



State investments in Bakersfield

Education Equity

Helping one out of every three schools in California transition to the **community school model**, a strategy poised to improve student opportunities and outcomes and help counteract the impact of multigenerational disinvestment in disadvantaged communities.

- In May 2024, the state announced [\\$49 million in community schools grants](#) to go to 11 Kern County school districts, including Arvin Union, Delano Union Elementary School District, Di Giorgio Elementary School District, El Tejon Unified, Fairfax Elementary School District, Grow Academy Arvin, Kern High School District, Maricopa Unified, Southfork Union School District, Vineland Elementary School District, and Wasco Union Elementary.
- In total, Kern County Office of Education and the schools within the county have received **\$55,862,500** in community school funding for cohorts 1 and 2.

Made California the first state to implement a statewide **Universal Meals Program** for K-12 school children, ensuring all public K-12 students access to two free meals per school day.

- Students in Kern County's [public school districts](#) receive free school meals thanks to the state Universal Meals Program.

Invested billions to **close learning gaps from COVID-19** through expanded instructional time, tutoring, and learning recovery programs.

- School districts across Kern County have received millions in Learning Recovery Block Grant Funding, which is available to learning recovery programs through 2027-28.
- In 2022 and 2023 Kern County received about \$28 million through the Literacy Coaches and Reading Specialists program, with approximately \$11 million of that total funding going to schools in the Bakersfield City School District. That includes \$450,000 for the Kern COE court schools.

Teacher Preparation and Recruitment:

- Schools in Kern County received \$50.1 million for the Educator Effectiveness Block Grant.

- Teachers in Kern County received \$20,000 for the National Board Certified Teacher Incentive Grant.
- Kern HSD and Bakersfield City have received over \$7.6 million in teacher residency grants.
- Schools in Kern County have received approximately \$650,000 since 2022 as part of the California Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) grant program, focused on supporting and enhancing social-emotional learning. This includes a \$250,000 award to the Kern COE court schools.
 - Kern County Office of Education is a member of the MTSS partner entity consortium (along with Placer COE, Santa Clara COE, and WestED) to share a total of \$12.5 million to build the state's capacity to implement social-emotional learning.

Created the **K-16 Education Collaboratives Grant Program** to strengthen pathways to career opportunities and address long-standing equity gaps.

- In 2022, the Kern Regional Collaborative received [\\$18.1 million](#) to support efforts that will improve student progress from high school to postsecondary education and into the workforce.

The state has also invested \$83 million for the Cal State Bakersfield Energy Innovation Center and \$50 million for Kern Community College District's Renewable Energy Lab.

Other significant state education investments with Bakersfield and Kern impacts:

- Created the **Office of Cradle to Career Data** to track student progress, including demographic data and equity metrics.
- Signed a **Career Education executive order** with universal access and affordability being a core component of the directive. Directed state leaders in education, workforce development, and economic development to work collaboratively with leaders of the state's public education systems and employers — along with legislative partners, philanthropic partners, and stakeholders representing diverse students, parents, education professionals, labor, business, and community groups – to develop a **Master Plan for Career Education**.
- Expanding **after-school and summer programs** for all high-need students.

- Added a whole new grade, **transitional kindergarten**, to public school for 4-year-olds.
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Arts, Culture, Recreation

Through the **California Arts Council**, invested in the California Cultural Districts Program, California Cultural and Art Installations through Parks and Recreation and grants for local arts and culture. Made CA venues eligible for small business relief grants as part of the California Comeback Plan. Implemented the California Creative Corps Pilot Program.

- Since 2018, organizations in Kern County have received **\$277,745** in grants from the California Arts Council.

Invested in the **Outdoors for All** statewide initiative to ensure all Californians can access the outdoors, particularly those from low-income and disadvantaged communities.

- Through **Parks' Outdoor Equity Grants Program**, organizations in Kern County have received a total of \$207,734 to support outdoor recreation activities for individuals in underserved communities.
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Health, Environment, and Housing

Safe and Clean Environment

- Accelerating electrification, resiliency, and other climate efforts, with over half of California's climate investments **benefitting priority populations at particular risk from climate change**.
 - California Climate Investments dollars to Kern County have totaled over **\$382 million** through cap-and-trade auction proceeds alone since 2015.
 - \$22 million for the Bakersfield Transformative Climate Communities proposal, which will support affordable housing, urban greening, biking, walking and transit improvements in Southeast Bakersfield

- Helping low-income families pay water bills through the Low Income Households Water Assistance Program, which serves 4,238 households in Kern County.
- Over \$25 million in funding to more than 86,000 households through the water arrearages program in Kern County.
- \$100 million statewide to plug orphan and idle wells leaking methane

Health Care Equity and Access

- Expanded **full-scope Medi-Cal** to all income-eligible Californians, regardless of immigration status.
- Signed AB 1701 to extend the **California Perinatal Equity Initiative** to include city health departments.
- Invested in the **Farm to School** program, which connects schools with local food producers – with an emphasis on socially-disadvantaged food producers – to support access to nutritious, California-grown school meals and high-quality food.
 - Kern County schools received grants of \$278,188 for the Farm to School program from [2021](#) to [2022](#).

