

CASC LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

Legislative Session 2021-2022



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COVID/School Reopenings

- **Grading**
 - Support uniform grading policy including the utilization of equity when determining grading practices. These policies should be tier based and conform to schools' individual needs.
 - Support the establishment of equal learning experiences and deliverance of content for students regardless of what educational tier they are in or the relative experience of their peers.

- **Attendance**
 - Support a uniform attendance policy including leeway regarding quarantine status and technology difficulties.

- **Learning Disabilities and Special Education**
 - Support a system that caters to certain learning disabilities including increased teacher to student communication and understanding.
 - Support priority movement to hybrid or in-person classes to provide the best possible learning experience and accommodations to disabled students.
 - Support the creation of an abundance of materials for both disabled and non-disabled students to better supplement all students' learning in all education tiers.

- **Technology Divide**
 - Support for uniform access to technology including internet hotspots and devices for both students and faculty.
 - Support leniency regarding technical difficulties including such things as: video call connectivity issues, failure to submit assignments due to a lack of internet connectivity or insufficient technology, lack of access to study materials.

- **Access to Supplemental Opportunities**
 - Support a system that aids students in receiving adequate supplemental extracurricular activities, access to test-taking or studying opportunities, and activities necessary for college admissions.
 - Support the suggestion of a student information catalogue regarding scholarships, clubs, sports, and by the State Board of Education for highschools across California. Provide students who were unable to participate in sports, clubs, and other activities elemental to the highschool experience with priority access to those activities via the catalogue.

Systemic Racial and Socioeconomic Disparities

- **Achievement Gap**
 - Support creating a network of support systems outside the classroom including bilingual peer tutors and bilingual counselors for English Language Learners.
 - Support schools adopting teaching models dedicated to personalized learning.

- **Standardized Testing**
 - Support creating and implementing a Standardized Testing Advisory Council to evaluate the design and administration of the tests.
 - Support developing tests in different languages.

- **College Preparation/Admissions Practices**
 - Support schools offering an accessible resource list of available scholarships and their criteria, deadlines, and other additional important information.
 - Support schools offering free, accessible seminars and workshops to provide guidance in the college admissions process including scholarships, applications, and essays.

- **Inclusive Curriculum**
 - Support adopting curriculums committed to teaching texts & topics related to ethnic studies and black history as well as using materials written by BIPOC authors.

- **Diverse Teachers and Staff**
 - Support hiring diverse teachers and staff to establish an environment that reflects the variety of backgrounds and identities in the student body.

- **Racial Sensitivity/Cultural Competency Training**
 - Support requiring school staff and teachers to complete racial sensitivity and cultural competency training to ensure a nurturing environment for all students.

- **Discipline Policies**
 - Oppose the current highly carceral system of discipline implementation/commit to reducing suspensions and expulsions that lead to a student falling further behind.
 - Support an in depth review of all discipline policies and their impact on Latine/hispanic/black students as it compares to the impacts on students of other racial groups; accompanied, if deemed necessary, by an overhaul of the discipline system that focuses on transformative justice/reducing behavior as opposed to punishment.

- Expand discipline policy to protect/provide recourse for students that are victims of harassment based on protected identities/create environments that are safe for students of all identities to engage in.
- **School Resource Officers**
 - Support the creation of a committee to interrogate the role/effectiveness of school resource officers as protection on campus with the goal of phasing out the practice and reconfiguring the funds on a city level to practices that emphasize transformative justice (school counseling, therapy, eg).
- **Continuum of Care for System-Involved Youth**
 - Expand school counseling in California to include at least one spanish speaking counselor per site.
 - Support allocation of funds for hiring a sufficient volume mental health professionals.
 - Improve coordination between social workers, health and human service agencies, justice system, and school districts/county offices of education for comprehensive wrap-around services for students where they are, instead of outsourcing support to an outside organization.
- **Restorative and Transformative Justice**
 - Support the creation of norms regarding any interpersonal conflict that follow the tenets of restorative justice (avoiding criminalization, centering the voice of the person harmed, peer mediated interaction between the harmed and harm-doer).
 - Support the creation of norms regarding any disciplinary conflict that follow the tenets of transformative justice (avoiding criminalization, understanding the process by which the harm arised, analyzing the intersections of power dynamics).

