

# The Public Education All California Students Deserve

*The Public Education All California Students Deserve* is a research-based document by the California Teachers Association that outlines proven education strategies that improve and enhance student learning, are essential to providing a quality public education to all of California's 9 million students, build stronger local communities, and help maintain public education as the cornerstone of our democratic society. This document is based on education research and input from thousands of educators and community members.

## A Well-Rounded Education

We must invest in learning over testing. Invest to ensure that all students and schools have access to art, music, theater, dance, physical education, and career-technical education classes. All students should have access to world languages, a variety of subject choices and advanced placement classes. Every school should have a library with librarians to staff them. The focus on standardized testing has narrowed expectations and learning. Teachers need the freedom to use a variety of teaching techniques that are culturally relevant to the diverse students they teach.



## Class Size Matters

California has the largest class sizes in the country, which greatly inhibits the ability of our students to learn and thrive. Smaller class sizes give teachers more time to provide one-on-one instruction, significantly improve student learning – particularly for ethnic minority students and English learners – and allow for more communication between teachers and families.



## Access to Preschool

Learning begins before students enter kindergarten. All California kids deserve access to high-quality early childhood education.

## Safe Learning and Teaching Environments

Students need to be taught in facilities that are safe, well-maintained and show respect for those who go to school and work there.

## Teaching All Students

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The principles of social justice, equity and diversity integrally shape public education in California. The chances of a child's success should not depend on living in the right zip code. Parents and educators recognize the inequities within the system and continue to support additional resources to those students and schools that need additional support.

## Leading the Profession

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Education professionals are deeply committed to the success of every student, should be recognized for the experts they are and responsible for establishing the highest standards of quality for students and the profession. Teachers deserve teacher-directed professional development, time to plan lessons and collaborate with their colleagues and shared decision-making to determine the most effective teaching methods, curriculum, assessment and evaluation systems. Educators also need salaries comparable to others with the same education and experience to attract and retain quality educators for students.



## Family and Community Engagement

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Parents and family members are an integral part of a child's education. Educators should have time to communicate regularly with parents to develop a shared vision for student learning. Public schools should serve as centers of community and adult learning.

## Health and Support Services

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California ranks dead last in the number of counselors, nurses and social workers per student. Adequate health care, including eye and dental care, is essential to ensuring kids come to school ready to learn. Free and reduced meal programs and free transportation must be available to all students who need them. California schools need adequate counselors, nurses and other education support professionals to help meet the needs of all children.

## Fully Fund Education

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Public education continues to be the great equalizer and the cornerstone of our democracy. California is the eighth largest economy in the world, but continues to rank well-below the national average in per-student funding. Investing in public education is an investment in our future.



## Access to Affordable College and Careers

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All students deserve access to affordable college. Students should also have access to career and technical training programs, and other educational opportunities that will prepare them for the workforce.