

Assembly Bill No. 2585

CHAPTER 309

An act to amend Sections 1622 and 42127 of the Education Code, relating to school finance.

[Approved by Governor September 9, 2014. Filed with Secretary of State September 9, 2014.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2585, Daly. School finance: annual budgets.

(1) Existing law, on or before July 1 of each year, requires a county board of education to hold a public hearing on the proposed county school service fund budget for that fiscal year, requires the county board of education to adopt an annual budget for the budget year, and requires the county board of education to file the budget with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the county board of supervisors, and the county auditor. Existing law requires the Superintendent to examine the budget, as specified, and, on or before August 15, approve or disapprove the budget. If the budget is disapproved, existing law requires the Superintendent, on or before August 15, to transmit to the county office of education, in writing, his or her recommendations regarding revision of the budget and the reasons for those recommendations. Existing law, on or before September 8, and after a public hearing regarding the proposed revisions to the budget, as specified, requires the county board of education to revise the county office of education budget to reflect certain fiscal changes, to include any response to the recommendations of the Superintendent, to adopt the revised budget, and to file the revised budget with the Superintendent, the county board of supervisors, and the county auditor. Existing law authorizes the county office of education to elect to use an alternative budget review process by providing the Superintendent with written notice, as specified.

This bill, if the budget of a county office of education is disapproved, would instead require the county superintendent of schools and the county board of education, on or before September 8, to review the recommendations of the Superintendent at a regularly scheduled meeting of the county board of education and to respond to those recommendations. The bill would require that response to include any revisions to the adopted budget and other proposed actions to be taken, if any, as a result of those recommendations. The bill would repeal the authority of a county office of education to elect to use the alternative budget review process. The bill would also make nonsubstantive changes to these provisions. By requiring a county superintendent of schools to undertake additional responsibilities related to reviewing the recommendations of the Superintendent, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(2) Existing law, on or before July 1 of each year, requires a school district to hold a public hearing on, and adopt, a budget for the subsequent fiscal year. Existing law requires the governing board of the school district to file the adopted budget with the county superintendent of schools, as specified. Existing law requires the county superintendent of schools to examine the adopted budget, as specified, to make certain determinations related to the adopted budget, and, on or before August 15, to approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove the adopted budget for each school district. If the adopted budget is conditionally approved or disapproved, existing law requires the county superintendent of schools, on or before August 15, to transmit to the governing board of the school district, in writing, his or her recommendations regarding revision of the budget and the reasons for those recommendations. Existing law, on or before September 8, and after a public hearing regarding the proposed revisions to the budget, as specified, requires the governing board of the school district to revise the adopted budget to reflect certain fiscal changes, to include any response to the recommendations of the county superintendent of schools, to adopt the revised budget, and to file the revised budget with the county superintendent of schools. Existing law, if the adopted budget is disapproved, also requires the governing board of the school district and the county superintendent of schools to review the disapproval and the recommendations of the county superintendent of schools regarding revision of the budget at the public hearing. Existing law authorizes the governing board of a school district to elect to use an alternative budget review process by providing the county superintendent of schools with written notice, as specified.

This bill would require the public hearing to be conducted in accordance with a specified provision related to proposed budgets. The bill, if the adopted budget of a school district is conditionally approved or disapproved as described above, would instead require the governing board of the school district, on or before September 8, and in conjunction with the county superintendent of schools, to review and respond to the superintendent's recommendations at a regular meeting of the governing board of the school district. The bill would require the response to include any revisions to the adopted budget and other proposed actions to be taken, if any, as a result of the superintendent's recommendations. The bill would repeal the authority of the governing board of a school district to elect to use the alternative budget review process. The bill would also make nonsubstantive changes to these provisions. By requiring school districts to undertake additional responsibilities related to the conditional approval of budgets, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(3) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 1622 of the Education Code is amended to read:

1622. (a) On or before July 1 of each fiscal year, the county board of education shall adopt an annual budget for the budget year and shall file the budget with the Superintendent, the county board of supervisors, and the county auditor. The budget, and supporting data, shall be maintained and made available for public review. The budget shall indicate the date, time, and location at which the county board of education held the public hearing required under Section 1620. For the 2014–15 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter, the county board of education shall not adopt a budget before the county board of education adopts a local control and accountability plan or approves an update to an existing local control and accountability plan if an existing local control and accountability plan or update to a local control and accountability plan is not effective during the budget year. The county board of education shall not adopt a budget that does not include the expenditures identified in the local control and accountability plan and any annual update to the local control and accountability plan that will be effective for the budget year. Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, for the 2014–15 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter, the budget shall not be adopted or approved by the Superintendent before a local control and accountability plan or update to an existing local control and accountability plan for the budget year is approved.

