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**California Department of Education
Official Letter**

November 22, 2024

Dear District and County Superintendents of Schools:

Funding Availability for the Classified School Employee Summer Assistance Program 2025–26 School Year

The 2024–25 budget package provides \$99 million in funding for the Classified School Employee Summer Assistance Program (CSESAP). The California Department of Education (CDE) will apportion funds to participating local educational agencies (LEAs) to provide up to a dollar for dollar match on amounts withheld from the LEA's participating classified school employees' monthly paychecks during the 2025–26 school year. For purposes of this program, a participating LEA may include a school district or county office of education.

California *Education Code* (EC) Section 45500 establishes the CSESAP on an ongoing basis when funding is available. Pursuant to EC Section 45500, LEAs have the option to elect to participate in the CSESAP. The following is a summary of key dates and requirements that LEAs need to be aware of in implementing the program if the LEA decides to participate during the 2025–26 school year:

- **By January 1, 2025**, a participating LEA shall notify classified employees that the LEA has elected to participate in the program for the 2025–26 school year. Once an LEA elects to participate in the program and notifies classified employees, the LEA is prohibited from reversing the decision.
- **By March 1, 2025**, a classified employee that elects to participate in the program shall notify the LEA in writing, on a form prescribed by the CDE. To participate, the classified employee must meet certain eligibility criteria, specify amounts to be withheld up to 10 percent from their monthly paychecks for the 2025–26 school year, and choose whether to receive one or two payments during the summer recess period. Detailed eligibility requirements are described further below.
- **By April 1, 2025**, a participating LEA shall notify the CDE that it elected to participate in the program, specify the number of classified employees that have elected to participate, and estimate the total amount to be withheld from participating classified employee paychecks for the 2025–26 school year.
- **By June 1, 2025**, a participating LEA shall notify participating classified employees of the estimated amount of state match funding the employee can expect to receive as a result of participating in the program.
- **During the 2025–26 school year**, a participating LEA shall withhold specified amounts from their participating classified employees' monthly paychecks. Participating employees are allowed to withdraw their election to participate in the CSESAP or reduce the amount of the withholding, by notifying the LEA no later than 30 days after the start of school instruction for the 2025–26 school year. In addition, a classified employee that separates from employment with the LEA or has economic or personal hardship during the 2025–26 school year may request from the LEA any pay withheld for the CSESAP from their paycheck. A classified employee who requests any pay withheld is not entitled to receive any state match funds under this program.
- **On or before July 31, 2026**, a participating LEA shall request payment from the CDE on a form developed by the CDE for the amount of classified employee pay withheld. If the total amount requested by LEAs exceeds the appropriated amount available for the CSESAP, the CDE will apply a proration accordingly.
- **During summer recess period following the 2025–26 school year**, LEAs must pay their classified employees the amounts withheld from their monthly paychecks plus the CSESAP match funds expected from the state, in one or two payments in accordance with the employee's selected payment option. The summer recess period may vary for each LEA, and is the period that regular class sessions are not being held by the LEA during the months of June, July, and August 2026.

If an LEA makes an election to participate in the CSESAP, it is important to note that a classified employee must meet certain eligibility criteria as a condition of participation in the CSESAP. Classified employees must meet the below criteria applicable to the 2025–26 school year:

- The employee must have been employed with the LEA for at least one year at the time the employee elects to participate.
- The employee is employed by the LEA in their regular assignment for 11 months or fewer, out of a 12-month period. For purposes of determining total months employed, the employing LEA shall exclude any hours worked outside of the regular assignment. A month is defined to mean 20 days or four weeks of 5 days each, including legal holidays pursuant to EC Section 45500(q)(2).
- The regular annual pay the classified employee receives directly from the LEA is \$62,400 or less for an entire school year, at the time of enrollment. For purposes of determining regular annual pay, exclude any pay received by the classified employee during the previous summer recess period. Pay earned by a classified employee with limited employment during the months of June, July, or August that is not for the summer session shall not be excluded.

Participating LEAs are also required to deposit amounts withheld from their participating classified employees' monthly paychecks in a separate account. It is important for LEAs to consider the above requirements for the CSESAP to ensure effective implementation of the program. In addition, LEAs should also be aware that strict adherence to the CDE reporting timeframes is critical to ensure state match funds can be apportioned to the LEA for their participating classified employees.

The CDE will notify participating LEAs of the estimated state match funds the LEA can expect to receive for the 2025–26 school year by May 1, 2025. The CDE will make the required apportionment for the state match funds in September 2026, following the 2025–26 school year. The CSESAP Employee Election Form and Frequently Asked Questions with the most recent program updates are available on CDE's CSESAP web page <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/ca/csesap.asp>.

If you have any questions regarding the CSESAP, please contact the Categorical Allocations and Audit Resolutions Office, by email at CSESAP@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Keith Smith, Administrator
Categorical Allocations and Audit Resolutions Office
School Fiscal Services Division

KS:da

Last Reviewed: Tuesday, December 03, 2024