

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 2225
Author: Patel (D), Garcia (D), Muratsuchi (D) and Ransom (D)
Amended: 8/28/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/24/26

AYES: Pérez, Ochoa Bogh, Cabaldon, Choi, Cortese, Gonzalez, Reyes

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26

AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-1, 5/27/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Education governance: Education Commissioner: reporting

SOURCE: California School Boards Association

DIGEST: This bill requires the Education Commissioner to submit a report, on or before October 1, 2028, to the Governor and appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature, that includes, among other things, information on the state's progress toward implementing the Commissioner's recommendations on phase two of education governance consolidation and streamlining, and recommendations for additional steps to consolidate and reduce fragmentation.

Senate floor amendments of 8/28/26: 1) strike the current contents of the bill; and 2) require the Education Commissioner to submit a specified report, on or before October 1, 2028, to the Governor and the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature, utilizing the Commissioner's findings and recommendations for a second phase of education governance consolidation and streamlining (developed pursuant to AB 181 (Alvarez and Patel of 2026)).

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) States, commencing January 1, 2027, that the California Department of Education (CDE) shall be conducted under the control of an executive officer known as the Education Commissioner. (Education Code (EC) § 33302)
- 2) Establishes, commencing January 1, 2027, the role of the Education Commissioner, who shall be appointed by the Governor, and confirmed by the Senate, and shall hold office at the pleasure of the Governor. (EC § 33302.5)
- 3) Vests, commencing January 1, 2027, the Education Commissioner with the power of general supervision over, and direct responsibility to the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Governor for, the operations of the CDE Authorizes the Education Commissioner to issue those orders as the Education Commissioner deems appropriate to exercise any power or jurisdiction, or to assume or discharge any responsibility, or to carry out or effect any of the purposes vested by law in the CDE. (EC § 33302.5)
- 4) States the intent of the Legislature to streamline and strengthen state governance of California's transitional kindergarten (TK) through grade 12 education system under the SBE to improve the delivery of education to California's public education pupils, and to empower the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to foster needed alignment and coordination of education policies from early childhood through postsecondary education with new governing board roles and responsibilities. (Section 1(b)(1) of AB 181 (Alvarez and Patel) Chapter 66, Statutes of 2026)
- 5) Requires the Education Commissioner, no later than October 1, 2027, to develop findings and recommendations for a second phase of education governance consolidation and streamlining. (Section 1(c) of AB 181 (Alvarez and Patel) Chapter 66, Statutes of 2026)
- 6) Requires the above findings and recommendations to include, but not be limited to, all of the following:
 - a) Identification of early education and TK through grade 12 public education support entities and programs operating outside of the department, including state entities, county offices of education and their contracted roles, including serving as regional and statewide leads, the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE), and the Office of Civil Rights (OCR).
 - b) Recommendations for actions and activities necessary for a second phase of education governance consolidation and streamlining, including the

evaluation of all entities that have authority over, or provide statewide support to, early education and TK through grade 12 programs, and how they might be organized to support improved child and pupil outcomes more efficiently and effectively.

- c) Recommendations, developed in consultation with the SPI, for refining the scope of responsibilities of the Office of the SPI with a particular focus on prioritizing the SPI's role as the independently elected nonpartisan voice for the public interest in the governance of the state's educational systems, as specified.
 - d) A recommended long-term fiscal plan, developed in consultation with the SPI and the Department of Finance (DOF), to provide the Office of the SPI with adequate staffing and resources to support established and recommended responsibilities. (Section 1(c) of AB 181 (Alvarez and Patel) Chapter 66, Statutes of 2026)
- 7) Requires the Education Commissioner to submit an interim report on the above recommendations and findings by June 30, 2027, with a detailed description of the process used to gather input, as specified, and then, by October 1, 2027, submit a final report on the findings and recommendations to the Governor and the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature, as specified.. (Section 1(c) of AB 181 (Alvarez and Patel) Chapter 66, Statutes of 2026)

This bill:

- 1) Requires the Education Commissioner, utilizing their findings and recommendations for a second phase of education governance consolidation and streamlining, to submit a report, on or before October 1, 2028, to the Governor and appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature, on all of the following:
 - a) Progress toward implementation of the recommended actions or activities for education governance consolidation and streamlining, including evaluation of how implementation is contributing to increased efficiency, transparency, and accountability, and how it is supporting improved child and pupil outcomes, with a particular focus on improving outcomes for lower-performing pupil subgroups.
 - b) Identifying how the CDE is implementing recommendations to the extent possible under existing statutory and budgetary authority.

