



March 10, 2024

The Honorable John Laird
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee 1
Suite 8720
1021 O Street Sacramento, CA

The Honorable David Alvarez
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee 3
Suite 5320
1021 O Street Sacramento, CA

RE: Proposed 2024-2025 State Budget for K-12 Education

Dear Senator Laird and Assemblymember Alvarez:

As an organization working to expose and eradicate the injustices and inequities in California schools and colleges, from transitional kindergarten through higher education, The Education Trust–West (ETW) asks that you and your colleagues on the Budget Subcommittees on Education adopt the following recommendations on the Governor’s proposed budget for K-12 education in 2024-2025.

1) Professional Development in Math (\$20 million) – Support and Seek Amendments

The budget proposes \$20 million to be appropriated to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for allocation to one or more county offices of education or a consortia of county offices of education, to partner with the California Mathematics Project to develop and deliver educator training, and provide resources to educators on delivering high-quality mathematics instruction to students, pursuant to the 2023 California Mathematics Framework. The grantee or grantees may also partner with other well-qualified governmental or non-profit providers of high-quality mathematics training to educators, in addition to the California Mathematics Project.

ETW supports this proposal as it is critical in realizing the full benefits of the 2023 Math Framework. We also request an amendment to ensure the development of the educator training is aligned with and builds on the training infrastructure and content developed by the Fresno and San Joaquin County offices of education with the \$85 million provided in



the 2022-2023 budget; this funding was provided for professional development infrastructure and learning networks in math, science, and computer science. We recommend that the professional learning to be developed and delivered with this \$20 million investment leverage the infrastructure and networks that are being developed by the California Math, Science, and Computer Science Grant Program (funded in the 2022-23 budget), to ensure coherence in statewide programs and strategic use of funding. While the 2022-23 investment is developing the infrastructure and networks, the proposed \$20 million for educator training and resources will be instrumental in supporting educators to participate in the professional learning trainings and networks.

2) Exempt Holders of Bachelor’s Degree from Basic Skills Requirement for Teaching Credential – Support

The budget proposes to exempt holders of a bachelor’s degree from the requirement to demonstrate competency in basic skills for a California teaching credential.

Research shows that performance on the Teaching Performance Assessment and in credential programs are much stronger predictors of teacher effectiveness than any of the current measures of competency in basic skills, including the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST). In light of the low passage rates for Black and Latinx students, CBEST and the basic skills requirement may be keeping talented candidates of color from entering the teaching profession.

Thus, ETW is pleased to support the budget proposal to exempt college graduates from the basic skills requirement and hopes we see more diverse teachers entering the profession as a result.

3) Instructional Continuity – Concern

The Governor is proposing a new funding program to allow local educational agencies to offer before or after school, weekend, or intersessional instruction and claim average daily attendance funding. This could be useful for students who lose instructional time due to a natural disaster.

Unfortunately, it is not clear the program would help students who are chronically absent due to the lack of services to address root causes of this problem. ETW is also concerned about instructional quality. Additional safeguards are needed, such as requiring online instruction to be delivered synchronously to avoid some of the problems we saw during the pandemic.



4) Transitional Kindergarten (TK) Implementation (\$331 million for Year 3 Implementation, \$218 million to reduce staffing ratios) – Support

The budget proposes \$331 million for the third year of implementation of TK and \$218 million for staffing ratio reduction to 1 adult for every 10 students in the classroom. We urge the legislature to support the Governor’s proposed budget which continues to invest in reducing staffing ratios. Smaller class sizes create a safe environment to facilitate play-based learning and improve the quality of assessment and observation by teachers. Also, it allows staff to provide individualized learning and they experience less stress and a more positive classroom climate. This investment ensures that TK continues to move towards alignment with the rest of the early learning and care options in California.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Brian M. Rivas
Senior Director, Policy and Government Relations
The Education Trust—West

- cc: Members of Senate Budget Subcommittee 1
Members of Assembly Budget Subcommittee 3
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