

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 2008 (Patel)

As Amended April 27, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires a bill that would require a local education agency (LEA) to complete a plan or report with an unspecified date to include a provision that repeals the reporting requirement four years after it goes into effect, unless the author directs otherwise. Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop a standardized reporting template for use by LEAs by October 1, 2027.

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires a bill that, as introduced or amended in either house of the Legislature after January 1, 2027, would require an LEA to complete a plan or report with an undefined end date, to include a provision that repeals the reporting requirement four years after the bill becomes operative or four years after the due date of any report required every four or more years.
- 2) Requires the Office of Legislative Counsel, in drafting a bill that would impose a reporting requirement on an LEA, to include a provision that repeals the reporting requirement, or makes the reporting requirement inoperative, four years after the date on which the requirement becomes operative, unless the person requesting the bill or amendment directs the Legislative Counsel to do otherwise.
- 3) Requires the CDE, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, to create a standardized reporting template for use by LEAs that includes the minimum information needed to ascertain administrative information, programmatic and expenditure outcomes, sustainability plans, and required certifications, and exclude information that is already reported to the State to avoid duplicative reporting. Require the CDE to submit the template and a report detailing its development to the Legislature, and post it on its website, by October 1, 2027.
- 4) Requires, beginning January 1, 2028, the Office of Legislative Counsel to reference the standardized reporting template developed by the CDE when drafting a bill amendment that would impose a reporting requirement on an LEA, unless directed to do otherwise.

COMMENTS

Balancing accountability and evaluation with opportunity costs. State reporting requirements serve important purposes, including safeguarding public funds and evaluating policy initiatives. However, the cumulative impact of mandated state and federal reports, data submissions, and planning documents draws resources away from critical tasks and responsibilities of LEA staff.

In a 2024 report, *Drowning in Documentation*, the California School Boards Association (CSBA) notes several detrimental effects of overly burdensome reporting requirements. These include a high price in time, human capital, and cost to complete the requirements; an ever-growing burden, as new requirements are frequently added but rarely removed; an overwhelming amount of data that is not digestible by LEAs or the state; and a disproportionate burden for small districts, which must meet the same reporting requirements with fewer staffs.

How do LEAs report information to the state? A full account of the number and types of reports that LEAs must complete each year has been difficult to produce, in part because there is not a single submission platform that processes all reports. A 2025 report by the CDE identified 59 examples of data they collect, which schools report across 39 different submission portals. This does not include federal requirements. The required plans, applications, and reports LEAs submit to the state fall into some of the following categories:

A report by Fresno COE identified over 204 reporting requirements, which must be submitted through 36 different collection systems to 17 divisions of the CDE. They report that individual school administrators spend 30% of their time each week on reporting requirements. The 2025/2026 Master Calendar created by Fresno County Superintendent of Schools includes a non-exhaustive list of 28 reports that required data submissions that year.

The auto-repeal of government reports. In 2010, the State enacted a measure to remove obsolete reports and require an automatic sunset provision be added to all future reports required of state agencies (AB 1585 (Committee on Accountability and Administrative Review), Chapter 7, Statutes of 2010). The Assembly Committee on Business and Professions analysis of the bill noted that, at the time, there were more than 1,200 obsolete reporting requirements in statute.

These obsolete reports were identified by examining the list of reports maintained by the Office of Legislative Counsel. As LEA reports are not submitted to the Office of Legislative Counsel, most LEA reporting requirements were not examined in this cleanup process. Similarly, the sunset provision that this statute applied to future reports from state agencies does not apply to LEAs. AB 2008 would remedy this, providing LEAs with the same protections against obsolete reports that are currently afforded to state agencies.

The utility of a standardized reporting template. In its 2025 report on reports, the CDE noted that there are currently at least 39 distinct data reporting systems that LEAs use to complete required reports. Furthermore, the 2024 CSBA analysis highlights that LEA reporting activities are often highly duplicative, as school administrators are asked to input the same information (e.g., school attendance rates) across multiple different reporting documents. The use of a standardized template could simplify and expedite the reporting process.

According to the Author

According to the author, "California's schools administer an ever-growing number of state and federal programs that help them operate. However, each program requires schools to submit plans and reports on how the money is used. While individually these requirements appear reasonable, their cumulative impact is overwhelming. And while the State often adds new requirements, old ones are rarely removed, even when they become outdated.

AB 2008 would add an automatic sunset to school planning and reporting requirements, making them inoperable four years after they go into effect. This common-sense provision, which already exists for other state government agencies, will allow schools to submit a reasonable amount of data without being bogged down by perpetual requirements.

School administrators from across the state have been asking for 'permission to focus.' They want to spend their time on improving student success, not filling out endless reports. AB 2008 would give them that permission. By automatically sunsetting outdated reporting requirements,

AB 2008 would give much-needed time back to school administrators and allow them to better serve our students."

Arguments in Support

According to the Association of School Administrators, "Our organizations strongly support transparency and responsible stewardship of public funds, and we recognize that planning and reporting are essential components of California's education accountability system. At the same time, local educational agencies (LEAs) face an opportunity cost in redirecting limited staff that would otherwise support teachers and students to complete planning and reporting requirements. One way the state can carefully balance these two interests is by considering the appropriate duration of any new reporting and planning requirements it chooses to enact. Over the last several years LEAs have experienced a significant increase in reporting requirements, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. This reporting burden seems to grow with each new program and mandate, which come from both the state and federal government. Small schools feel a disproportionate burden, as they must comply with the same planning and reporting requirements as the largest schools with extremely limited staff. The burden also affects the state, which may similarly lack staff to analyze plans and reports or provide constructive feedback and technical assistance. If reports are submitted but never meaningfully reviewed or acted upon, the work invested by LEAs produces no benefit for students – making an already burdensome process not just costly, but potentially without purpose. AB 2008 is an important and common-sense step in addressing this issue and balances the interests of policymakers with those of students."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, "One-time General Fund costs of an unknown but likely significant amount, possibly in the low hundreds of thousands of dollars, for CDE to release a standardized reporting template and provide recommendations for its use to the Legislature.

Even if Legislature provides funding to CDE to support this work as part of the annual budget act for the 2027-28 fiscal year, it is unlikely CDE would be able to hire additional staff with enough time to complete the required tasks of this bill by October 1, 2027."

VOTES

ASM EDUCATION: 9-0-0

YES: Patel, Hoover, Alvarez, Bonta, Castillo, Garcia, Lowenthal, Pellerin, Zbur

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

VERSION: April 27, 2026

CONSULTANT: Sarah Cate Hawthorne / ED. / (916) 319-2087

FN: 0002670