

CALIFORNIA COUNTY BOARDS OF EDUCATION

POLICY PLATFORM

December 2015



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CCBE VISION AND MISSION

VISION

California County Boards of Education (CCBE) envisions each County Office of Education (COE) in our state providing a unique, locally developed, effectively managed, and highly successful combination of programs and services that:

- Prepares the COE's students for college and career, consistent with state-adopted standards, in safe, secure facilities.
- Maintains the financial soundness of the COE, and ensures the strength and vitality of the COE's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).
- Operates efficiently and effectively, and is highly respected by all of the county's Local Educational Agencies (LEAs).

MISSION

Through leadership, advocacy, and resources, CCBE:

- Represents County Boards of Education in the education community.
- Partners with the California School Boards Association (CSBA) and the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) to ensure that a high quality education is provided to every student.
- Promotes collaboration among County Boards and Superintendents to ensure that COEs are operated efficiently and effectively.
- Provides members of County Boards with the tools they need to be successful.

Policy and political leadership on behalf of children and students: CCBE supports CSBA's efforts to conduct non-partisan research and policy analysis, and advocate aggressively for state and federal policies that are coherent and focused on providing educational opportunities for all students.

Comprehensive support for governance teams: CCBE joins CSBA in providing training, support, resources and inspiration to County Boards and Superintendents to maximize their effectiveness in carrying out their critical leadership functions.

Direct services to COEs: CCBE partners with CSBA in providing high quality fiscal, policy, executive search, and other services to COEs to assist them in meeting the needs of their students and the LEAs within their jurisdiction.

Education to our communities about public schools and school board leadership: CCBE welcomes CSBA's efforts to develop and implement communications strategies that increase the public's understanding about the value of public education and the importance of local school governance.

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY PLATFORM

CCBE's Policy Platform provides a broad policy framework for implementing the organization's vision and mission. It guides the organization in its leadership activities, partnerships, legislative and regulatory advocacy, and work with the media and the public. For avoidance of doubt, nothing in this document should be interpreted as seeking to alter the division of responsibilities as provided under California law between county boards and superintendents.

To the extent CCBE's officers and committees take action on the organization's behalf, the Policy Platform serves as the foundation for their efforts.

CORE BELIEFS

CCBE's policy positions are based on a set of core beliefs about children, schools, local governance, and the roles of the state and federal governments.

CHILDREN

- All children can learn and succeed when they have access to a high quality education program that challenges them to succeed.
- The needs of the whole child must be addressed.
- Children in COE-operated court and community schools and special education programs confront unusual obstacles to learning and deserve specialized assistance and support.

SCHOOLS

- Schools must effectively serve every child irrespective of their social, ethnic, language, or economic background, gender, or special needs.
- School staff must be adequately prepared, supported, and held accountable.
- Schools must provide a safe, supportive, and positive environment.
- Every school (and every school district) deserves the support and assistance of an effective COE to ensure that the students are well served.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE

- County Boards and Superintendents must collaboratively ensure accountability for the effectiveness and fiscal solvency of programs operated by both COEs and other LEAs.
- Within a constitutional, statutory, and regulatory framework, County Boards and Superintendents must have authority to govern COE-operated schools.
- County Boards and Superintendents must be responsive to the needs, desires, and concerns of local families and communities.
- Family and community engagement is necessary for student success.

STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- COEs must have adequate, predictable, and fair funding, and must be permitted to retain and expend for educational purposes all revenues collected from local taxpayers for those purposes.
- State and federal accountability measures must be fair and meaningful.

While addressing all these critical issues, policy discussions about educational improvement must stay focused on meeting the needs of students. The ultimate goal must be to prepare all students for college and career, consistent with state-adopted standards, and for the challenges they will face in the 21st century. Moreover, the essential role of COEs in attaining that goal must be recognized, including the COEs' ability to efficiently deliver cost-effective programs and services in such areas as professional development and in-service training for teachers and administrators, teacher preparation and induction, technology, and centralized purchasing.

