

# Fingertip Facts

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*“The longest stretch*

*on earth, it is*

*sometimes said, is the*

*distance between*

*education*

*policymakers and*

*what goes on in the*

*heads of kids.”*

– Peter Schrag, author  
and columnist

*Harper’s Magazine,*  
September 2007

The 16,500-member Association of California School Administrators strives to ensure all students have the essential tools and knowledge needed to excel. California schools educate a growing number of minority and immigrant children who speak little or no English. More students than ever before come to school hungry and in need of health and dental care, and many have had no preschool experience. At the same time, our global high-tech economy requires more specialized skills than ever before. Our school accountability systems - both state and national – require *all* schools to bring *all* students to the highest levels.

There are a handful of facts most stakeholders know about California’s public education system:

**Fact:** California has some of the most rigorous academic standards in the country, yet California also has the largest class sizes in the country and California’s K-12 spending is below the national average.

**Fact:** Parents and voters continuously rate increasing funding for education as one of their top spending priorities. Californians also know the current education finance system is deeply flawed and is not making the most effective use of its current resources.

**Fact:** Highly prescriptive finance and governance policies thwart local schools and districts in their efforts to meet the needs of their students and promote higher achievement.

**Fact:** School leaders, especially site principals, believe that more efficient and flexible policies and targeted resources would help their efforts to support and evaluate teachers and to ensure their own success as educational leaders.

**Fact:** ACSA believes that specific improvements in four priority areas – narrowing the achievement gap; building capacity among teachers and administrators; measuring results through reliable data on student achievement; and providing adequate, stable and ongoing funding – will greatly aid our success for students.