of the State's School District of Choice (DOC) program and recommended the Legislature and Governor extend the program for five years.

The DOC law was enacted in 1993 and allows a school district

to declare itself a "District of Choice" and enroll students that live in other school districts. Under this program, school districts do not need to use the more traditional inter-district transfer process.

Brief Political History

The DOC program has not gone without controversy, in the early 2000s, Rowland Unified School District reported large numbers of transfers to Walnut Unified School District, which had declared itself a DOC. Rowland (roughly 60% Hispanic, 20% Asian, and 20% other) reported a disproportionate percentage of Asian students transferring to Walnut under what it described as deceptive and racially targeted marketing tactics. In 2009, the issue exploded when the Legislature debated SB 680 (Romero/Huff), which sought to extend the DOC program. At the time, the state's funding for schools was in free fall and there was a heated race for the next State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Conservative Democrat and then-Chair of the Senate Education Committee Gloria Romero carried the EdVoice sponsored bill along with Republican Vice-Chair Bob Huff, as part of her campaign for State Superintendent. The bill was unpopular with Democrats in the Legislature because of the issues raised by Rowland, and related opposition to the bill from the State PTA, CSBA, Public Advocates, and numerous school districts. Ultimately, the bill became a proxy for the State Superintendent battle and because of backing by then-Senate Leader Darrell Steinberg and Governor Schwarzenegger, Romero was able to squeak the bill out of the Legislature and it was signed into law.

The DOC program was set to "sunset" or expire in law last year, but legislation extended the program through July 1, 2017. That legislation also required the LAO to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the program and present recommendations regarding the extension of the program to the Legislature.

LAO Review and Recommendations

Interestingly, when the Legislature authorized this evaluation it intended the LAO to use data collected from the annual reports that participating districts were required to submit to

the California Department of Education (CDE), but the CDE indicated that it had not received these reports. Therefore, to provide baseline data for the LAO's evaluation, the CDE conducted a survey where it asked Districts of Choice to identify themselves and provide data on their transfer students. The LAO noted, however, that this form of data collection was severely limited, with only 6 of the 40 respondents actually providing complete information. The LAO also conducted its own data collection efforts in preparation for the evaluation, contacting nearly 100 districts and conducting more than two dozen interviews with administrators from Districts of Choice and home districts.

Below is a summary of the LAO's findings:

- **California has 47 Districts of Choice and about 10,000 students participating in the program.** Districts of Choice are largely concentrated in Los Angeles and the Bay Area. Apart from the five largest districts, most Districts of Choice are small and rural.
- **Small Districts of Choice rely on the program for a larger share of their student population than do larger participating districts.** The average share of enrollment from transfers through the program for small school districts (fewer than 300 students) is 36% while the average for larger school districts is 9%.
- **Most home districts only experience small changes in their enrollment.** Of the 197 home districts affected by the program, 136 have less than 1% of their students attending a DOC.
- **About 1 out of 4 participating students is low income.** An estimated 27% of participating transfer students are from families with incomes low enough to qualify for free and reduced lunch. The share of participating low-income transfer students is similar to the average for DOC (30%) but much lower than the share for home districts (66%).
- **White students transfer at a relatively high rate as compared to their proportion of their home district enrollment.** White students account for roughly 20% of home district enrollment yet account for 35% of participating transfer students. Conversely, Hispanic students account for 66% of home district enrollment but only account for 32% of participating transfer students.
- **The DOC program provides transfer students with additional educational options.** Districts of Choice often offer educational programs not available in a student's home districts, like college preparatory coursework, gifted/talented programs, specific thematic focuses, or specialized instructional philosophies.