POLICY PILLARS

There are four overarching policy pillars that we believe will lead to the outcome we all want for California's children: graduates prepared for post-high school success in college and the workforce with the skills to be lifelong learners and effective, contributing members of society.

1 STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

California K-12 public schools belong to the communities they serve. Within our constitutional, statutory, and regulatory framework, County Boards and Superintendents, working collaboratively, must have authority consistent with their responsibilities, including responsibilities related to charter school authorization and oversight, to ensure that all students are successful and that all LEAs have long-term fiscal stability.

2 SECURE FAIR FUNDING

Funding for each COE in California must be sufficient to provide for high quality teaching and learning in the COE's schools, as well as to enable the COE to support high quality teaching and learning in every public school in the county. The funding must be guaranteed, stable, and fair, consistent with the needs of the students being served.

3 IMPROVE CONDITIONS OF CHILDREN

County Boards realize that proper nutrition, physical and mental health; support for learning; safe school environments; and access to community resources help students achieve and succeed. To the extent of their authority, County Boards and Superintendents must establish policies and practices to overcome the barriers that students face.

4 ENSURE ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL

COEs must provide (and assist school districts in providing) all students with high quality teaching and learning driven by curricula that prepare the students for post-high school success in college and career; research-based instruction; timely assessments that accurately measure student performance, and strong professional teacher development.

PLATFORM AT-A-GLANCE

Within the policy pillars, there are specific levers—issues to which focus and pressure should be brought to leverage change that will improve K-12 education.

PILLARS

LEVERS

1 Strengthen local governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Local authority▪ A robust K-12 system▪ Strong and coherent local governance▪ An engaged public
2 Secure fair funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Fair funding▪ Stable funding▪ Local autonomy
3 Improve conditions of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Integrated student services▪ Safe and supportive school environments▪ Family and community role in improving conditions of children
4 Ensure achievement for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ An aligned education system▪ Rich and challenging local curricula▪ Student centered teaching and learning▪ Preparing effective teachers▪ Family and community role in promoting student achievement

POLICY PLATFORM DETAIL

STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Preamble

County Boards are an essential element in the local governance of one of our most valuable public institutions: California's K-12 public schools. CCBE vigorously defends and values the contributions that County Boards make to K-12 education, and is committed to preserving and strengthening their contribution to local governance.

To strengthen local governance, four education policy levers should be pursued.

1. Local authority
2. A robust K-12 system
3. Strong and coherent local governance
4. An engaged public

I.I LOCAL AUTHORITY

County Boards and Superintendents are accountable for ensuring that COE-provided education programs lead to achievement for all students and that the long-term financial health of the county's LEAs is maintained. Responsibility and authority go hand in hand. Therefore, within our constitutional, statutory, and regulatory framework, County Boards and Superintendents must have authority over key aspects of the COE for which they are held accountable. Local authority should include:

1.1.1 Student learning / achievement: Authority to establish policy related to programs, curriculum, instruction, assessment, student placement, as well as class-size, instructional time and the school calendar.

1.1.2 Student support programs: Authority over non-academic student services including discipline, extracurricular programs and programs for health and safety.

1.1.3 Human capital: Authority over the recruitment, selection, compensation, professional development, assignment, supervision, evaluation, promotion and termination of staff.

1.1.4 Financial resources: Authority over the planning and use of all COE assets and resources; authority to raise local revenue through bonds, parcel taxes, and other local measures; and authority to receive reports resulting from independent and objective audits to determine the fiscal stability of school systems.

1.1.5 COE programs and services: Authority to establish and provide programs and services that support the work of school districts, including the efficient, cost-effective delivery of professional development and in-service training for teachers and administrators, teacher preparation and induction, technology, and centralized purchasing.

