

New School Funding Initiative Submitted for Title and Summary

A new initiative, titled the Full and Fair Funding: the Public School Progress, Prosperity and Accountability Act of 2020, was submitted for title and summary by the Attorney General on Monday, October 14, 2019. This is the first step before the proposal can be decided by voters at the November 2020 general election.

Proposed by the California School Boards Association (CSBA), the Association of California School Administrators, and the Community College League, the initiative would place a new tax on corporations and millionaires with the new revenues earmarked for K–14 education, estimated to be roughly \$15 billion annually.

In announcing their proposal, CSBA Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director Vernon Billy stated, “This education-only initiative will reverse the disinvestment from public education we’ve seen since the 1970s.”

Beginning in 2021, the proposal would add a two-percent tax on taxable income of more than \$1 million and a 3% tax on taxable incomes greater than \$2 million. Corporate taxes would also be increased by up to 5% for corporate income greater than \$1 million.

Revenues generated from this proposal would be deposited into the Investment in California’s Public Schools and Community Colleges fund with 89% percent of the revenues earmarked for K–12 local education agencies (LEAs) and 11% for community colleges.

Funds would be allocated to LEAs in proportion to each LEA’s share of the Local Control Funding Formula targets after accounting for local revenues, with no LEA receiving less than \$500 per unit of average daily attendance (ADA). Funding, which would be subject to annual audit procedures, would be used for:

- Workforce preparation
- School safety
- Recruitment and retention of teachers and school leaders
- Reducing achievement gaps
- Pre-kindergarten early learning services
- Computer science education
- No more than 5% could be used for administration.

In addition, \$500 million of these funds generated from the initiative would be allocated on a per-ADA basis in grades 7 through 12 to LEAs for the purpose of implementing state computer science standards and purchasing computers and technology for the classroom.

In order to qualify for the November ballot, proponents will need to collect a minimum of nearly one million signatures from registered voters.

—Dave Heckler

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