Student Health and Safety

- **Access to Hygiene Resources**

- Support the implementation and accessibility of hygiene resources in either gender restroom as a sign of respect and inclusivity. These facilities shall be safe spaces without stripping individuals of their rights. Access to hygiene resources shall be available within restrooms, offices, and possibly among staff.

- **Equality Between Mental Health and Physical Health**

- Forbid the acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Local Education Agencies shall recommend procedures to be set for investigating and reporting incidents.
- Support proposed language allowing students to take mental health days, just as they would sick days. Leading to the expansion of excused school absences to include mental and/ or behavioral health, this measure shall respond to the mental health crises within schools.

- **Healthy Lunches**

- Provide equitable access to nutritious lunches even for those not in free or reduced lunch.

- **Mental Health**

- Support education providing mental health awareness and early intervention among students, staff, and faculty. In doing so the promotion of resources and supports will be increased.
- Provide forums and create safe spaces to openly speak about mental health. These safe spaces shall provide time in the day to invest in self-care for all students and school personnel.
- Actively encourage avoiding language that perpetuates mental health stigmas. This includes, but is not limited to the words crazy, insane, etc.
- Support equitable access to certified counselors, psychiatrists, and therapists.
- Post and provide awareness of available crisis lines that expand beyond suicide (ex: drug abuse, substance abuse, mental health decline, etc.). When providing awareness include programs of early intervention and post-intervention.
- Support law in an effort to create more effective and equitable mental health assessments.
- Supporting education codes mandating that Local Education Agencies in California serve to adopt policies on the basis of suicide prevention, intervention, and postintervention.

- Promote Legislation in funding for homeless and mental health outreach teams to target at-risk youth.
- Support and promote education on substance misuse and abuse. While following up to adopt policies and procedures by local districts.
- **School Shootings Crisis Planning/Gun Reform**
 - Support efforts to work collectively with school sites to maintain transparency of action taken forward. Recommended action to establish school safety committees where students can hold direct voice and opinion on ways to provide prevention, intervention, and awareness.
 - Support education codes mandating that schools update their Safety Plan annually with all information.
- **Sex Education**
 - Support efforts in consistently updating the sexual education curriculum to be more LGBTQ+ inclusive.
 - Support initiatives that provide a more inclusive environment to all students where teachers and school personnel respond to annual training regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning pupil (LGBTQ+) through encouraging the use of resources developed by the Department of Education.
 - Support the practice of more extensive, relevant sex-ed courses and requiring more intensive and frequent consent training.
- **Sexual Harassment Policy**
 - Supporting law requiring that any educational institution in the State of California is mandated to have a written policy on sexual harassment.
- **Trauma-Informed Care**
 - Support training that recognizes the signs of mental health decline in students and school personnel. Even amongst the COVID-19 pandemic mental health and physical health needs must be met. Staff and mandated reporters can comply by reporting concerns of safety, welfare, and welling being of a child.
- **Wellness**
 - Support curriculum providing knowledge in the physical, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal, environment, occupational, and financial aspects of life.
 - Support education codes establishing no person should be subjected to discrimination under the boundaries of sexual orientation, ethnic group identification, race, national origin, religion, mental or physical disabilities, or any basis.

Environmental Sustainability

- **Environmental Curriculum**
 - Advocate for an updated climate change and environmental science curriculum within existing frameworks in all elementary, junior high, and high schools.
 - Support funding for paperless curriculum in schools, including online textbooks and course materials.