1.2 A ROBUST K-12 SYSTEM

California should have a robust K-12 system of education that provides local autonomy, encourages and rewards innovation that raises student achievement, and closes achievement gaps for all students. Current law allows boards to create magnet and alternative schools, as well as to authorize charter schools that are free from some of the constraints that COEs and school districts face, but that are held accountable to their charter provisions. A robust K-12 system should ensure:

1.2.1 Consistent expectations: All K-12 institutions in California should be expected to raise student achievement and close achievement gaps. All schools must offer programs that meet student needs and, in particular, the needs of underperforming students.

1.2.2 Consistent support for innovation: COEs should have incentives and rewards for innovation and authority over operations in order to increase student achievement and close achievement gaps.

1.2.3 Consistent exercise of local control: COEs should be operated under the leadership of County Boards and Superintendents, who work collaboratively, and who have authority over the development, review, approval, oversight, and evaluation of all schools within the COE's jurisdictional boundaries. Transparency and conflict-of-interest laws should be clear and consistent.

1.2.4 Rigorous charter school authorizing and oversight: COEs should exercise leadership in the authorizing and oversight of charter schools for which they are responsible.

1.3 STRONG AND COHERENT LOCAL GOVERNANCE

District and county school boards are part of a system of local governance that includes city councils and county boards of supervisors. Within our constitutional, statutory, and regulatory framework, a coherent system of governance requires all local governing bodies, including district and county school boards, to have sufficient authority, fair standards of accountability, and equitable treatment under the law. District and county school boards also need quality professional development that strengthens their ability to govern.

1.3.1 Equitable standing with other governing agencies: District and county school boards should be treated fairly relative to other local governing agencies. They should have input and influence regarding local decisions that impact schools, especially related to local planning issues.

1.3.2 Professional development: District and county school board professional development should focus on improving the capacity to exercise the responsibilities of office, be aligned with professional governance standards, and be directed towards improving student outcomes.

1.3.3 Effective district organization: Each County Committee on School District Organization should ensure that the county's districts are effectively, efficiently, fairly, and appropriately organized.

1.4 AN ENGAGED PUBLIC

Public education remodeling will be strengthened by a more engaged public. Well-informed local residents can more meaningfully engage in and contribute to improving public education in four key areas.

1.4.1 Local representation: District and county school boards reflect American democracy at its most fundamental level. District and county school boards are stronger when the community they serve: 1) understands school governance and the beliefs, skills, and knowledge that characterize effective board members; and 2) actively participates in selecting non-partisan school board members.

1.4.2 Local engagement and collaboration: District and county school boards must play a leadership role in the promotion and development of collaborative approaches among schools, cities, counties, other local government agencies, community-based organizations, local businesses and service organizations to meet the needs of students.

1.4.3 Advocacy for and engagement in state and national issues: The improvement of education in California can be accelerated by greater participation of district and county school boards and the public in state and national policy issues.

1.4.4. Better information: Recognizing that School Accountability Report Cards (SARCs) have become outdated in some respects, County Boards should take a leadership role in revising the requirements for SARCs, so as to better inform the public about schools operated by COEs.

Preamble

Public education is a fundamental component of our American democracy and vital to the economic success of our state and nation. Our highest value and priority should be investing in the public education and training of the next generation. Federal, state, and local government spending should reflect this critical investment.

To secure fair funding, three education policy levers should be pursued.

1. Fair funding
2. Stable funding
3. Local autonomy

2.1 FAIR FUNDING

Funding should place California in the top tier of national per-pupil resources and fully cover the cost of educating our students. The funding system should fairly distribute resources across COEs and school districts to pay for the real costs of educating each of California's students. Three fundamental criteria for fair funding include:

2.1.1 Full funding: California must provide enough resources to support the actual cost of ensuring that all public school students - and all the COEs and school districts that serve them - perform at high levels. Funding formulas should (1) provide sufficient resources to ensure the success of all California's students; (2) include resources for non-instructional services and infrastructure necessary for effective school operations; and (3) enable COEs and school districts to retain and expend for educational purposes all revenues collected from local taxpayers for those purposes. California should fully fund state mandates, and impose as few additional mandates as possible.

