

## ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 2496 (Solache)

As Amended April 27, 2026

Majority vote

**SUMMARY**

Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop a crosswalk indicating where information comparable to information required in the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) is found on the California School Dashboard (Dashboard) and notify the State Board of Education (SBE). Requires the SBE to certify that all elements of the SARC, as specified, are available on CDE's internet website. States the intent of the Legislature to remove the SARC from the Education Code upon the certification of the SBE. Repeals the requirement of a local educational agency (LEA) to present a midyear update on its Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

**Major Provisions**

- 1) Requires the CDE, by March 1, 2027, to develop a crosswalk indicating where information comparable to information required in the SARC is found on the Dashboard and notify the SBE.
- 2) Requires the SBE, by January 1, 2029, to certify that all elements of the SARC, as specified, are available on CDE's internet website.
- 3) Requires, based on the crosswalk, the SBE to move or collect, as necessary, any data elements included in the SARC not otherwise available on the CDE's website. Provides the SBE with the authorization to move or collect data specifically for this purpose.
- 4) Requires the SBE to certify that all data elements included in the SARC as of December 31, 2026, are either available on the CDE's website or are in progress towards being available on the CDE's website. Requires those data elements to be available at the same level as required by the SARC (for example: school-level or LEA-level). Authorizes the SBE to denote any school accountability report card data elements that are either no longer required to be collected (such as the Academic Performance Index [API]), no longer in existence, or other circumstances with a corresponding justification, and to not require the collection of those data elements denoted in their certification.
- 5) Requires, within 60 days of the SBE's certification, the CDE to update the crosswalk accordingly and include it as part of an internet website that includes a history of the SARC.
- 6) States the intent of the Legislature to remove the SARC from the Education Code upon the certification of the SBE.
- 7) Repeals the requirement of an LEA to present a midyear update on its LCAP.

**COMMENTS**

*SARCs.* Since the passage of Proposition 98 in November 1988, state law has required that schools receiving state funding to prepare and distribute a SARC, including charter schools and nonpublic schools (NPSs). A similar requirement is also contained in the federal Elementary and

Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as ESSA. The original purpose of the report card was to provide information about each school so parents could make meaningful comparisons between public schools, enabling them to make informed decisions on the school in which to enroll their children. The public may also use a SARC to evaluate and compare schools on a variety of indicators. SARCs are required to be updated annually by February 1<sup>st</sup>. This annual deadline falls at a time in the school year just prior to, or the start of, the administration of state assessments.

Each SARC begins with a profile that provides background information about the school and its students. The profile typically summarizes the school's mission, goals, and accomplishments. State law requires that the SARC contain the following: demographic data; school safety and climate for learning information; academic data; school completion rates; class sizes; teacher and staff information; curriculum and instruction descriptions; postsecondary preparation information; and fiscal and expenditure data.

*Schools are required to notify parents of SARC availability.* State law generally encourages schools to make a concerted effort to notify parents of the purpose of the SARC and to ensure that all parents receive a copy of the report card for the school their child attends. Specifically, schools are required to notify all parents about the availability of the SARC and to provide parents with instructions about how the SARC can be obtained both through the Internet (if feasible) and on paper (upon request). If 15% or more of a school's enrolled students speak a single primary language other than English, state law requires that the SARC also be prepared and made available to these parents in the appropriate primary language.

*CDE support of local SARC development.* The CDE populates the majority of the electronic SARC template tables where data are required and provides corresponding downloadable data files. The data that CDE pre-populates into the public school electronic SARC templates are data that the public schools/LEAs provided to the CDE during the school year.

*NPSs are required to prepare a SARC.* NPSs are private schools certified to educate students with disabilities using public funding. Pursuant to AB 1858 (Steinberg), Chapter 914, Statutes of 2004, all NPSs, are required to prepare a SARC. This requirement applies to NPSs, nonsectarian schools, but does not apply to nonpublic agencies. For traditional public schools and charter schools, most information included in the SARC is available through other publicly available data sources. Data for NPSs is less readily available. NPSs are generally not included in the Dashboard accountability system.