Continued on page 13



LAO Recommends Legislature Extend State's School District of Choice Program



Continued from page 12

- **Nearly all students transfer to districts with higher test scores.** The average API score for Districts of Choice was 871, well above the state average of 801, while the average score for home districts was 785.
- **The DOC program often encouraged home districts to improve their own programs.** Most of the home districts interviewed had responded to the program by trying to do more to retain and attract students and districts reported that their efforts usually resulted in a least some reduction in the number of students looking to transfer.
- **Oversight of the DOC program is limited because the state lacks reliable data for the program and the audit requirement is limited.** Existing law requires Districts of Choice to produce annual reports summarizing the demographic characteristics of its participating transfer students but the state has failed to collect these reports. Additionally, the scope of the review for an audit is inconsistent across districts, due in part to the law prohibiting the state from issuing audit instructions for the program, and there is no system for remedying any problems identified during an audit.

Based on its findings, the LAO had five recommendations for the Legislature:

1. Reauthorize the DOC program for at least five more years. The LAO reasoned that eliminating the program would be particularly difficult for those small districts that have come to rely on the program for a substantial share of their enrollment and that the benefits of the program, like additional education options, justified reauthorization. The LAO also indicated that reauthorizing the program for a longer period would also be reasonable but that five years was the minimum amount of time the state would need to implement and assess the effects of the LAO's other recommendations.
2. Repeal the 10% cumulative cap on transfers because its no longer necessary. Current law requires that transfers through the program cannot exceed 10% of the district's average annual attendance over the life of the program. This 10% includes every student who has participated in the program, even if the student has graduated or left the program. The LAO found that the cap was no longer necessary since districts are now allowed to prohibit transfers that would notably worsen their fiscal conditions.
3. Put the CDE in charge of specific administrative responsibilities. Specifically, the LAO recommended that the Legislature require the CDE to (1) maintain a list of the

- Districts of Choice in the state, (2) ensure all districts submit their annual reports, (3) post these annual reports and other program information on its website, (4) provide information to districts about the program, and (5) explore the possibility of collecting required data using the state's existing student-level data system. To cover the cost of these new responsibilities, the LAO also recommended the Legislature provide the CDE with \$150,000 in ongoing funding as well as one additional staff position.
4. Replace the audit requirement with a new oversight mechanism administered by county offices of education (COEs). The new oversight mechanism would require a home district with concerns about a DOC to file a complaint with the COE. If, after reviewing the complaint, the COE determines the District of Choice is out of compliance, the district would be required to correct the problem before accepting any more transfer students through the program.
5. Improve local communication about the program. Specifically, the LAO recommended the Legislature require Districts of Choice to (1) upon accepting transfer students, provide home districts a list of those students and (2) post application information on their website.

Despite its evaluation focusing on the DOC program, the LAO noted in its conclusion that the state's inter district transfer system as a whole seems to consist of complex and overlapping set of policies and that a boarder review of California's inter-district transfer policies is warranted over the coming years.

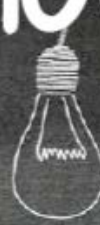
Next Steps?

We expect Senator Huff to introduce a bill in 2016 to extend the DOC program. However, it is important to note that some of the Democrat Legislators that fought the program extension in 2009 are still serving in the Legislature and may push for the program to sunset, or to extend it with changes to protect certain populations of students. Gloria Romero lost her bid for State Superintendent in the 2010 primary election and is not in an official position to advocate for the extension.

While the Legislature easily passed a bill last year to extend the program for one-year, that was largely seen as a courtesy because the state didn't have data to inform a lengthier sunset extension debate. The LAO report, while based on little data, should be sufficient for policy debate this year.

Democrats wanting the program to sunset will face opposition from the school reform community, in addition to a larger number of Districts of Choice than were in existence in 2009, which may make sunseting the DOC program politically unachievable. The debate is likely to center on potential changes to the program.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS!



We would love to hear your feedback on any of the articles listed in this issue.

If you have any suggestions for future articles or have any topics you would like to see, let us know.