2.1.2 Properly allocated funding: COEs must be allocated funding that is sufficient to pay for the actual cost of meeting the differential needs of the students served. To the extent of their budget and policy approval authorities, County Boards should ensure to the maximum extent possible that the resources received are distributed fairly within their jurisdictions to meet each student's needs.

2.1.3 Specialized funding: Recognizing that COEs have unique and specialized needs relating to the specific student populations served and historical derivations, California must provide funding for COEs that fairly supports those needs and imperatives.

2.2 STABLE FUNDING

Funding should be predictable and not subject to dramatic fluctuations from year to year. In particular, funding should empower COEs to anticipate and respond to changes in a manner that mitigates the harm to student programs and maximizes the COE's capacity to plan for proactive change. Stable funding must be guaranteed.

2.2.1 *Consistent*: Funding streams should be dependable and not subject to substantial shifts in resource levels from year to year.

2.2.2 *Guaranteed*: Funding streams should be protected from encroachment, deferrals, replacement or other political or legislative adjustments that reduce agreed upon resource levels.

2.3 LOCAL AUTONOMY

Under the principle of subsidiarity, central authority has a subsidiary or supportive function, performing only those tasks that cannot be more effectively performed at the local level. Education funding must allow for local autonomy appropriate for the level of accountability placed upon LEAs. County Boards and Superintendents need authority to generate local revenue, control over the allocation of resources, and greater autonomy for the development and use of facilities.

2.3.1 *Generate local revenue*: County Boards and Superintendents need authority to generate additional revenue.

2.3.2 *Allocating resources*: County Boards and Superintendents need authority to make decisions about how to best maximize and allocate resources. The state should impose as few categorical programs as possible to maximize the ability of County Boards and Superintendents to align their resources with student achievement and organization goals.

2.3.3 *Control over development and use of facilities*: County Boards and Superintendents must have authority over the use of all COE property within their jurisdiction. They also need flexibility to provide facilities that are safe and educationally appropriate.

3 IMPROVE CONDITIONS OF CHILDREN

Preamble

The primary responsibility of public schools is to educate students. The ability of children to attend school, to be engaged and learning in the classroom and to achieve academic success is significantly affected by conditions in their daily lives. The physical, mental, and emotional health of each child, the social and economic obstacles they and their families may face, and the environments in which they live all impact a child's opportunity to learn. Therefore, all children need access to appropriate support services if California is going to close the gaps that current exist in both opportunity and achievement.

Improving the outcomes for K-12 education in California is a complex challenge. The emerging research and documented success of the collective impact achieved by mobilizing multiple organizations to collaborate to find solutions for communities is compelling, and must be a key strategy for meeting this challenge. No one agency can solve this problem alone, and CCBE encourages the convening of conversations and the sustaining of collaborations at every level that will bring to fruition the vision of children unbounded by circumstance.

To improve the conditions of children, three education policy levers should be pursued.

1. Integrated student services
2. Safe and supportive school environments
3. Family and community role in improving conditions of children

3.1 INTEGRATED STUDENT SERVICES

Addressing the conditions that impact students is not the sole responsibility of schools. The needs of all students must be identified and comprehensively addressed through the coordinated and collective efforts of schools and other agencies, institutions and organizations, each held to high standards of accountability.

3.1.1 Collaboration and accountability: Partnerships and collaboration among all public and private agencies, businesses and community organizations should eliminate barriers to sharing appropriate data and increase flexibility in the coordination of funds to simplify access to education, health and support services for children. Responsibility for meeting the needs of all students should be shared across agencies, organizations, communities and schools. All entities providing integrated services to students should hold each other mutually accountable.

3.1.2 Prevention, intervention, and support for students: Schools and communities should provide developmentally appropriate programs that lead to early success in school. Schools should identify student needs and provide services and supports that address the barriers students face to attending, engaging, learning and achieving in school. Appropriate and effective solutions should be developed for students whose needs cannot be met in regular education programs.