- **Sustainable Practices and Facilities**
 - Support legislation and funding that enforces the tri-bin system in all communities.
 - Support funding for sustainable school supplies such as recycled paper, stapleless stapler, etc.
 - Support legislation and funding for solar power infrastructure for schools, including solar batteries, as a renewable energy resource.
 - Support partnering with programs that recycle non-recyclable items, such as TerraCycle or color cycle.
 - Support funding for sustainable and plastic-free hygiene products in schools such as recycled paper/bamboo toilet paper and menstrual cups.
 - Support funding and legislation for package-free, plant-rich meals to be accessible to all students.
 - Support funding and legislation for schools to use recycled water to irrigate greenery and gardens.
 - Support funding for accessible refillable water stations and reusable water bottles for all at schools.
 - Support funding for motion-sensing faucets, low-flow toilets, Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) free paint, tile and stone flooring, LED lighting, heat pump water heaters, and hand dryers in California schools.

- **Climate Advocacy**
 - Support the California Green New Deal and Green Recovery Plans.
 - Support legislation to combat climate change and improve air quality.
 - Support youth-centered organizations fighting for climate change initiatives like the Sunrise Movement.

School Culture and Environment

- **Equity**
 - Support nondiscriminatory dress codes that allow students to dress in accordance with their gender identity and are not enforced more strictly against transgender and gender non-conforming students.
 - Support the establishment of all-gender or gender non-binary bathrooms, as well as a student's freedom to choose any bathroom they identify with.
 - High quality schools in both densely populated and rural areas with support for the unique needs and challenges of rural student populations.

- **Student Safety, Health, and Privacy**
 - Divest from school resource officers, strengthening schools' commitment to psychologists, counselors, and trained mental health experts to ensure students feel safe and supported on campus.
 - Support school lunch programs that are healthy, affordable, and don't marginalize the 58 percent of California public school students that live in a low-income family.
 - Support later school start times that are consistent with adolescent health and sleep patterns.
 - Support School-based social and emotional learning ([SEL](#)) programs including engaging classroom materials and specific classroom-management practices.
 - Support privacy protections for students in regards to their transcripts, social media, health records, and discipline records. Information should only be disclosed with express permission from the student or the student's parent/guardian.

- **Career Technical Education**
 - Support the proportionate emphasis on career and technical skill-based instruction and inclusion of College and Career Indicators on the LCAP to measure California's priority of college and career readiness and support the implementation of CTE at schools.

- **Teacher Training and Credentialing**
 - Support periodic training for teachers in technology, socio-emotional learning, cultural competency, and developments in education sciences. Support a diverse staff and max classroom size of 20 students.
 - Support the implementation of updated and culturally responsive credentialing requirements for new teachers.

Civic Engagement

● Student Representation

- Encourage a student board member position with preferential voting rights in every high school district, a position already guaranteed by previous legislation.
- Support student board members having access to all appropriate materials discussed in board meetings, as required by existing legislation.
- Support transparency between board members/administrators and students (as appropriate) on issues affecting the school & students' education.
- Support passing of AB 1858 and the creation of a Statewide Youth Commission
 - Encourage Statewide Youth Commission's annual report to the Legislature being shared with CASC to be considered at conferences.
 - Encourage Statewide Youth Commission's annual report being shared with student board members and leadership classes in all high school districts.
- Expand network of student board members and members of Statewide Youth Commission (once appointed) to communicate and share information/resources.
- Support lowering the voting age to 16 to give students a voice on matters concerning their education and future.
- Support youth commissions/youth members on commissions created by cities, counties, or special districts.
 - Especially if the commission addresses issues that affect youth, e.g. the climate crisis.
- Support initiatives to survey students and present survey results at board meetings to consider student opinion when making decisions.
- Support at-risk/disadvantaged youth being represented as school board members/youth members on commissions, including students of color, low-income students, students with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, students in foster care, and incarcerated youth.

● Civic Education and Voter Registration

- Support schools leading voter registration drives for eligible students.
- Support initiatives to encourage LEAs to provide information to students about voter registration.
- Support schools delivering assemblies/information nights about the importance of voting & what lowering the voting age would mean to students.
- Support LEAs implementing civic engagement programs specific to their community, as recommended by the State Seal of Civic Engagement.
 - Support student input about said civic engagement programs.
 - Support disadvantaged/at-risk students being represented in said programs.