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November Facilities Bond Effort Moves into High Gear



Susan Stuart, Partner
Capitol Advisors Group, LLC

Because of the recent failure of the Legislature and Administration to place a June facilities bond on the ballot, the qualified November 2016 school facilities initiative, sponsored by the California Building Industry Association (CBIA) and by the Coalition

of Adequate School Housing (CASH) is moving ahead at full steam. Both sponsors are strongly committed to the passage of this measure.

The November facilities bond cannot be amended, but could be withdrawn by the sponsors before June 30, 2016. Although opponents, including the Governor and CTA could actively oppose the bond in November, it could prove to be politically difficult for them considering the widespread support for a facilities bond, which includes very support from school districts and organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, Legislative Latino Caucus, Construction Trade Unions, numerous individual legislators. And, this list of supporters grows more impressive by the day.

Approaching November, the opposition may be limited, as both CTA and the Administration have higher priorities for their war chests: for CTA, the extension of Prop 30 taxes; and for the Governor, the twin tunnels and high speed rail.

The November bond contains \$7 billion for K-12 facilities and continues the current School Facilities Program (SFP) as it existed January 1, 2015. Under this bond, the current \$2 billion pipeline (those projects submitted to the state with the Division of the State Architect (DSA) and CDE approval, including those on the Unfunded List and the Acknowledged List) will be funded.

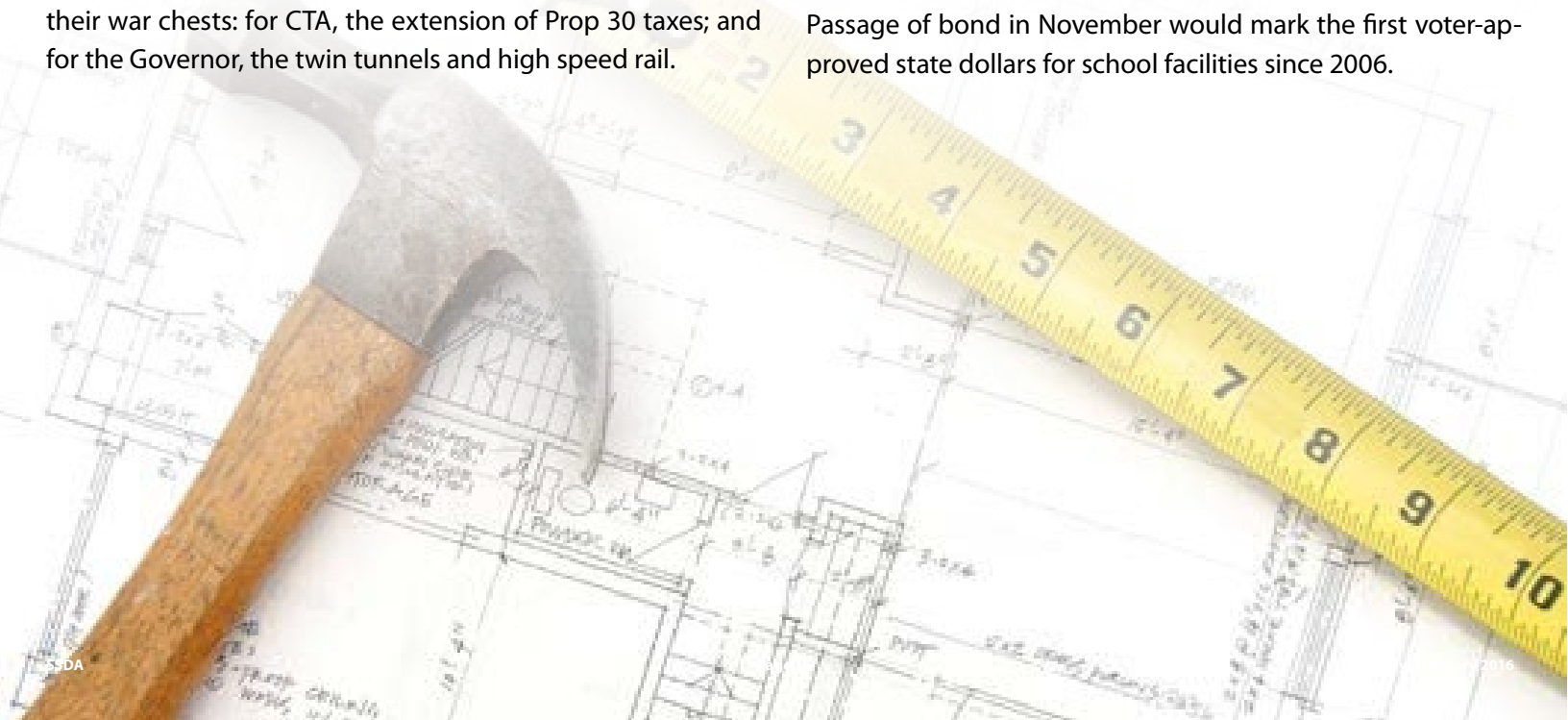
Polling continues to be strong and, if put before the voters today, the initiative would pass by a healthy margin. Current polling suggests that the passage of the facilities bond would not negatively impact the Prop 30 tax extension measures, but some opponents dispute this fact.