3.2 SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

Excellence in teaching and learning occurs when students and staff are healthy and feel safe, supported and connected.

3.2.1 *Safe schools:* A positive school environment identifies and reinforces nonviolent solutions to problems and respect for all students and staff. Schools must implement fair and effective practices for student discipline, safe use of appropriate technology and media resources, and appropriate emergency response and communication plans. Schools must protect confidential student information.

3.2.2 *Healthy students:* Students benefit from coordinated programs and supports that promote student wellness, including health, fitness, disease prevention, and nutrition.

3.2.3 *Attendance and Expulsion:* County Boards play a special and extremely important role in conducting appeals related to interdistrict attendance requests and student expulsions, as provided by law.

3.3 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ROLE IN IMPROVING CONDITIONS OF CHILDREN

The home and community environments in which children live influence their ability to learn and thrive. Community outreach, support and partnering with families are critical strategies for improving the conditions of children.

3.3.1 *Community outreach:* Schools should initiate outreach for community-based support to meet the physical, emotional and mental health needs of all children.

3.3.2 *Partnering with families:* Schools should promote the active involvement of families in supporting the physical, emotional and mental health of children as critical to fostering their success in school and life.

4 ENSURE ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL

Preamble

California students need a well-aligned education system that prepares them for college and career success. The state role should focus on standards, frameworks, accountability and data. State and federal governments must provide an effective, efficient and unbiased accountability system that uses multiple measures to determine school success and balances the depth and scope of testing at each grade level to provide timely results and minimize the impact on instructional time. County Boards must have authority to adopt local standards and curricula for their school communities that serve their local needs.

To advance the achievement of all students, five education policy levers should be pursued.

1. An aligned education system
2. Rich and challenging local curricula
3. Student centered teaching and learning
4. Preparing effective teachers
5. Family and community role in promoting student achievement

4.1 AN ALIGNED EDUCATION SYSTEM

California students need a well-aligned education system that prepares them for college and career success. A well-aligned education system requires effective collaboration, coordination, and articulation among school districts, COEs, career technical education programs (including apprenticeship programs), and California's institutes of higher education.

4.1.1 Horizontal alignment: A well-aligned education system requires consistent standards of accountability and performance among all schools that provide PreK, K-12, career technical education programs (including apprenticeship programs), or post-secondary education. COEs play an essential role in the implementation of those standards.

4.1.2 Vertical alignment: A well-aligned education system that includes strong leadership from COEs ensures that there are consistent standards for admission and matriculation between PreK, elementary, high school, career technical education programs (including apprenticeship programs), and post-secondary institutions.

4.2 RICH AND CHALLENGING LOCAL CURRICULA

A high-quality and comprehensive instructional programs offers a rich curriculum beyond what is tested on state assessments as the foundation for high expectations and achievement for all students.

4.2.1 Comprehensive and competitive: COE and school district educational programs should prepare all students for graduation and successful transition to employment or postsecondary education in the multi-cultural and global economy of the 21st century. The full PreK-12 program must help students advance their proficiency in English-language arts, mathematics, science, history-social science, technology, the visual and performing arts and physical education, and support the development of their physical and emotional health. College and career-ready students should also have opportunities to learn an additional language, utilize applied and experiential learning and explore the principles of personal character, productive citizenship and co-curricular interests.

4.2.2 Cultural inclusiveness: COEs and school districts must encourage learning environments that respect the diversity among students and families in languages, customs, cultures, and beliefs. Educational programming should offer insight into different cultures and offer role models that highlight and promote acceptance of our multicultural society.

4.2.3 Locally driven: County Boards need the freedom to adopt and approve curricula that meet local needs.

4.3 STUDENT CENTERED TEACHING AND LEARNING

All children residing in California deserve high-quality educational services. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment must be designed based on what students need to meet high expectations for performance. COEs support these objectives through professional development and in-service training activities that disseminate best practices.

