



February 2025 Legislative Advocate Report

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Bill Introduction Deadline Cleared

February 21st was the final deadline to introduce bills. With 2,350 total bills introduced, 1,500 in the Assembly and 850 in the Senate, this number represented a reduction in the overall number of bills typically introduced. There was a definite shift in focus in many of the bills introduced that deal with fire recovery, but many ongoing issues, such as affordable housing, were in the mix of bills introduced. The Legislative Policy Team has already begun to review bills and is now finalizing positions. Once bill letters have gone out, I will provide additional updates in future monthly reports.

LAO Issues 2025-26 Budget Review

The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) issued: [*The 2025-26 Budget: Proposition 98 Guarantee and K-12 Spending Plan*](#). The report reviews the Governor's 2024-25 and 2025-26 budgets which project a rise in school funding due to Proposition 98, with a \$3.9 billion increase in 2024-25 and \$3.6 billion in 2025-26. However, these projections are sensitive to stock market changes. To manage volatility, the Governor suggests delaying a \$1.6 billion payment to schools but recommends a reserve deposit instead to avoid deferring costs. The proposal allocates \$7.8 billion for K-12 spending, with \$4.4 billion for ongoing costs, like a cost-of-living adjustment, transitional kindergarten expansion, and \$3.4 billion for one-time activities. The budget also outlines how Proposition 98 funding fluctuates based on revenue and other factors, adjusting school funding accordingly. The LAO contemplates that while the plan has positive elements, it may need adjustments for better fiscal stability.

The LAO additionally expresses caution about California's 2024-25 budget, noting that revenue projections rely heavily on a volatile stock market. Wildfire-related tax extensions add uncertainty to revenue estimates. Proposition 98 funding for schools is highly sensitive to revenue changes, particularly in 2024-25, where small fluctuations could significantly impact school funding. The 2025-26 budget is expected to have a moderate impact on school funding, with no mandatory reserve deposit due to higher estimates under Test 2. The Los Angeles wildfires are projected to reduce property tax revenue by \$100-200 million, slightly impacting school funding.

LAO Recommends Support for TK Multilingual Screener

The LAO issued a [report](#) including a background and recommendation to the Governor's \$10 million proposal for \$10 million for a multilingual learner screener in transitional kindergarten. Districts are required by law to identify English learners (ELs) through a standardized home language survey and state-developed assessments like the ELPAC, which evaluates English proficiency. EL students receive language development support and are assessed annually to track progress.

CABE co-sponsored AB 2268 with Early Edge and Californians Together, which eliminated ELPAC testing for TK students starting in 2024-25 due to concerns about misidentification. The Governor's 2024-25 budget proposes \$10 million to develop a new multilingual screener for TK students to identify those needing language support without classifying them as ELs. The screener must be developmentally appropriate, unbiased, and available by 2026, with mandatory use by 2027-28.

The LAO notes that the proposal helps early identification, they raise concerns about lack of mandated services for identified multilingual learners and funding reductions. The LAO recommends the Legislature adopt the Governor's proposal but consider whether to set service requirements and explore funding adjustments for multilingual learners.

LAO Recommends Changes to ELOP

The state offers three expanded learning programs, primarily funded through the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP), which provides academic and enrichment activities for students outside regular school hours. ELOP funding is distributed to districts based on the number of English learner (EL) or low-income (LI) students. Districts with more than 75% EL/LI students receive a higher funding rate, known as Tier 1, while those with fewer EL/LI students are funded under Tier 2, with variable rates depending on remaining funds after Tier 1 allocation.

The LAO released [*The 2025-26 Budget: Expanded Learning Opportunities Program*](#), which notes the Governor proposes increasing ELOP funding by \$435 million and lowering the threshold for Tier 1 eligibility from 75% to 55% EL/LI students. This would allow more districts to receive higher funding but require them to serve all students, not just EL/LI students. While the proposal's estimated costs are reasonable, the LAO recommends that the implementation be delayed for at least one year to give districts time to adjust staffing and facilities.

