

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 2468 (Patel)

As Amended August 18, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Establishes the Supporting Inclusive Practices (SIP) Project in statute and assigns responsibility for statewide universal technical assistance to the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) and responsibility for targeted compliance-related support to the California Department of Education (CDE).

Senate Amendments

- 1) Establish the respective responsibilities of the CDE and the CCEE in administering the SIP project, such that the CDE is responsible for the direct support components of the project and the CCEE is responsible for the universal support components of the project.
- 2) Require that the CDE and the CCEE coordinate their activities, as specified.
- 3) Require the CDE to allocate new funding appropriated for the SIP project in the 2026-27 budget to the CCEE, for allocation to the El Dorado County Office of Education (COE), and aligns reporting requirements with this funding shift.

COMMENTS

Research shows significant increases in inclusion with support from SIP. For ten years the SIP project has been administered by the Special Education Division of the CDE, and operated through two COEs. The project aims to help LEAs strengthen inclusive practices through tiered technical assistance and support. It has been operating for ten years but is not established in statute.

According to a 2026 policy brief by Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE), *Advancing Inclusive Education in California Schools*, SIP serves a combination of LEAs referred through CDE's Compliance and Improvement Monitoring (CIM) process when data indicate persistent, systemic patterns related to LRE.

LEAs may also receive support from SIP when they express interest in strengthening inclusive practices. SIP currently includes 96 grantees who voluntarily participate and 10 assigned by the CDE Special Education Division. Nearly all required participants (98% over 10 years) ask to continue engagement with SIP as voluntary grantees once CIM support ends.

Data regarding growth in inclusion for districts participating in SIP, as measured by SPP indicator 5a (students included in general education at least 80% of the day) indicate that:

- 1) Growth in the percentage of students included in general education was 13 times the state average over five years;
- 2) Growth in the percentage of students included in general education was 6 times the national average over five years; and

- 3) Growth among CIM districts per year was 3 times the state average between 2022 and 2024.

According to the PACE report:

- 4) Districts entering SIP with the lowest baseline rates have made the largest gains, while higher baseline cohorts showed smaller but still positive gains.
- 5) SIP grantees also reduced the use of more restrictive placements. Across cohorts, use of separate schools (SPP Indicator 5c) declined in six of seven cohorts, with reductions of up to 11.7 percentage points, and three cohorts met the state's separate-school target of 2.6 percent or lower.
- 6) There were meaningful gains among LEAs that were required to participate through the CDE's CIM process. CIM districts achieved 4.16% of growth in the 2021–21 cohort and 6.20% in the 2021–22 cohort.

California lags behind other states in inclusion of students with disabilities. According to the PACE report, California places a smaller proportion of students with disabilities in general education settings for most of the school day than the national average. Both California and the nation exhibit steady improvement over the past decade, but California consistently remains below the national average.

According to the Author

"Research over many decades has found that inclusion offers a host of academic, behavioral, and social benefits for students with disabilities, as well as for their peers. In spite of these benefits, California has lagged behind most other states in the rate of inclusion of students with disabilities for many years.

50 years after the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), California schools still struggle to realize the vision that all students with disabilities experience meaningful inclusion and belonging in the academic and social life of school communities. Research consistently shows that schools need sustained, practice-embedded support and a systemwide, proactive approach to achieve meaningful gains in inclusive education.

Recent research from Policy Analysis for California Education shows that districts participating in the Supporting Innovative Practices project have increased inclusion at a rate significantly higher than the state average. Over five years, SIP districts experienced 13 times the growth compared to the state average. Districts required to participate by the California Department of Education because of low rates of inclusion experienced growth 6 times the state average.

AB 2468 will ensure that SIP is able to continue and expand its successful work, as well as align and integrate it with the other improvement initiatives."

Arguments in Support

Disability Rights California writes, "Students with disabilities consistently achieve stronger academic and long-term outcomes when they are educated in inclusive settings alongside their nondisabled peers. Inclusive environments improve access to grade-level curriculum, reduce disciplinary referrals, and increase opportunities for post-secondary success including employment and independent living.

However, too many students in California remain in unnecessarily restrictive placements. This gap is not due to a lack of evidence, but a lack of consistent systems training and support to implement inclusive practices effectively. AB 2468 (Patel) addresses this challenge by codifying and expanding the SIP project, a model that provides targeted technical assistance to school districts. Districts participating in SIP have significantly increased inclusive placements compared to the statewide average demonstrating the effectiveness of sustained, practice-based support.

AB 2468 (Patel) strengthens this approach by: providing technical assistance to local educational agencies and charter schools, establishing demonstration sites across regions, supporting professional learning through inclusion academies, and expanding inclusive practices through teacher preparation and early childhood systems.

From a disability rights perspective, AB 2468 (Patel) is critical to advancing the principles of equity, access, and inclusion that are central to both federal and state law, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Under IDEA, students with disabilities have a legal right to be educated in the least restrictive environment, yet too often that right is not fully realized in practice. This bill helps bridge the gap between legal mandate and lived reality by investing in the systems and supports necessary to make inclusion meaningful and sustainable. By investing in systems that make inclusion achievable at scale, this bill moves California closer to fulfilling that promise."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, based on the June 22, 2026 version of the bill:

- 1) This bill could lead to one-time General Fund cost pressure of at least \$30 million for the project. The bill's provisions are contingent upon an appropriation and includes legislative intent to appropriate at least \$30 million over five years to the CCEE, in addition to separate funding for CDE. The AB 126 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 65, Statutes of 2026), the education trailer bill, includes \$30 million for this purpose.
- 2) The CCEE estimates General Fund costs ranging from \$1.8 million to \$2.9 million over five years to administer and coordinate the universal support components of the SIP Project. The higher end of the range includes the cost for 3.0 positions and resources necessary to collaborate with an institution of higher education to support evaluation of the project, including the use of evidence-based practices, for the purpose of continuous improvement of the project.
- 3) The CDE estimates ongoing General Fund costs of \$378,000 and 2.0 positions to oversee the new activities of coordinating with the CCEE and the new governance administration.

VOTES:**ASM EDUCATION: 8-0-1**

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

ABS, ABST OR NV: Lowenthal

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

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

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0-2

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, 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, 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

ABS, ABST OR NV: Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez

UPDATED

VERSION: August 18, 2026

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FN: 0004326