(b) (1) The Superintendent shall examine the budget to determine if it (A) complies with the standards and criteria adopted by the state board pursuant to Section 33127 for application to final local educational agency budgets, (B) allows the county office of education to meet its financial obligations during the fiscal year, and (C) is consistent with a financial plan that will enable the county office of education to satisfy its multiyear financial commitments. In addition, the Superintendent shall identify any technical corrections to the budget that must be made. On or before August 15, the Superintendent shall approve or disapprove the budget and, in the event of a disapproval, transmit to the county office of education in writing his or her recommendations regarding revision of the budget and the reasons for those recommendations.

(2) For the 2014–15 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter, the Superintendent shall disapprove a budget if any of the following occur:

(A) The Superintendent has not approved a local control and accountability plan or an annual update to the local control and accountability plan filed by a county board of education pursuant to Section 52070.5 that is effective for the budget year.

(B) The Superintendent determines that the budget does not include the expenditures necessary to implement the local control and accountability plan or an annual update to the local control and accountability plan that is effective for that budget year.

(c) In the event of the disapproval of the budget of a county office of education pursuant to subdivision (b), on or before September 8, the county

superintendent of schools and the county board of education shall review the recommendations of the Superintendent at a regularly scheduled meeting of the county board of education and respond to those recommendations. That response shall include any revisions to the adopted budget and other proposed actions to be taken, if any, as a result of those recommendations.

(d) (1) The Superintendent shall examine the revised budget as provided in subdivision (c) to determine if it complies with the standards and criteria adopted by the state board pursuant to Section 33127 for application to final local educational agency budgets and, no later than October 8, shall approve or disapprove the revised budget. For the 2014–15 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter, the Superintendent shall disapprove a revised budget if the Superintendent determines that the revised budget does not include the expenditures necessary to implement the local control and accountability plan or an annual update to the local control and accountability plan approved by the Superintendent pursuant to Section 52070.5 that is effective for the budget year. If the Superintendent disapproves the budget, he or she shall call for the formation of a budget review committee pursuant to Section 1623.

(2) Notwithstanding any other law, for the 2014–15 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter, if the Superintendent disapproves the budget for the sole reason that the Superintendent has not approved a local control and accountability plan or an annual update to the local control and accountability plan filed by the county board of education pursuant to Section 52070.5, the Superintendent shall not call for the formation of a budget review committee pursuant to Section 1623.

(e) Not later than 45 days after the Governor signs the annual Budget Act, the county office of education shall make available for public review any revisions in revenues and expenditures that it has made to its budget to reflect the funding made available by that Budget Act.

SEC. 2. Section 42127 of the Education Code is amended to read:

42127. (a) On or before July 1 of each year, the governing board of each school district shall accomplish the following:

(1) Hold a public hearing conducted in accordance with Section 42103 on the budget to be adopted for the subsequent fiscal year. The budget to be adopted shall be prepared in accordance with Section 42126. The agenda for that hearing shall be posted at least 72 hours before the public hearing and shall include the location where the budget will be available for public inspection.

(2) (A) Adopt a budget. Not later than five days after that adoption or by July 1, whichever occurs first, the governing board of the school district shall file that budget with the county superintendent of schools. The budget and supporting data shall be maintained and made available for public review. If the governing board of the school district does not want all or a portion of the property tax requirement levied for the purpose of making payments for the interest and redemption charges on indebtedness as described in paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (b) of Section 1 of Article XIII A of the California Constitution, the budget shall include a statement

of the amount or portion for which a levy shall not be made. For the 2014–15 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter, the governing board of the school district shall not adopt a budget before the governing board of the school district adopts a local control and accountability plan, if an existing local control and accountability plan or annual update to a local control and accountability plan is not effective for the budget year. The governing board of a school district shall not adopt a budget that does not include the expenditures necessary to implement the local control and accountability plan or the annual update to a local control and accountability plan that is effective for the budget year.

