

## **7/23/21 – Budget Investments in the Opportunities for All Branch**

We hope you all saw the communication last Friday from the State Superintendent Tony Thurmond expressing his excitement over the historic investments and opportunities in the [2021–22 California State Budget Act](#) signed on July 12, 2021, by Governor Gavin Newsom with additional components for preschool and childcare signed on July 15, 2021.

The budget includes historic new and expanded investments in education and, as you will see below, the California Department of Education (CDE) Opportunities for All Branch has all three of the universal education investments – preschool, expanded learning, and meals – in our branch along with transformative investments in special education, funding for dual language programs, and much-needed rate increases for the California State Preschool Program. As the budget is being finalized, our CDE team is busy planning for how to ensure these investments are implemented as intended and best practices are established to support equitable access across the state. Our planning process will include multiple opportunities for input and feedback from the field, and in many cases will require your ongoing partnership.

We are excited about the interconnected nature of these investments and look forward to working with each of you to realize the vision of this budget and support districts, schools, and community-based organizations as they work to provide the highest quality educational opportunities to every student and preschooler. We are particularly excited about the opportunity to leverage these investments to build a coherent preschool to third-grade system and will be sharing more information about connections to the CDE's [P-3 Alignment Initiative](#) in the coming months.

As a first step in what will be an ongoing effort to keep you informed and engaged in the implementation process, we are sharing the summary of investments below. We will be following up with additional communications, including opportunities to get involved as our planning process takes shape and the work of implementation begins in earnest.

### **Budget Investments in the Opportunities for All Branch**

#### **Early Learning**

**Universal Preschool (UPK):** The budget includes substantial funding to support a phase-in of UPK through a universally available transitional kindergarten (TK) program to complement existing prekindergarten programs beginning with a planning year and followed by a four-year expansion starting in 2022–23 to admit all children who will have their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year. The budget also sets forth new conditions for receipt of apportionment for students in a TK program, including reduced group size and adult-to-student ratios and early childhood education units for credentialed TK teachers.

**California Prekindergarten Planning and Implementation Grant Program:** The budget provides \$300 million to support planning and implementation costs to expand access to classroom-based prekindergarten programs at local educational agencies (LEAs). Of this amount, \$200 million will be allocated directly to LEAs, including a minimum base of \$100,000 to all LEAs that operate kindergarten programs, and a minimum base for each county office of education equal to 15 percent of the base grant allocation awarded to LEAs in their county to support planning and capacity building. The remaining \$100 million will support a competitive grant program for LEAs to increase the supply of highly qualified teachers, and provide training to California State Preschool Program (CSPP); TK, and kindergarten classrooms on inclusive practices, culturally responsive instruction, supporting dual language learners, enhancing social-emotional learning, implementing trauma-informed and restorative practices, and eliminating exclusionary discipline.

**California State Preschool Program (CSPP) Expansion and Supports:** The budget includes nearly \$2 billion in funding to support the continued implementation of CSPP. The budget includes an additional \$103 million (\$210 million when fully implemented) for increased reimbursement rates for all CSPP programs including part-day, full-day, LEAs, and non-LEA programs. The budget also includes an additional \$130 million to support the expansion of CSPP programs. Further, in recognition of the need to reduce administrative burden and increase flexibility for contractors; the budget provides \$20 million to support the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Department of Social Services in continuing the practice of transfers between CSPP and General Child Care and Development Program contracts, and \$6 million for a vendor contract

to provide direct deposit to all CSPP contractors. Finally, the budget includes \$11.6 million to support family fee waivers for families in CSPP whenever waivers of subsidized childcare family fees are approved by the federal Administration for Children and Families.

**California Preschool Learning Foundations (CPLF):** The budget provides \$10 million to update the CPLF to incorporate recent research in the field, including best practices to support dual language learners and inclusion of children with disabilities; and to develop curriculum and educator resources to implement those standards as well as to adapt the Desired Results Developmental Profile to reflect the updated standards, address preschool to second grade, and include direct assessment of literacy and math.

**Early Math Initiative:** The budget includes \$37 million for the Fresno County Office of Education to expand the statewide early math initiative.

### **Expanded Learning**

**Expanded Learning Expansion:** The budget includes a significant expansion of the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program to a total of \$1.7 billion to support before school, after school, summer, or intersession learning programs that focus on developing the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs and interests of students. In addition, the budget sets out new student-to-staff member ratios for programs serving TK and kindergarten students. The budget also includes \$118 million specifically to expand summer learning programs and \$2 million to support After School Education and Safety Program (ASES) programs operating in rural districts.

**Rate Increases for Expanded Learning Programs:** The budget includes \$181 million in funding to support rate increases for both ASES and 21st Century Community Learning Centers Programs.

### **Multilingual Support**

**Dual Language Immersion Grant Program:** The budget includes \$10 million to support a Dual Language Immersion Grant Program that will

expand access to quality dual language learning programs and foster languages that English learners bring to California's education system.

