



How California Supported Students During the Pandemic & Is Transforming Education

California has done more than any other state to support kids during the pandemic, investing **\$23.8 billion to support students learning remotely and for when they got back into the classroom.**

California is transforming education – **more funding than ever before, college savings accounts, universal TK, universal school meals, before & after school, mental health supports,** and more.

When schools moved to distance learning to save lives, the focus on serving students did not stop in California – schools were [required](#) to provide high-quality educational opportunities through distance learning and deliver school meals. Then, California invested \$23.8 billion in students and schools to support safe, in-person instruction and help mitigate learning loss:

- **2020: \$5.3 billion when students were distance learning** to mitigate learning loss, bridge the digital divide, extend the school year, provide academic supports, offer tutoring, and more.
- **2021: \$10.6 billion to help get kids back into the classroom and bolster student supports,** including \$2 billion for In-Person Instruction Grants, \$4.6 billion for Expanded Learning Opportunities Grants (summer school, tutoring, mental health, and learning acceleration), and \$4 billion for expanded-day, full-year instruction and enrichment for elementary students.
- **2022: \$7.9 billion for Learning Recovery Block Grants** to extend the school year, closing learning gaps and tutoring, counseling and mental health services, more instruction for struggling students, and new academic services.

Governor Newsom has increased funding for education in California to historic levels, investing **\$170 billion in TK-16 education.** And last summer, California's schools offered robust summer programming to recover learning loss and prepare for a successful 2021-22 school year – with [89% of schools](#) offering summer programs with mental health and tutoring services.

In 2021-22, California schools stayed open for in-person instruction at a [higher rate than schools in other states.](#) The massive statewide effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 included hundreds of millions of dollars to provide tens of millions of COVID-19 tests, vaccines, and PPE, as well as comprehensive guidance to maintain health and safety during in-person instruction.



Here are the top 9 actions that California is taking to transform education going forward:

1. **More K-12 Education Funding Than Ever Before.** Governor Newsom allocated **\$170 billion** for TK-16 education in California, the highest funding levels for education in state history.
2. **Universal Transitional Kindergarten (TK).** Public schools will add a **new grade before kindergarten**. By 2025, schools will serve an additional 450,000 children per year, giving all parents access to free, high-quality early care and education.
3. **Universal Access for Youth Mental Health.** With California's [\\$4.7 billion Master Plan for Kids' Mental Health](#), **all young people ages 0-25 will have ready access to mental health supports** both inside and outside of school.
4. **Universal School Meals.** All students have access to **two free school meals per day** – up to 12 million meals per day statewide. And \$800 million was invested to increase access to fresh, high-quality, and locally-sourced meals.
5. **Expanded Access to After-School and Summer School Enrichment.** Elementary school **students from low-income households, foster youth, and English learners will have access to enrichment programs year-round and 9 hours per day**. At full scale in 2025, the \$4 billion-per-year effort will serve an additional 1.5 million students per year.
6. **Community Schools.** Roughly 1 out of every 3 schools in California will receive \$4.1 billion to become 'community schools' to focus more on **parent engagement, expanded access to physical and mental health supports, and wraparound services**.
7. **More Teachers, More Counselors, and More Paraeducators.** Lower staff-to-student ratios means higher levels of support for students. With additional funding, **ratios will be lowered across settings**, including a reduction from 24:1 to 10:1 for transitional kindergarten and \$1.1 billion in annual funding for high-poverty schools to hire up to 5 more staff each.
8. **Universal College Savings Accounts.** 3.5 million college savings accounts – with seed investments of \$500-\$1,500 – will be opened for all low-income public school students in first grade and above. Starting in August 2022, **all newborns will automatically have college savings accounts opened in their names**, with seed investments of up to \$100 – and on an annual basis, \$500-\$1,500 in seed investments will be added for all first graders who are low-income, in foster care, or experiencing homelessness.
9. **Eliminate Teacher Shortages, Improve Professional Development.** California invested a record **\$3.6 billion to improve educator recruitment, retention and training**. That includes \$500 million to attract new teachers and counselors to schools that need them most, \$600 million for Teacher Residency programs, \$1.5 billion for the Educator Effectiveness Block Grant, and more.