

# CSBA Sample Board Policy

**Business and Noninstructional Operations**

BP 3320(a)

## CLAIMS AND ACTIONS AGAINST THE DISTRICT

Note: The following **optional** policy and accompanying administrative regulation reflect the claims procedure in the Government Claims Act pursuant to Government Code 810-996.6. The Act details requirements for the filing of claims against public entities such as school districts.

Government Code 905 specifies certain types of claims which are exempted from the procedures in the Government Claims Act. Pursuant to Government Code 935, a district is authorized to establish its own claims processing procedures for those exempted claims. A local claims requirement must be similar to and be no more restrictive than those established by the Government Claims Act. For example, the district's procedures may not allow a longer time for the Board to take action on a claim than the timeline provided for claims under the Government Claims Act. The following policy and accompanying administrative regulation may be revised to reflect district practice.

Because a district's insurance carrier or joint powers authority may require the district to comply with certain claims management conditions as part of the district's contractual coverage obligation, **it is strongly recommended** that, prior to adoption by the Governing Board, this board policy and accompanying administrative regulation be reviewed for consistency with any applicable conditions of coverage. A district's failure to follow those contractual conditions may result in a loss of coverage benefits. The district's risk manager and legal counsel should also be consulted, as appropriate.

The Governing Board desires to conduct district operations in a manner that minimizes risk, protects district resources, and promotes the health and safety of students, staff, and the public. Any and all claims for money or damages against the district shall be presented to and acted upon in accordance with the Government Claims Act or other applicable state or district procedures, as well as the district's joint powers authority (JPA) agreement or other insurance coverage.

*(cf. 3530 - Risk Management/Insurance)*

*(cf. 5143 - Insurance)*

Note: The following **optional** paragraph is for use by districts that choose to establish their own claims procedures for certain types of claims pursuant to Government Code 935.

Any claim for money or damages not governed by the Government Claims Act (Government Code 810-996.6) or specifically excepted by Government Code 905 shall be presented and acted upon in accordance with district-established procedures consistent with the manner and time limitations specified in the accompanying administrative regulation, unless a procedure for processing such claims is otherwise provided by state or federal law or regulation. (Government Code 935)

Upon notice to the district of a claim, the Superintendent or designee shall take all necessary steps to protect the district's rights under any applicable contractual agreements, including the right to indemnification from its insurance or other coverage provider.

**CLAIMS AND ACTIONS AGAINST THE DISTRICT** (continued)

Note: The following paragraph is **optional**. Government Code 935.4 authorizes, but does not require, the Board to delegate to any employee the authority to allow, compromise, or settle a claim of \$50,000 or less. Boards that do not wish to delegate such authority should delete the following paragraph. Boards that wish to delegate this authority may modify the following paragraph to specify a different employee to whom the authority is delegated and/or an amount less than \$50,000.

Management of the defense or settlement of the claim may be subject to contractual requirements contained in the district's insurance policy, memorandum of coverage, or contractual indemnity agreements. Thus, even when the Board has authorized the Superintendent or another employee to settle such claims, the authority is subject to any such requirements or conditions of coverage.

In accordance with Government Code 935.4, the Board delegates to the Superintendent the authority to allow, compromise, or settle claims of \$50,000 or less pursuant to any conditions of coverage in the district's JPA agreement or insurance coverage.

**Roster of Public Agencies**

Note: Government Code 53051 requires public agencies, such as school districts, to register the information specified below, including the names of all Board members, with the Secretary of State and County Clerk. If the information on file is not accurate or if no information is on file, the court may allow a person to proceed with a claim against the district even if the time limit for filing such a claim has expired. Thus, it is imperative that all required information be current and accurate.

Within 10 days of any change in the name of the district, the mailing address of the Board, or the names and addresses of the Board president, the Board clerk or secretary, or other Board members, the Superintendent or designee shall file the updated information with the Secretary of State and the County Clerk. (Government Code 53051)

*Legal Reference: (see next page)*

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**CLAIMS AND ACTIONS AGAINST THE DISTRICT (continued)**

*Legal Reference:*

EDUCATION CODE

35200 *Liability for debts and contracts*

35202 *Claims against districts; applicability of Government Code*

CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE

340.1 *Damages suffered as result of childhood sexual abuse*

GOVERNMENT CODE

800 *Cost in civil actions*

810-996.6 *Claims and actions against public entities*

6500-6536 *Joint exercise of powers*

53051 *Information filed with secretary of state and county clerk*

PENAL CODE

72 *Fraudulent claims*

COURT DECISIONS

*Big Oak Flat-Groveland Unified School District v. Superior Court of Tuolumne County, (2018) 21 Cal.App.5th 403*

*City of Stockton v. Superior Court, (2007) 42 Cal. 4th 730*

*Connelly v. County of Fresno, (2006) 146 Cal.App.4th 29*

*CSEA v. South Orange Community College District, (2004) 123 Cal.App.4th 574*

*CSEA v. Azusa Unified School District, (1984) 152 Cal.App.3d 580*

*Management Resources:*

WEB SITES

*California Secretary of State's Office, <http://www.sos.ca.gov>*

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