The analysis suggests several improvements to the ELOP program, such as aligning ELOP with the After School Education and Safety (ASES) program to avoid duplicative funding, basing funding on actual program participation rather than district attendance, and fixing the Tier 2 funding rate for more stability. There is also a call to delay changes until the 2026-27 school year to give districts more time to scale their programs.

CABE-Supported Legislation

CABE will be reviewing newly-introduced bills shortly and will communicate those positions to the Legislature. CABE has taken a support position on the following bills thus far:

AB 49 (Muratsuchi): Immigration Enforcement: Would prohibit local educational agency school officials and employees from allowing federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials from entering a school site for any purpose without providing valid identification, a written statement of purpose, a valid judicial warrant, as well as receiving approval from the superintendent of the district, the county, or the principal of the charter school or their designee. Further, AB 49 requires the LEA to limit access to school facilities.

AB 243 (Ahrens): Student Financial Aid Dependency Status: Would require financial administrators of the California community colleges, California State University, or University of California, or the Student Aid Commission, to accept a sworn statement signed under penalty of perjury by a representative of a LEA, county welfare department, or probation department as sufficient document for student aid.

SB 12 (Gonzalez): Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Agency: Would create the Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Agency headed by a secretary appointed by the Governor, subject to Senate confirmation who would reduce obstacles and enhance immigration integration into California.

SB 48 (Gonzalez): Immigration Enforcement at School Sites: prohibitions on access, sharing information, and law enforcement collaboration: Would prohibit school districts, county offices of education, or charter schools and their personnel, from allowing Immigration and Customs Enforcement to access a school campus without a judicial warrant. To the extent possible, SB 48 would require local education agencies and their personnel to document and have a witness present when denying such access. Additionally, the bill would prohibit LEAs and their personnel from disclosing or providing education records about a pupil, pupil's family, school employees, or teachers, without a judicial warrant.

LAO Issues Report on Fiscal Oversight

The Legislative Analyst's Office recently issued the report: [*The 2025-26 Budget Undertaking Fiscal Oversight*](#), which advised the Legislature to conduct rigorous fiscal oversight of state programs in the 2025-26 budget process, focusing on General Fund-supported programs to address anticipated budget deficits. These deficits, expected from 2026-27 onward, will require spending cuts, revenue increases, or other solutions. The LAO noted the importance of fiscal oversight to help assess whether public resources achieve intended goals at reasonable costs through evaluations of program outcomes, costs, and effectiveness.

Given time constraints, the LAO is recommending the Legislature prioritize oversight efforts by focusing on high-cost, high-growth programs, areas with fiscal flexibility, underexamined programs, and those susceptible to external changes. Assessing program success is challenging due to limited data, but gathering relevant cost-benefit information can help prioritize spending. The Legislature is urged to determine whether programs address well-defined problems, meet objectives effectively, and provide sufficient benefits relative to costs. This oversight will aid in balancing future budgets and preparing for upcoming fiscal challenges.

Further, the Legislature is encouraged to examine the state's revenue structure alongside spending, including evaluating the fairness, stability, and efficiency of California's tax system and considering adjustments, such as the future of Proposition 55. Tax expenditures, including credits and deductions, are also recommended to be scrutinized like other spending to ensure they achieve their intended objectives effectively.

Legislative Calendar

April 1 – CAFE Lobby Day.

May 2 – Last day for policy committees to hear fiscal bills.

May 9 – Last day for policy committees to hear nonfiscal bills.

May 16 – Last day for policy committees to meet prior to June 9.

May 23 – Last day for fiscal committees to hear Floor bills introduced in their house.

June 2-6 – Floor session only.

June 6 – Last day for each house to pass bills introduced in that house.

June 9 – Committee meetings may resume.

June 15 – Budget bill must be passed by midnight.

July 18 – Last day for policy committees to hear bills. Summer Recess begins.

August 18 – Legislature reconvenes from Summer Recess.

August 29 – Last day for fiscal committees to hear bills.

September 2-12 – Floor session only.

September 5 – Last day to amend a bill on the Floor.

September 12 – Last day for each house to pass bills. Interim Recess begins.