

Policy 5020: Parent Rights And Responsibilities

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 02/01/1999 | **Last Revised Date:** 08/01/2026 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 08/01/2026

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to Education Code 51101, each Governing Board is mandated to adopt policies, jointly developed with parents/guardians, including parents/guardians whose primary language is not English, that outline how parents/guardians, school staff, and students may share the responsibility for continuing the intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development and well-being of students at each school site. Such policy is required to include (1) the means by which the school and parents/guardians may help students achieve academic and other standards of the school, (2) a description of the school's responsibility to provide a high-quality curriculum and instructional program in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables all students to meet the academic expectations of the school, and (3) the manner in which parents/guardians may support the learning environment of their students, including, but not limited to, the responsibilities as detailed in the accompanying administrative regulation.

This policy and the accompanying administrative regulation should be modified, jointly with parents/guardians, to reflect district practice.

The Governing Board recognizes that parents/guardians of district students have certain rights as well as responsibilities related to the education of their students.

The Board believes that the district's relationship with parents/guardians is one of mutual support and respect. The Superintendent or designee shall work with parents/guardians, including parents/guardians of English learners, to determine appropriate roles and responsibilities of parents/guardians for continuing the intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development and well-being of their students, including the means by which the district and parents/guardians can help their students achieve academic and other standards of the district.

The district is responsible for providing a high-quality curriculum and instructional program in a safe, supportive, and effective learning environment.

Parents/guardians shall have the opportunity to work with schools in a mutually supportive and respectful partnership and to help their students succeed in school.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that district staff understand the rights of parents/guardians afforded by law, Board policy, and administrative regulation, and follow acceptable practices that respect those rights.

CSBA NOTE: Districts are required to annually provide parents/guardians with notice of their rights pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 USC 1232g; 34 CFR 99.1-99.8). For more information regarding annual notifications to parents/guardians, see BP/E(1) 5145.6 - Parent/Guardian Notifications.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that parents/guardians receive notification regarding their rights, including, but not limited to, their rights in accordance with 20 USC 1232g and 34 CFR 99.1-99.8, the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and as specified in Board Policy 5145.6 - Parent/Guardian Notifications.

CSBA NOTE: Districts are required to teach certain instructional content. For example, Education Code 51204.5 requires instruction in social sciences to include a study of the role and contributions of specified groups of people to the economic, political, and social development of California and the United States of America, which includes people of all genders, Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, European Americans, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) Americans, and members of other ethnic, cultural, religious, and socioeconomic status groups. Additionally, pursuant to Education Code 243 and 51501, the Board may not prohibit the continued use of an appropriately adopted textbook, instructional material, or curriculum on the basis that it contains inclusive or diverse perspectives. For more information on required instructional content, see BP/AR 6143 - Courses of Study.

Districts are required to provide parents/guardians notice and the opportunity to opt their students out of certain instruction, in some instances only based on religious beliefs and in other instances for any basis not prohibited by law. For example, Education Code 51938 requires districts to provide parents/guardians notice about planned comprehensive sexual health and HIV prevention education and the opportunity to opt their students out of such instruction. For more information on comprehensive sexual health and HIV prevention education, see BP/AR 6142.1 - Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention Instruction.

Additionally, in June 2025, the U.S. Supreme Court, in Mahmoud v. Taylor, held that the First Amendment

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The Board of Education recognizes that parents/guardians of district students have certain rights as well as responsibilities related to the education of their children.

The Board believes that the education of the district's students is a shared responsibility. The Superintendent or designee shall work with parents/guardians, including parents/guardians of English learners, to determine appropriate roles and responsibilities of parents/guardians, school staff and students for continuing the intellectual, physical, emotional and social development and well-being of students at each school site, including the means by which the schools and parents/guardians can help students achieve academic and other standards of the school.

Within this framework, the school's primary responsibility shall be to provide a high-quality curriculum and instructional program in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables all students to meet the academic expectations of the school.

Parents/guardians shall have the opportunity to work with schools in a mutually supportive and respectful partnership and to help their children succeed in school. (Education Code 51100)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that district staff understand the rights of parents/guardians afforded by law and Board policy and follow acceptable practices that respect those rights.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that parents/guardians receive notification regarding their rights in accordance with law.

The Superintendent or designee shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that all parents/guardians who speak a language other than English are properly notified in English, and in their home language of the rights and opportunities available to them pursuant to Education Code 48985. (Education Code 51101.1)

prohibited a district from including LGBTQ storybooks as part of elementary school instruction without providing parents with notice and the ability to opt their students out of that instructional content on the grounds that the storybooks substantially interfered with the religious development of their children. The court's reasoning may be interpreted to apply to other instructional content that parents/guardians could view as substantially interfering with the religious development of their children. In addition, the court's holding emphasized that the question of whether certain instructional content substantially interferes with the religious development of a student will always be fact-intensive. For more information regarding parent/guardian opt-outs related to interference with religious development, see BP/AR 6141.2 - Recognition of Religious Beliefs and Customs.

In light of Mahmoud, the existence of some statutorily required opt-outs, and the requirement to teach certain content, it is recommended that districts consult CSBA's District and County Office of Education Legal Services or district legal counsel when determining the instructional content for which parents/guardians may opt their students out, creating opt-out procedures, and evaluating opt-out requests.

When required by law, Board policy, or administrative regulation, the district shall notify parents/guardians that they may request to opt their student out of certain instruction. Students for whom the district has approved the opt out shall be offered an alternative activity of similar educational value.

CSBA NOTE: Education Code 51101.1 provides that parents/guardians be afforded all rights pursuant to Education Code 51100-51140, regardless of English fluency, and grants additional rights for parents/guardians of English learners. For more information regarding rights of parents/guardian of English learners, see the accompanying administrative regulation.

Additionally, Education Code 51101.1 requires the district to take all reasonable steps to ensure that parents/guardians of English learners are notified of the rights and opportunities available to them in English and in their home language pursuant to Education Code 48985. Education Code 48985 provides that when 15 percent or more of students enrolled in a school speak a single primary language other than English, all notices and reports sent to the parents/guardians of these students are required to also be written in the primary language and may be answered by the parent/guardian in either language.

In addition, Education Code 51101.1 encourages those districts with a substantial number of English learners to establish parent centers with district staff who can communicate with the parents/guardians and to encourage their participation in the district's educational programs.

The Superintendent or designee shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that all parents/guardians who speak a language other than English are properly notified in English, and in their home language, of the rights and opportunities available to them pursuant to Education Code 48985. (Education Code 51101.1)

The Superintendent or designee may establish a center for parents/guardians at a school with a substantial number of students with a home language other than English, to encourage parent/guardian understanding of, and participation in, the educational programs. (Education Code 51101.1)
