



May 2023 Legislative Advocate Report

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CABE/Californians Together 2023 Co-Sponsored Legislation Update

AB 1127 (Reyes): Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program – Would revise and update the Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program (BTPDP), which will use a “grow your own” approach to address the bilingual teacher shortage. This bill is additionally co-sponsored by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. AB 1127 passed out of the Assembly with full bipartisan support and is now moving to the Senate, where it will be shortly sent to the Senate Education Committee. It is possible that it will be heard as soon as early June.

CABE is thankful to Governor Newsom, the Senate, and the Assembly for their support of the \$20 million that was proposed in the May Revision to fund the BTPDP. This budget item will be monitored until the final budget is passed to ensure the funding remains in the final budget that is passed by the Legislature.

AB 370 (Addis): State Seal of Biliteracy - Would update the criteria required to obtain the State Seal of Biliteracy in order to make it equitable for all students to obtain and create a better understanding for all participating local educational agencies as to its implementation. This measure received full bipartisan support in the Assembly and has moved to the Senate Education Committee, where it will be heard on June 7th.

AB 393 (L. Rivas): Child Care: Dual Language Learners - Would expand asset-based dual language learner identification to general childcare programs to help California achieve the goals of the Master Plan to support these students. This legislation will require the Department of Social Services, in consultation with the Department of Education, to create a process with the necessary guidelines and requirements regarding information to coordinate data collection for these students. This measure is expected to pass the Assembly Floor by June 2nd with bipartisan support and would then move to the Senate Education Committee.

CABE Responds to Governor’s Reading Screening Proposal

The May Revision was accompanied by an education budget trailer bill that included a reading screening proposal by the Governor. While this proposal includes a comprehensively different approach than SB 691 (Portantino), which CABE opposed, it does recommend the creation of a complex new state-wide screening program. CABE and Californians Together have been collectively discussing this language and recommended amendments to the Governor’s office and Legislative leadership regarding reading difficulties among English learners, universal screening, the screening process, potential misidentification, the lack of translation, as well as the creation of an independent panel of experts that would begin this process. This has been an expedited and complex process due to the need to pass a budget by June 15th.

This issue has been a top priority for CAFE, which included a Lobby Day with CAFE leaders on May 24th in Sacramento to express our concerns and recommendations to the Governor’s office and Legislative leadership.

Please make sure to respond to CAFE’s Budget Call to Action by contacting the Governor and Legislative leadership to encourage them to create protections for English learners in this budget trailer bill.

Legislature Begins Formalizing Budget Votes

The Senate and Assembly began voting on a number of budget items which are beginning to turn into a final budget package. CAFE is so pleased that this package includes \$20 million to fund the BTPDP. In the past, this would be the time of year that a Budget Conference Committee, comprised of members from the Senate and Assembly, would be assembled to work out the differences between the houses. Over the past few years, this process has been replaced with meetings of the “Big Three,” which solely includes the Governor, Senate Pro Tempore Toni Atkins, and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon. It is unclear if Speaker Designate will be formally included in this process as his transition to Assembly Speaker will begin on July 1st.

The Legislature must pass a budget by the constitutionally-set deadline of June 15th. While a final budget is being passed this next month, the final numbers in this budget will not be known until after the extended tax deadline of October 15th.

Legislative Analyst’s Office Raises Fiscal Concerns

In an ironic twist of recommendations, the Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) took a more conservative approach to what the State can afford than the Governor included in his May Revision, as reported in the LAO’s *2023-24 Budget: Multiyear Budget Outlook*.

In this more conservative approach, which is significant as the Governor and Department of Finance are typically the more conservative of the bunch, the LAO strongly suggests the State will not be able to afford the spending levels that are included in the May Revision. They suggest recent one-time funding proposed over the past few years, as well as into the future, is no longer feasible given the State’s fiscal future.

Ultimately, the LAO contemplates that existing reserves are not sufficient to cover future projected spending deficits, coupled with increases in overall program costs.

CAFE-Supported Legislation Moving Forward

The Appropriations Committees held hundreds of bills but collectively passed over 1,000 bills when they took up their respective Suspense Files in mid-May. All bills that were released must pass the floor of their house by June 2nd, or they will become a two-year bill.

Support 

AB 506 (Fong): Ethnic Studies - Would create a seamless process to ensure that students who take an ethnic studies course within the community college system would be able to successfully transfer that course to the California State University (CSU) System. This process would be created through a collaboration between the CSU, the Community College Chancellor, and the CSU Council on Ethnic Studies. This bill is expected to pass the Assembly Floor by June 2nd and will then move to the Senate Education Committee.

AB 1354 (Fong): Curriculum - Would ensure that when the Instructional Quality Commission next revises the history-social science curriculum framework, they consider including the contributions made by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, as well as highlight racism, discrimination, and violence that have been perpetrated against these critical communities. This bill has passed the Assembly and has been referred to the Senate Education Committee.

SB 348 (Skinner): Pupil Meals - Would require local educational agencies to provide free meals to students, including both breakfast and lunch, beginning with the 2024-25 school year. As poverty rates and family hunger increases, schools play an increasingly important role to bridge that hunger gap for children. This bill is expected to pass the Senate Floor by June 2nd and would then move to the Assembly Education Committee.