- c) Identifying state actions and activities of all entities that have authority over, or provide statewide support to, early education and any of TK, kindergarten, or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, that can be consolidated, streamlined, or eliminated in pursuit of the recommendations and improved child and pupil outcomes, with a particular focus on improving outcomes for lower-performing pupil subgroups.
- d) Recommendations of any additional steps the Governor and Legislature can take to consolidate or eliminate fragmented or duplicative state requirements and activities that require statutory or budgetary authority.

Comments

Need for the bill. According to the author, “AB 2225 convenes educators, families, researchers, and policymakers to develop a comprehensive statewide plan with clear goals, benchmarks, and annual performance targets to close achievement gaps and evaluate how well our state education programs are supporting student success.

“The achievement gap - persistent disparities in academic outcomes between different groups of students, often along lines of income, race, language status, or access to resources - show up in test scores, graduation rates, and college readiness, and they reflect deeper inequities in opportunity.

“AB 2225 is the first of a package of 4 bills in CSBA’s package to address these persistent gaps.”

Upcoming changes to education governance. On July 10, Governor Newsom signed AB 181 (Alvarez and Patel, 2026), setting forth a significant reorganization of California’s state governance structure. Key components of this restructuring effort include the following:

- a) Transferring management of the CDE from the elected SPI to a Governor-appointed, Senate-confirmed Education Commissioner;
- b) Vesting all executive and administrative functions of the CDE in the Education Commissioner;
- c) Providing that the CDE shall be administered through the SBE and the Education Commissioner, rather than the SPI;

- d) Authorizing the Education Commissioner to exercise general supervision over department operations and issue orders necessary to carry out duties vested in the CDE;
- e) Establishing a separate Office of the SPI consisting of the elected SPI, constitutional deputies and associate superintendents, specified exempt staff, and transferred civil service employees.
- f) Authorizing the Education Commissioner to exercise general supervision over department operations and issue orders necessary to carry out duties vested in the CDE.

AB 181 also requires the Education Commissioner to develop recommendations by October 1, 2027, for a second phase of education governance consolidation, including recommendations regarding statewide support entities, county office regional functions, the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, the Office of Civil Rights, and the future role and staffing of the Office of the SPI.

This bill amends AB 181 to require the Education Commissioner to utilize the above phase two recommendations to develop and submit a follow-up report to the Governor and appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature, on or before October 1, 2028. The bill requires that the follow-up report includes, among other things, information on the state's progress toward implementing phase two recommendations for education governance consolidation and streamlining, the identification of state actions and activities that can be consolidated and streamlined to support improved child and pupil outcomes, and recommendations for further actions that could be taken to consolidate and eliminate fragmentation and duplication.

Other state education entities. California's education ecosystem comprises several entities with distinct objectives that are intended to work together to serve students and schools. They include the following:

- a) The Governor signs legislation and proposes programs and school funding allocations through the state budget. *Beginning January 1, 2027, the Governor will also be responsible for appointing an Education Commissioner.*
- b) The Legislature reviews and approves the Governor's budget and passes legislation, including those that establish new programs and initiatives, and define the roles and responsibilities of state and local educational entities. *Beginning January 1, 2027, the Senate will also be responsible for confirming an Education Commissioner.*

- c) The SBE serves as a policymaking body appointed by the Governor that is responsible for adopting and approving academic standards, curriculum frameworks, instructional materials, state assessments, and regulations. *Beginning January 1, 2027, the Education Commissioner will be vested with the role of executive director of the SBE. Additionally, beginning January 15, 2027, the elected SPI will become a member of the SBE, along with an additional two members appointed by the Senate and Assembly, respectively.*
- d) The CDE administers educational programs; enforces education laws and regulations; collects demographic, fiscal, and performance data; provides technical assistance and training; distributes funds; and oversees COEs and LCAPs. *Beginning January 1, 2027, the Education Commissioner will be vested with all executive and administrative functions of the CDE*
- e) The CTC develops program standards and accredits educator credential preparation programs; issues teaching and service credentials as well as permits; and administers credential discipline.
- f) The CCEE provides various levels of academic support and technical assistance to LEAs, helping them achieve the goals outlined in their LCAPs and facilitate continuous improvement within the SSOS.
- g) The Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) helps LEAs identify, prevent, and resolve financial, operational, and data management challenges by providing management assistance and professional learning opportunities.

Beginning January 1, 2027, the SPI shall oversee the Office of the SPI and serve as the independently elected nonpartisan voice for the public interest in the governance of the state's educational systems.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.:Yes Local:No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- The California Department of Education estimates General Fund costs of \$188,000 and 1.0 position to convene the working group to develop the CTAG Plan.

NOTE: The fiscal analysis reflects a previous version of this bill.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/28/26)

California School Boards Association (source)

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/28/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-1, 5/27/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NOES: DeMaio

NO VOTE RECORDED: Celeste Rodriguez

Prepared by: Therresa Austin / ED. / (916) 651-4105
8/28/26 11:36:55

**** **END** ****