



Established in 1991, UCC serves as the representative voice for state legislative advocacy for high-population counties in California. Initially composed of seven counties, the association has grown to 14 today. Over 80 percent of the state's population reside in UCC counties. Consequently, urban counties carry out critical programs and services to the state's most vulnerable populations. For more information, including details on our Board of Directors, please visit [our website](#).

UCC News: March 1, 2021

School Reopening Compromise Announced

At an Elk Grove elementary school this morning, Governor Gavin Newsom and legislative leaders announced a deal on school reopening that focuses on getting the youngest students (TK-2nd) back to school by April 1. The compromise offers \$2 billion in incentive grants to schools in counties with fewer than 25 new daily confirmed coronavirus cases per 100,000 residents. School districts in red tier counties with seven or fewer confirmed cases per 100,000 residents would be required to extend in-person learning to all elementary grades and at least one grade of middle or high school in order to receive funds.

The agreement does not, however, mandate that schools reopen, leaving decisions on school reopening to local officials and collective bargaining agreements. Of significance, the compromise does not require vaccination of teachers and staff as a precondition for in-person learning. It does specifically require that the Government Operations Agency (through the Third Party Administrator agreement) “prioritize a set number of appointments for education sector staff,” including 10 percent of first doses through June 2022, essentially codifying the Governor’s announcement from last month.

In terms of testing, districts would have to conduct asymptomatic COVID testing – to be run through the Valencia lab, as we understand it – at state-prescribed cadences if they are in purple tier counties. Such testing is not required in red tier or better or for schools that are already open.

School districts that meet the COVID case criteria and do not open by April 1 would lose 1% of their share of the \$2 billion in reopening funds for each school day that distance learning remains the only option for students. If schools are not open by May 15, all state grant funds are forfeited. Schools that are already open or have plans to reopen before the end of March are allowed to move forward with their reopening plans and would still receive state incentive funds. In today's announcement, Governor Newsom indicated that some funds would be available for those schools that decide to extend the school year into summer.

We would note that local health departments will be reviewing school plans to reopen and will assist schools with outbreaks and disease investigations.

The following bills will be considered by the Legislature this week:

AB 86/SB 86 : COVID-19 relief and school reopening, reporting, and public health requirements

Outlines provisions for reopening schools and receipt of \$2 billion incentive payments, as outlined above.

AB 83 (Committee on Budget): Alcoholic beverage control: license renewal fees: waivers

Clean-up to expand the license types eligible for fee waivers and appropriates \$6 million to the Alcohol Beverage Control Fund to backfill lost renewal fee revenue.

AB 88 (Committee on Budget): One-time stimulus and grant payments: garnishment: exclusion from gross income

Clean-up to ensure that Golden State Stimulus payments are exempt from garnishment orders and gross income for personal income tax purposes. Provides \$100,000 to the Franchise Tax Board to provide additional outreach to raise public awareness of the Golden State Stimulus to its existing Earned Income Tax Credit outreach program.