



LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

California Schools in Focus: Quarterly Newsletter on Legislation Affecting Schools



Legislative Outlook

As the Legislature advances bills through policy and fiscal committees, lawmakers continue to balance competing priorities against budget constraints. Much like prior years, proposals with significant fiscal impacts face increased scrutiny in the Assembly and Senate Appropriations Committees. School safety, workforce challenges, employee protections, artificial intelligence, student wellness, and workers' compensation reform remain key topics under consideration during the 2026 legislative session.

Several bills of interest to public education agencies, employers, and risk management professionals continue to move through the legislative process. The following provides an overview of key issues and legislation that may impact California school districts and public agencies.

Workers' Compensation Reform Efforts

The California Coalition on Workers' Compensation (CCWC) recently joined a statewide coalition effort focused on advancing reforms designed to strengthen California's workers' compensation system and ensure benefits remain available for legitimately injured workers.

Coalition representatives have identified rising workers' compensation costs, increasing medical-legal expenses, and growth in cumulative trauma claims as areas of concern for public agencies and employers throughout California. School districts, community colleges, cities, counties, and other public employers bear many of these costs directly, potentially affecting funding available for educational programs, public services, and community initiatives.

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A key focus of current reform discussions are the increase in cumulative trauma claims, which coalition representatives report now account for approximately one-quarter of all indemnity claims filed statewide. Advocates for reform have proposed measures that would strengthen documentation requirements, establish reasonable filing standards, and improve accountability while preserving benefits for legitimately injured workers.

The California Coalition on Workers' Compensation (CCWC) will continue to monitor legislative and regulatory developments related to workers' compensation reform and advocate for balanced solutions that support both injured workers and the long-term sustainability of the workers' compensation system.

School Safety

AB 1721 – Pupil Safety: Comprehensive School Safety Plans **K-12**

AB 1721 would require the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to convene a workgroup to review and evaluate existing Comprehensive School Safety Plan requirements. The workgroup would assess current mandates and provide recommendations for improving school safety planning. As school safety requirements continue to expand, districts should monitor this bill for potential future changes to safety planning and compliance obligations.

AB 2144 – The California Youth Cardiac Screening Pilot Program **K-12**

AB 2144 would amend existing Education Code provisions by requiring at least two adults with CPR certification to be present during on-campus events that do not involve interscholastic athletic programs. The proposal builds upon existing requirements and may create additional staffing and training obligations for districts hosting school-sponsored events.

AB 2242 – Pupil safety: Sextortion Awareness Materials **Any educational agencies serving grades 7-12**

AB 2242 would require schools to post educational materials regarding sextortion awareness in student restrooms. While the bill seeks to increase student awareness and prevention efforts, implementation standards and required content remain subject to further clarification.

Employment and Human Resources

AB 1883 – Workplace Surveillance Restrictions **K-12 and Higher Education**

AB 1883 would place restrictions on employer use of workplace surveillance technologies, including certain camera systems, artificial intelligence monitoring tools, and biometric data collection. If enacted, the bill may affect district security practices, workplace monitoring procedures, and employee privacy considerations.

AB 1898 – Artificial Intelligence in Employment **K-12 and Higher Education**

As employers increasingly explore artificial intelligence tools in hiring and employment processes, AB 1898 would require employers to provide notice when AI is used in employment-related decisions. The bill would also establish employee acknowledgment requirements and additional transparency obligations.



AB 1940 – Menopause Protections Under FEHA **K-12 and Higher Education**

AB 1940 clarifies that menopause related medical conditions fall within existing sex discrimination protections under California's Fair Employment and Housing Act. School districts may need to review workplace policies, training programs, and accommodation practices to ensure compliance if the bill is enacted.

AB 1961 – Workplace Violence Restraining Orders **K-12 and Higher Education**

Building upon existing workplace violence prevention requirements, AB 1961 would allow employers to seek restraining orders on behalf of groups of employees when threats are directed at a workplace. The bill may provide districts with additional tools to address workplace safety concerns and respond to threatening behavior.

AB 2365 – Educator Misconduct Reporting **K-12 and Limited Higher Education Impact**

AB 2365 would expand requirements related to reporting serious educator misconduct between school employers. While intended to improve information sharing and student safety protections, implementation challenges remain due to the absence of a centralized reporting system and potential interaction with existing employment laws.

Student Wellness and Support Services

AB 1985 – Mental Health Training for Coaches **Higher Education**

AB 1985 would require mental health awareness training for school coaches. The proposal seeks to improve early identification of mental health concerns and strengthen schools' ability to connect students with appropriate support services.

AB 2003 – Suicide Prevention Training **K-12**

AB 2003 would expand suicide prevention training requirements across K-12 schools. The bill builds upon existing prevention efforts and emphasizes early identification, intervention, and student support.

SB 1226 – Student Health Services **K-12**

SB 1226 would authorize trained school personnel to perform certain respiratory care services that have traditionally been limited to licensed nursing staff. While the proposal may provide districts with greater flexibility in serving students with medical needs, it may also increase training, oversight, and risk management responsibilities.

Technology and Emerging Issues

AB 2449 – School Bus Stop-Arm Cameras **K-12**

AB 2449 would authorize school districts to install stop-arm camera systems on school buses to capture vehicles that unlawfully pass stopped buses. While intended to improve student safety, districts implementing these systems may assume additional responsibilities related to video management, public records requests, and program administration.

SB 1276 – Artificial Intelligence and Deepfake Protections **K-12 and Limited Higher Education Impact**

As artificial intelligence technologies continue to evolve, SB 1276 seeks to expand protections related to AI-generated exploitative images involving minors. The bill reflects growing legislative attention to emerging technology risks and student safety concerns in digital environments.

Looking Ahead

As bills continue through the legislative process, fiscal pressures remain a significant factor in determining which proposals advance. Many measures face additional scrutiny regarding implementation costs and budget impacts before reaching the Governor's desk.

School safety, student wellness, artificial intelligence, workforce issues, and workers' compensation reform are expected to remain key areas of focus throughout the remainder of the legislative session. CSRM will continue monitoring legislative developments and providing updates on issues that may affect member districts and educational agencies throughout California.

CSRM Mission Statement

Promote student achievement by optimizing the financial and human resources of member districts through high-quality risk financing and loss reduction services.



A Message from our Workers' Compensation Manager

While some bills failed to advance, we expect that many of them will be revived in January when the legislature reconvenes. CSRM partners with both CAJPA and PRISM to continue advocacy efforts for our community college and school district members.

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