

Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE) Legislative Platform for 2023

Legislative Advocacy Guiding Statement

Every year, ACOE is committed to developing legislative advocacy priorities that will generate outcomes that are student-centered and justice-oriented, and that will, to the greatest extent possible, maximize the resources available to make necessary improvements for students.

2023 Legislative Advocacy Priorities

Fiscal Health

California continues to rank low in comparison to education spending in other states. Our schools deserve to receive adequate funding in order to provide a robust, rigorous, and well-rounded educational experience for our students. Supporting our districts' fiscal health with current funding levels remains a high priority, as does increasing education funding in California to rank above the national average.

Advocacy priorities include:

- Increase the base funding for TK-12 schools, including facilities
- Support a funding formula for court and community schools that reflects actual costs of programs and services provided
- Develop a funding strategy that addresses the negative impact of declining enrollment
- Support policies that strengthen district fiscal infrastructure, including training for school fiscal staff

Student Safety and Wellness

Student mental and physical health are inextricably tied to positive academic outcomes and have been particularly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. ACOE believes schools, in partnership with their families and communities, play a pivotal role in ensuring the wellness of students. This role is even more important in the coming years as we work to re-engage all students and recover from losses experienced during the pandemic.

Advocacy priorities include:

- Ensure that policies support effective implementation of community school models
- Collaborate across agencies to increase mental health resources for students and educators
- Support effective cyber security measures to protect children's and staff's personal identifiable information
- Support comprehensive school health programs and health literacy

Education Workforce

Research shows that student outcomes improve when students are taught by a diverse body of educators. However, attracting and retaining highly qualified education staff from diverse backgrounds remains a challenge.

Advocacy priorities include:

- Support programs that attract, train, and retain educators, with an emphasis on educators of color
- Support programs that attract, train, and retain other essential staff for school sites and central offices

Academic Programs

All students deserve a well-rounded school experience that prepares them for the college and career of their choice. Policies that center equity and inclusion are imperative for the success of all students, and particularly for unhoused, justice-involved, and foster youth.

Advocacy priorities include:

- Expand access to college prep and concurrent enrollment programs, as well as to career technical education (CTE), short-term certification, and other alternative education programs
- Expand access to STEAM, enrichment, civic engagement, and integrated or project-based learning
- Support a cohesive mixed-delivery early education system
- Support an accountability framework tailored to alternative education programs