(B) Commencing with budgets adopted for the 2015–16 fiscal year, the governing board of a school district that proposes to adopt a budget, or revise a budget pursuant to subdivision (e), that includes a combined assigned and unassigned ending fund balance in excess of the minimum recommended reserve for economic uncertainties adopted by the state board pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 33128, shall, at the public hearing held pursuant to paragraph (1), provide all of the following for public review and discussion:

(i) The minimum recommended reserve for economic uncertainties for each fiscal year identified in the budget.

(ii) The combined assigned and unassigned ending fund balances that are in excess of the minimum recommended reserve for economic uncertainties for each fiscal year identified in the budget.

(iii) A statement of reasons that substantiates the need for an assigned and unassigned ending fund balance that is in excess of the minimum recommended reserve for economic uncertainties for each fiscal year that the school district identifies an assigned and unassigned ending fund balance that is in excess of the minimum recommended reserve for economic uncertainties, as identified pursuant to clause (ii).

(C) The governing board of a school district shall include the information required pursuant to subparagraph (B) in its budgetary submission each time it files an adopted or revised budget with the county superintendent of schools. The information required pursuant to subparagraph (B) shall be maintained and made available for public review.

(b) The county superintendent of schools may accept changes in any statement included in the budget, pursuant to subdivision (a), of the amount or portion for which a property tax levy shall not be made. The county superintendent of schools or the county auditor shall compute the actual amounts to be levied on the property tax rolls of the school district for purposes that exceed apportionments to the school district pursuant to Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 95) of Part 0.5 of Division 1 of the Revenue and Taxation Code. Each school district shall provide all data needed by the county superintendent of schools or the county auditor to compute the amounts. On or before August 15, the county superintendent of schools shall transmit the amounts computed to the county auditor who shall compute the tax rates necessary to produce the amounts. On or before

September 1, the county auditor shall submit the rate computed to the board of supervisors for adoption.

(c) The county superintendent of schools shall do all of the following:

(1) Examine the adopted budget to determine whether it complies with the standards and criteria adopted by the state board pursuant to Section 33127 for application to final local educational agency budgets. The county superintendent of schools shall identify, if necessary, technical corrections that are required to be made to bring the budget into compliance with those standards and criteria.

(2) Determine whether the adopted budget will allow the school district to meet its financial obligations during the fiscal year and is consistent with a financial plan that will enable the school district to satisfy its multiyear financial commitments. In addition to his or her own analysis of the budget of each school district, the county superintendent of schools shall review and consider studies, reports, evaluations, or audits of the school district that were commissioned by the school district, the county superintendent of schools, the Superintendent, and state control agencies and that contain evidence that the school district is showing fiscal distress under the standards and criteria adopted in Section 33127 or that contain a finding by an external reviewer that more than 3 of the 15 most common predictors of a school district needing intervention, as determined by the County Office Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team, are present. The county superintendent of schools shall either conditionally approve or disapprove a budget that does not provide adequate assurance that the school district will meet its current and future obligations and resolve any problems identified in studies, reports, evaluations, or audits described in this paragraph.

(3) Determine whether the adopted budget includes the expenditures necessary to implement the local control and accountability plan or annual update to the local control and accountability plan approved by the county superintendent of schools.

(4) Determine whether the adopted budget includes a combined assigned and unassigned ending fund balance that exceeds the minimum recommended reserve for economic uncertainties. If the adopted budget includes a combined assigned and unassigned ending fund balance that exceeds the minimum recommended reserve for economic uncertainties, the county superintendent of schools shall verify that the school district complied with the requirements of subparagraphs (B) and (C) of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a).