*Williams v. State of California.* In 2004, a settlement agreement was reached in the case of *Williams v. State of California*. SB 550 (Vasconcellos), Chapter 900, Statutes of 2004, implemented portions of the settlement agreement in the case of *Williams, et al. v. State of California, et al.* that impacted the SARC. As a component of the settlement agreement, the bill added additional reporting requirements relating to any needed maintenance to ensure "good repair" of school facilities, the number of teacher "misassignments" and "vacant teacher positions," and the availability of "sufficient textbooks and other instructional materials."

*LCAPs and the midyear update.* The LCFF was established in the 2013-14 fiscal year to address the achievement gap by providing more equitable funding among LEAs, that is, to provide a higher level of funding to LEAs that enroll larger numbers of English learners, foster youth, and students eligible for free-or reduced-price meals (unduplicated pupils) so they could provide those students with additional services and support. The reforms to the funding system were

accompanied by changes to the state accountability system, including LCAPs. The LCAP is a three-year plan that describes the goals, actions, services, and expenditures to support positive student outcomes that address state and local priorities. The LCAP provides an opportunity for LEAs (school districts, COEs, and charter schools) to share their stories of how, what, and why programs and services are selected to meet their local needs. Current law requires that, before the governing board of a school district considers the adoption of an LCAP, numerous and specific steps be taken to ensure public input in the development of the LCAP, including consulting with parents and soliciting input from the public. All LEAs are required to present a report on the annual update to the LCAP and the LCFF Budget Overview for Parents on or before February 28th of each year at a regularly scheduled meeting of the governing board or body of the LEA. The mid-year report is required to include: all available mid-year outcome data related to metrics identified in the current year's LCAP, and all available mid-year expenditure and implementation data on all actions identified in the current year's LCAP.

### **According to the Author**

According to the author, "By streamlining duplicative reporting requirements, AB 2496 would alleviate the increased reporting burden schools face while maximizing our educational resources. Designating the California School Dashboard as the state's definitive tool for school accountability and public transparency would refine duplicative and outdated statutory requirements placed upon our education agencies. Because it is important that we use our educational resources efficiently to ensure the best outcomes for our children.

Much of the information historically reported through SARC is now reported through the Dashboard and related LCFF tools. As a result, the SARC largely duplicates existing reporting systems, creating unnecessary administrative workload for districts. In addition, separate requirements such as the mid-year LCAP update further contribute to reporting demands beyond the annual LCAP adoption process. Collectively, these overlapping requirements divert time and resources away from student-focused efforts and underscore the need to consolidate duplicative reporting statutes while preserving public access to essential information."

### **Arguments in Support**

The California School Business Officials (CASBO) writes, "When Proposition 98 established the SARC in 1988, it was a groundbreaking tool for transparency. However, the educational landscape shifted in 2013 with the LCFF and the subsequent launch of the California School Dashboard. Today, California districts are maintaining two separate, largely duplicative accountability systems. This "compliance overlap" increases administrative workload without a commensurate increase in transparency.

AB 2496 seeks to remedy this by prioritizing and strengthening the Dashboard as the state's primary transparency and accountability tool. The Dashboard already contains much of the same information required in the SARC, including academic performance, academic engagement, classroom discipline, and teacher assignments. It also reflects California's current accountability system, including critical student group data, and is released over three months before the SARC, ensuring timely sharing of information. AB 2496 would require the CDE to maintain a historical archive of the SARC and a crosswalk that identifies where to find the data that makes up each component of the most recent SARC template. If key information is not readily available in another location, the bill would require CDE to flag those items for the SBE to consider incorporating into the Dashboard."

**Arguments in Opposition**

None on file

**FISCAL COMMENTS**

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

Minor and absorbable costs to CDE.

**VOTES**

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

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

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Alvarez

**ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0**

**YES:** Wicks, Hoover, Bauer-Kahan, Calderon, Caloza, Ellis, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

**UPDATED**

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