4.3.1 Effective instruction, assessment, and interventions: Instruction and assessment provided by COEs and school districts should be research-based and address the learning needs of all students, and be adapted to meet the needs of English language learners, special education students, and students with learning differences. Accountability for student achievement should be based on multiple measures over time, including standardized and performance-based assessments. Assessment results should be included in the regular evaluation of program effectiveness in order to revise or terminate programs as needed.

4.3.2 Equitable access to quality resources: All students need equitable access to excellent teaching and learning experiences and resources including instructional materials, technology, media and other innovations appropriate and effective for learning. COEs must provide countywide leadership to realize these objectives.

4.3.3 Data-driven: Schools must use accurate data and reliable assessment results to regularly measure student progress. Assessment results effectively improve student performance when they support appropriate changes in curriculum and programs, instruction, assessment, and intervention strategies. They are also a valuable tool in the creation of alternative instruction programs to meet student needs. The state, with the active support and assistance of COEs, must provide a data system that tracks students through graduation and connects to student support services and higher education.

4.4 PREPARING EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

Students perform better when they are taught by highly qualified and highly effective teachers. California should provide a well-aligned and coherent system for K-12 teacher preparation including credentialing, recruitment, professional development and evaluation. COEs should have a leadership role in the K-12 teacher preparation system.

4.4.1 Credentialing: California's K-12 teacher preparation programs must be based on professional standards for teaching, and include a performance evaluation component prior to receiving a credential. The Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) should create multiple pathways for those interested in entering the teaching profession and simplify the process for credentialing qualified teachers with out-of-state credentials and CTE teacher candidates. Teacher preparation programs should prepare teachers for working with students with learning challenges, and actively encourage enrollment of teacher candidates from under-represented groups or with multilingual and culturally diverse backgrounds who can provide strong role models. The CTC should coordinate California's teacher and administrator preparation efforts with all key stakeholders to ensure alignment and coherence, and should include a major role for COEs in pursuing alternative routes to certification and other measures to maintain a supply of teachers in California that is equal to the demand moving forward.

4.4.2 Recruitment, placement and induction: County Boards and Superintendents should have authority to attract and retain highly qualified staff and provide support and training for new teachers. Longer probationary periods should be established to provide sufficient opportunity for assessing teacher performance. Assignment and transfer of teachers should be based on student needs and teacher effectiveness and qualifications.

4.4.3 Staff development: Professional development must be ongoing, relevant and based on recognized standards for the professional development of educators. Professional development should address teacher attitudes and perceptions about high expectations for—and the fair and equitable treatment of—all students. It must be focused on addressing the learning needs of students, including students with learning differences. Professional development activity can be enhanced by collaborative efforts among school districts, COEs, and institutions of higher learning.

4.4.4 Teacher evaluation: Teacher evaluations in COEs and school districts should be regular and ongoing, and must include assessment of subject-matter knowledge, instructional techniques, and progress in student learning. The procedures for teacher placement, layoff decisions, and the dismissal of staff whose performance is unsatisfactory should be streamlined, with maximum local authority.

4.5 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ROLE IN PROMOTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Schools are public institutions that belong to the communities they serve, and they function better when the community is engaged. Family involvement and community

partnerships are essential components of engagement and are important strategies for raising student achievement and improving schools. County Boards recognize that the specialized student populations served by COEs create particular challenges in relationship to family involvement.

4.5.1 *Family involvement:* The parents and guardians of students in both COE and district schools, reflecting diverse cultural backgrounds and native languages, should have access to: 1) opportunities to participate in the school decisions that affect their children; 2) key information about classroom and school issues, programs, expectations, and services; 3) time off from work to attend student-related meetings; and 4) opportunities to develop their own English language proficiency or academic/vocational skills.

4.5.2 *Community partnerships:* Collaboration and partnerships by COEs and school districts with businesses, local government agencies, institutions of higher education, and other organizations can provide community service and service learning activities, raise public awareness of educational needs in the community and bring additional resources and programs to school sites.