



**2024 Keynote Address**

**Charting a path forward: Educating California's Students in the  
Post-COVID Reality**

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gratitude:

The effects of the pandemic remain strong on students and teachers.

**6 million students statewide** were impacted by the closure of schools.

(Howard, 2024 and Hung et al., 2020)



There is a need to focus on the **most vulnerable populations.**

**Black**

**Foster**

**Latinx**

**Multilingual learners**

**Unhoused**

**Special Ed**





We need a focus on **fixing systems**, not students and families.

In 2020 and 2021, Congress passed **three COVID relief packages** that added up to over

**\$190 billion**

for public and private schools.

The vast majority of that money has gone to school districts.

*How was the money spent?*

*What has the return on investment been?*



Now we have the **perfect storm** brewing.



**Declining enrollment**



**Drying up of COVID relief dollars**



**Budget deficit looming**

**What is our strategy  
moving forward?**

## Enrollment in the state of CA is shifting to include a majority of **vulnerable student populations**.

According to the Public Policy Institute of CA, **California has the highest rate of poverty at**

# 13.2%

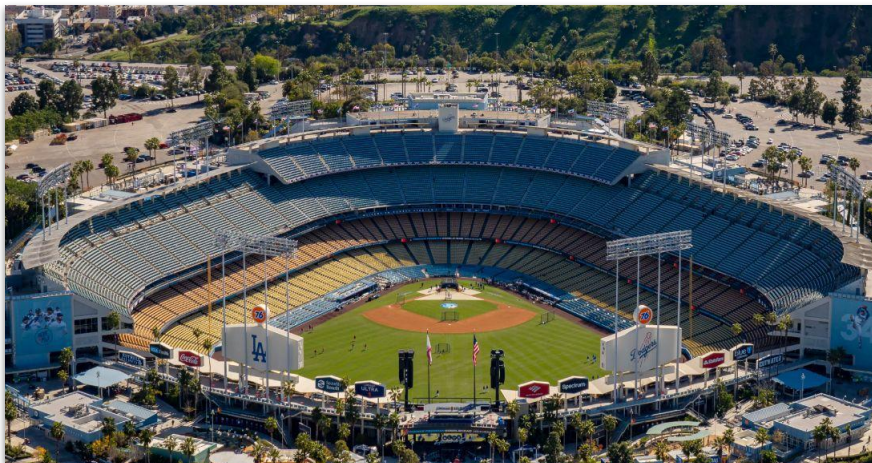
of any state in the U.S. (3-year average, 2020-22).

Almost two out of three of the **5.5 million K-12 students in CA** are economically disadvantaged (California Department of Education, 2021).



According to a national survey from Ed Week, more than three-quarters of district leaders and principals say they're experiencing at least **moderate staffing shortages** in their school buildings this year (Lieberman, 2021).

Recent analysis suggests that pre-COVID, **270,000 K-12 students were experiencing homelessness**, enough to fill Dodger Stadium almost five times (Bishop et al., 2020).





# So, what do we need to do?

**We need a bold, unapologetic, and strategic focus on educational equity.**

Educators identified four types of policies as critical to helping the state rebound from historic education inequities:

- a) **real-time data** to inform school implementation
- b) **equity standards** for implementation of state learning goals and the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF);
- c) **predictable, long-term, whole child investments** that are not one time state allocations
- d) **changes to how schools are funded**, based on enrollment, not average daily attendance (ADA) as a way to bring missing students back to school.



## Recommendation 1

### **Understand our data better.**

Identify and analyze essential school level, school system and regional data points to inform how the state moves forward to prioritize the education, health and wellbeing of young people, especially young people of color across the state.



## Recommendation 2

**Create a state roadmap for boosting enrollment and attendance** in California's public schools based on deeper insights from educators, students, caregivers, families, and community members.





## Recommendation 3

Establish statewide capacity-building efforts that prioritize race-centered approaches to systems of support.

Provide supports, protections, and road maps for various districts, schools, and programs that are engaged in doing race and equity centered work but are under constant attack



## Recommendation 4

**Develop a robust strategic plan on supporting teacher recruitment and retention efforts.** Place a focus on increasing teachers of color in schools across the state.





## Recommendation 5

Continue to **examine and expand our community schools initiatives.** The wrap around approach has tremendous potential for supporting our most vulnerable students, provide resources to families, and assist school personnel.



**Thank you**