(d) (1) On or before August 15, the county superintendent of schools shall approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove the adopted budget for each school district. For the 2014–15 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter, the county superintendent of schools shall disapprove a budget if the county superintendent of schools determines that the budget does not include the expenditures necessary to implement a local control and accountability plan or an annual update to the local control and accountability plan approved by the county superintendent of schools. If the governing

board of a school district does not submit a budget to the county superintendent of schools, the county superintendent of schools shall develop, at school district expense, a budget for that school district by September 15 and transmit that budget to the governing board of the school district. The budget prepared by the county superintendent of schools shall be deemed adopted, unless the county superintendent of schools approves any modifications made by the governing board of the school district. The budget prepared by the county superintendent of schools shall also comply with the requirements of subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a). The approved budget shall be used as a guide for the school district's priorities. The Superintendent shall review and certify the budget approved by the county. If, pursuant to the review conducted pursuant to subdivision (c), the county superintendent of schools determines that the adopted budget for a school district does not satisfy paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4) of that subdivision, he or she shall conditionally approve or disapprove the budget and, not later than August 15, transmit to the governing board of the school district, in writing, his or her recommendations regarding revision of the budget and the reasons for those recommendations, including, but not limited to, the amounts of any budget adjustments needed before he or she can approve that budget. The county superintendent of schools may assign a fiscal adviser to assist the school district to develop a budget in compliance with those revisions. In addition, the county superintendent of schools may appoint a committee to examine and comment on the superintendent's review and recommendations, subject to the requirement that the committee report its findings to the county superintendent of schools no later than August 20.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, for the 2014–15 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter, the budget shall not be adopted or approved by the county superintendent of schools before a local control and accountability plan or update to an existing local control and accountability plan for the budget year is approved.

(3) If the adopted budget of a school district is conditionally approved or disapproved pursuant to paragraph (1), on or before September 8, the governing board of the school district, in conjunction with the county superintendent of schools, shall review and respond to the recommendations of the county superintendent of schools at a regular meeting of the governing board of the school district. The response shall include any revisions to the adopted budget and other proposed actions to be taken, if any, as a result of those recommendations.

(e) On or before September 22, the county superintendent of schools shall provide a list to the Superintendent identifying all school districts for which budgets may be disapproved.

(f) (1) The county superintendent of schools shall examine the revised budget as provided in paragraph (3) of subdivision (d) to determine whether it (A) complies with the standards and criteria adopted by the state board pursuant to Section 33127 for application to final local educational agency budgets, (B) allows the school district to meet its financial obligations during the fiscal year, (C) satisfies all conditions established by the county

superintendent of schools in the case of a conditionally approved budget, (D) is consistent with a financial plan that will enable the school district to satisfy its multiyear financial commitments, and, not later than October 8, shall approve or disapprove the revised budget, and (E) whether the revised budget complies with the requirements of subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a). If the county superintendent of schools disapproves the budget, he or she shall call for the formation of a budget review committee pursuant to Section 42127.1, unless the governing board of the school district and the county superintendent of schools agree to waive the requirement that a budget review committee be formed and the department approves the waiver after determining that a budget review committee is not necessary. Upon the grant of a waiver, the county superintendent of schools immediately has the authority and responsibility provided in Section 42127.3. Upon approving a waiver of the budget review committee, the department shall ensure that a balanced budget is adopted for the school district by November 30. If no budget is adopted by November 30, the Superintendent may adopt a budget for the school district. The Superintendent shall report to the Legislature and the Director of Finance by December 10 if any school district, including a school district that has received a waiver of the budget review committee process, does not have an adopted budget by November 30. This report shall include the reasons why a budget has not been adopted by the deadline, the steps being taken to finalize budget adoption, the date the adopted budget is anticipated, and whether the Superintendent has or will exercise his or her authority to adopt a budget for the school district.

(2) Notwithstanding any other law, for the 2014–15 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter, if the county superintendent of schools disapproves the budget for the sole reason that the county superintendent of schools has not approved a local control and accountability plan or an annual update to the local control and accountability plan filed by the governing board of the school district pursuant to Section 52070, the county superintendent of schools shall not call for the formation of a budget review committee pursuant to Section 42127.1.

(g) Not later than October 8, the county superintendent of schools shall submit a report to the Superintendent identifying all school districts for which budgets have been disapproved or budget review committees waived. The report shall include a copy of the written response transmitted to each of those school districts pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (d).

(h) Not later than 45 days after the Governor signs the annual Budget Act, the school district shall make available for public review any revisions in revenues and expenditures that it has made to its budget to reflect the funding made available by that Budget Act.

(i) Any school district for which the county board of education serves as the governing board of the school district is not subject to subdivisions (c) to (h), inclusive, but is governed instead by the budget procedures set forth in Section 1622.

SEC. 3. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.