Failed attempt for a June 2016 alternative Facilities Bond

Over the past few months, ongoing discussions between the Legislature and Governor had occurred with the goal of placing a smaller facilities bond on the June ballot. Some, including CTA, believe a November facilities bond would compete with Prop 30 efforts to extend the temporary taxes, and supported the June initiative, for which passage could have been a distraction to passage of the November 2016 bond.

The attempt failed, however, as negotiations among the Administration, Legislature and sponsors of the November bond failed to produce an acceptable compromise. The deadline to place a bond measure on the June ballot was February 11, 2016.

Passage of bond in November would mark the first voter-approved state dollars for school facilities since 2006.





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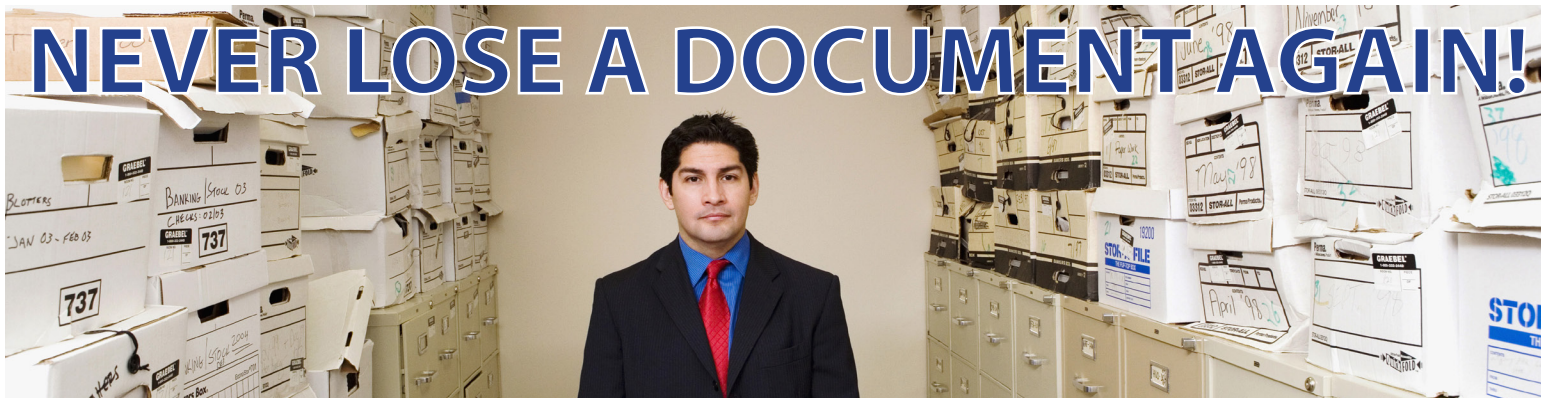
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