The Education Coalition

Working together to support and improve California's public schools

January 29, 2026

Memorandum

TO: Education Policymakers
FROM: The Education Coalition
RE: Reject the Proposal to Withhold $5.6 Billion From TK-14 Public Schools and Community Colleges

On behalf of the nine-member Education Coalition, we strongly oppose the Governor's January Budget proposal to withhold $5.6 billion from the Proposition 98 Guarantee and urge the Legislature to reject this proposal.

In December 2025, we urged the Administration to fully fund Proposition 98 without manipulation, yet the Governor now proposes funding schools at $115.9 billion instead of the $121.4 billion minimum guarantee—shortchanging public schools by $5.6 billion, or roughly $900 per average daily attendance.

These unappropriated funds would otherwise be used to retain and hire staff, sustain essential programs such as special education and mental health services, and cover the cost of core instruction. This proposal circumvents existing law, which already sets a process to restore full funding, with inflation adjustments, in a timely manner.

For the third year in a row, these funding manipulations have forced schools to absorb major shortfalls, undermining Proposition 98's voter-approved role as a stable funding floor for California's students.

While we recognize the State's non–Proposition 98 cost pressures, budget solutions must not come at the expense of students. As such, the Coalition **strongly opposes** withholding $5.6 billion from our schools and community colleges.

The Coalition will provide an additional letter, including our position on many of the remaining elements of the January Budget proposal, soon.

Sincerely,
Members of the Education Coalition

Association of California School Administrators (ACSA)
representing more than 18,000 school administrators

California Association of School Business Officials (CASBO)
representing more than 30,000 school business officials

California County Superintendents
representing all 58 county superintendents throughout California

CFT represents 120,000 educational employees working at every level of public and private education from Head Start to the University of California.

California School Boards Association (CSBA)
representing nearly 1,000 K-12 school districts and county offices of education throughout California

California School Employees Association (CSEA)
representing more than 250,000 classified school employees

California State PTA
representing more than 550,000 parents, teachers, and students in California

California Teachers Association (CTA)
representing over 325,000 educators

Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
representing more than 50,000 school employees in California

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