## **Nutrition Services**

**School Meals for All Students (Universal Meals):** The budget establishes the first phase of a long-term investment in student nutrition and universal meals by providing \$54 million to leverage the federal meal reimbursement rates and program waivers in place for the entire 2021–22 school year. The budget further provides \$650 million in ongoing funding, starting in 2022–23, to support all schools in offering two school meals free of charge during each school day to all students regardless of their eligibility for a free or reduced-price meal.

**School Food Service Infrastructure and Training Grants:** The budget commits \$150 million in one-time funding to provide \$120 million in kitchen infrastructure grants to support and promote increased student access to quality, fresh, and nutritious school meals. The remaining \$30 million is intended for food service staff training to promote professional development and skill-building in food preparation, healthy food marketing, and creating an inviting and engaging school dining experience and environment.

## **Special Education**

**Special Education Early Intervention Preschool Grant:** The budget includes \$260 million for the Special Education Early Intervention Preschool Grant. Funding will be distributed to school districts to provide services and supports in inclusive settings that have been determined to improve school readiness and long-term outcomes for infants, toddlers, and preschool pupils.

**Supporting Inclusive Practices Project Expansion:** The budget includes \$15 million to the Riverside County Office of Education and the El Dorado County Office of Education to expand the Supporting Inclusive Practices project. The purpose of this additional funding is to increase opportunities for students with disabilities to meaningfully participate in the least restrictive environment and improve LEA outcomes on Individuals

with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and California School Dashboard indicators.

**Family Empowerment Centers on Disability Expansion:** The budget provides an additional \$6.6 million to expand Family Empowerment Centers on Disability across the state, as well as support resources to reconfigure related grant and data collection processes.

**Special Education COVID-19 Funding:** The budget provides \$100 million in one-time funding for Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPAs) to support LEAs in conducting dispute prevention and voluntary alternative dispute resolution activities to prevent and resolve special education disputes resulting from COVID-19 school disruptions in a collaborative and equitable manner. The budget also includes \$450 million in one-time funding for SELPAs to provide learning recovery support to pupils with disabilities associated with impacts to learning due to school disruptions stemming from COVID-19.

**Study of Nonpublic School or Agency Placements:** The budget provides \$500,000 in federal IDEA funds for the CDE and State Board of Education to contract for a study of nonpublic school and agency placements to examine how California compares to other states in serving students with complex support needs.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP) Facilitation Network Model:** The budget provides \$300,000 for the CDE to provide a contract for the development of a model IEP facilitation network.

**Special Education Technical Assistance and Support for LEAs:** The budget provides \$10 million in one-time funding for technical assistance and support to LEAs in developing and administering comprehensive IEPs, and to develop tools and resources to assess and address learning and service needs for students with disabilities stemming from COVID-19 during the 2021–22 fiscal year.

## **Special Education Funding Changes**

The 2021 Budget Act makes several changes impacting special education funding and associated allocation methodologies, including, adjusting

allocation formulas to increase the SELPA base rate, updating the out-of-home care funding formula.

## **Other Investments**

There also are quite a few related investments in programs that are not operated by the Opportunities for All Branch (OFAB) but will impact LEAs and other stakeholders and require close partnership with other branches. This budget includes a total of \$123.9 billion to reduce barriers and increase opportunities from transitional kindergarten through community college. In addition to the investments outlined above, the budget includes many of State Superintendent Tony Thurmond's priority areas with critical investments in mental health, ethnic studies; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or sometimes questioning), and others; cultural competency, professional learning, broadband infrastructure, anti-bias curriculum, and Holocaust and genocide education. The budget will also fund thousands of full-service community schools with wraparound mental health, social, and family services; support for educators working with the most vulnerable students; and improved student-to-staff ratios.

There are also critical investments that will directly impact programs under the administration of the OFAB, which will require a working hand in hand in partnership with other state agencies. A few of these investments are described below.

### **California Preschool, TK, and Full-Day Kindergarten Facilities**

**Grant Program:** Under the administration of the State Allocation Board, the budget establishes a program to provide \$490 million in one-time grants to LEAs to construct new school facilities or retrofit existing school facilities for TK, full-day kindergarten classrooms, and preschool classrooms.

### **California Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing**

**Program and Golden State Teacher Grant Program:** The budget includes substantial investments to expand the California Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program and the Golden State Teacher Grant Program. These investments are intended, at least in part, to support a pipeline of highly qualified teachers in TK classrooms. The CDE is excited to partner with the agencies who administer these programs (California

Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) and the California Student Aid Commission, respectively), to support their efforts.

**Credential Fee Support and TK Credential Stakeholder**

**Workgroup:** The budget also provides \$20 million to relieve the burden of credentialing fees on prospective teachers and established a CTC-led TK credential workgroup to assess how current transitional kindergarten credentialing requirements are being implemented and align with the recently released Master Plan for Early Learning and Care. The CDE is eager to participate and support CTC in its work on this critical issue.

**Teacher Residency Grant Program:** The budget includes \$350 million from the General Fund for the CTC to provide grant funding for residency programs to address staffing shortages and additional requirements for staffing ratios required in TK classrooms (12:1 for the 2022–23 school year and 10:1 for the 2023–24 school year).