Mental Health, Substance Use Disorders, Homelessness

- Advanced the **Master Plan for Kids' Mental Health**, with funding for evidence-based and community-defined practice grants that focus on underserved communities, including targeted funding for disparities; investments in a more diverse workforce; and support for community-based, culturally-competent networks of prevention and care.
 - In 2021, the state awarded the Kern County Office of Education [\\$25,000,000](#) to contract with the Child Mind Institute for purposes of developing mental health and wellness instructional resources and trainings for caregivers, educators, and youth to address impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's mental health and to promote mental wellness within families and school communities.
- Invested in the **Behavioral Health Bridge Housing Program** to address the immediate housing and treatment needs of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness with serious behavioral health conditions.

- Nearly [\\$15.2 million](#) in state funding went to Behavioral Health Bridge Housing in Kern County in Round 1 of BHBH
- Invested in the **Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP)** to expand the community continuum of behavioral health treatment resources.
 - Over \$41 million has gone to BHCIP projects in Kern County.
- Major investments to **address the opioid and fentanyl crisis and expand wide access to naloxone**, including through the Naloxone Distribution Project (NDP).
 - Since the program's inception in 2018, Kern County has received 137,828 units of naloxone through the NDP, of which 96,236 went to the City of Bakersfield.
- Investing in the **CalAIM BH-CONNECT program** to expand the workforce needed across the behavioral health continuum.
- Investing in a **mobile crisis program** that will provide coordinated, Medi-Cal funded behavioral health care to individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis, including those experiencing homelessness.
- Established **988 Crisis Response Teams** that will be staffed by behavioral health professionals instead of law enforcement.
- Championed reforms to the **Mental Health Services Act** to require mental health data transparency, outcomes, and progress in closing disparities, including by race, as well as much greater community engagement in the local services planning process and a focus on people with the most serious mental illnesses.
- Created **CARE Court**, a new framework to provide individuals with the most severe mental health disorders care, housing, and services.
- Signed legislation to modernize California's **conservatorship laws** for the first time in more than 50 years.

Housing and Homelessness

- Invested billions to **boost affordable housing** across the state, including through expanded state tax credits, infrastructure grants, and funding for climate-friendly housing.

- Kern County received [\\$35 million](#) through the state's Housing Accelerator in 2022-23 and 2021-22.
- Pioneered nation-leading homeless housing reforms, including [Homekey and Project Roomkey](#), which have brought more than 71,000 people off the streets.
 - \$94.4 million has gone to Homekey projects in Kern County. \$135,192 has gone to Roomkey projects in Kern County.
- Revitalizing streets and public spaces through litter abatement and local beautification projects through [Clean California](#).
 - Since the launch of Clean California in July 2021, Caltrans and the city of Bakersfield have removed thousands of pounds of trash throughout local neighborhoods, engaged communities and transformed public spaces. Caltrans and Kern County partners have collected nearly 25,000 cubic yards of litter, equivalent to approximately 14 miles of trash – roughly 2 miles longer than the length of State Route 99 through the city of Bakersfield – piled 3 feet high and 3 feet wide.
 - Clean California has also funded 16 projects totaling \$36.2 million throughout Kern County, including four in Bakersfield totaling \$10.2 million. The projects are beautifying and improving highway roadsides, local streets and roads, tribal lands, parks, pathways, and transit centers. Through beautification measures and public art, along with the removal of litter and debris, Clean California is enhancing the community and improving spaces for walking and recreation.
- Provided flexible aid to local governments to help address and prevent homelessness through the [Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention \(HHAP\) grant program](#).
 - The City of Bakersfield has been allocated \$18.7 million in HHAP funding.
 - The Bakersfield/Kern County Continuum of Care has been allocated \$9.2 million in HHAP funding.
 - Kern County has been allocated \$8.7 million in HHAP funding.
- Invested in [Community Care Expansion](#) to build beds to house older adults and adults with disabilities, including people experiencing homelessness.

- Over [\\$25 million](#) has gone to CCE projects in Kern County.
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Economic Development, Supporting Working Families and Local Businesses, Infrastructure

Signed legislation creating the **CalMoneySmart program**, which provides funds to nonprofit organizations to provide financial education and financial empowerment programs for unbanked and underbanked Californians.

- [CHIRLA and Fresno Area Hispanic Foundation](#) both received funds in 2023-24 for CalMoneySmart services in Kern County.

Invested **small business credit support programs**, provided **financial support to small businesses** during the pandemic, provided start-up capital through the **Dream Fund**, and invested in **technical assistance** for small businesses.

- From 2019 through March 2024, iBank has deployed over \$13 million in Kern County through iBank's loan guarantee program to help small businesses that experience capital access barriers.
- Distributed 3,563 grants to small businesses for COVID relief, worth over \$40 million.
- 108 small businesses started with \$740,000 in assistance from the Dream Fund.
- Supported the Kern Innovation Hub with \$500,000 in funds through Accelerate California.
- Supported Kern's small business assistance network with over \$5.4 million through The Office of the Small Business Advocate's technical assistance funds.

\$41 billion in **infrastructure investments** already at work in the state, with tens of billions more to come in the next decade

- The state and federal investments are supporting over [190 infrastructure projects](#) that will impact and benefit Kern County, from highway restoration and groundwater recharge projects to ZEV charging stations and battery storage.

Major investments in workforce development programs and community economic resilience:

- As stated above in the Education section, the state has invested \$83 million for the Cal State Bakersfield Energy Innovation Center and \$50 million for Kern Community College District's Renewable Energy Lab. Both investments are focused on bolstering the region's research capacity to pioneer new developments in energy innovation – to create new companies and jobs in the region.
- \$19 million to the Kern Coalition to support planning and pre-development work through the California Jobs First Regional Investment Initiative
- Over \$800,000 in seed funding for the B3K initiative, a collaboration among business, government and civic stakeholders to expand quality jobs so that everyone in the Bakersfield/Kern County area has the opportunity to achieve upward economic mobility.
- \$1.3 million from the Farmworker Advancement Grant Program to two organizations who are providing upskilling training to help workers advance in the agricultural industry or prepare for advancement outside of the ag sector

The state has provided millions in awards to California companies to foster economic development:

- 12 companies in the Kern and Bakersfield area have received CalCompetes awards from the state ranging from \$750,000 to \$30,000,000. Awardees include Pacific Steel Group and AES Clean Energy Development.

Funded a state pilot program to train oil and gas workers in plugging orphan idle oil wells

Public Safety and Criminal Justice

Statewide **Public Safety Plan**, including major investments to combat organized retail theft, to address gun violence, and for opioid interdiction and enforcement.

In September 2022, signed legislation to expand CHP's **Organized Retail Crime Task Force (ORCTF)** (founded in 2019). Since its inception in 2019, ORCTF has been involved in nearly 2,500 investigations, leading to the arrest of more than 2,500 suspects and the recovery of over 770,000 stolen goods valued at \$42.3 million.

- Bakersfield Police Department received [\\$6,203,009](#) as part of the Organized Retail Theft Prevention Grant Program.

In April 2024, Governor Newsom [announced](#) a new partnership between the Bakersfield Police Department and CHP to address rising crime in Bakersfield

- Eight weeks after Governor Gavin Newsom launched a localized enforcement effort between the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the Bakersfield Police Department to address crime, results continue to show positive progress in the region — including the arrest of [302 individuals for illegal activity and the recovery of 182 stolen vehicles](#).

Invested in a multi-year recruitment campaign to **fill 1,000 CHP vacancies**. 660 officers have graduated from the Academy and have been hired so far and applications to join CHP have more than doubled in the past two years.

Invested in the **California Violence Intervention and Prevention (CalVIP)** program to support community-based responses to violence.

- The City of Bakersfield has been awarded [\\$4,614,625](#) through CalVIP since 2020. The state has also awarded [\\$5,164,674](#) to CBOs in Bakersfield since 2020.

Combating Gun Violence

Strengthened and expanded “red flag laws” and ghost gun regulation. Prohibited the sale of semiautomatic rifles to people under 21. Signed additional legislation to strengthen public carry regulations; require microstamping on handgun cartridges; generate \$160 million annually on the sale of bullets to improve school safety and gun violence intervention programs; keep guns out of the hands of potentially dangerous individuals; update the definition of a firearm to include ghost gun parts; and strengthen the process for removing firearms from people who are prohibited from owning them.