

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2025-2026 SIMULATION SESSION
SENATE BILL **NO 31**

Introduced by Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil

October 1, 2025

This bill aims to provide new districts and schools in rural areas in California—specifically, elementary and middle schools.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SB 31, as introduced, Alvarado-Gil. Transforming Rural Areas for Schooling and Hope

Existing law currently supports funding for existing rural school districts. It provides rural school districts with equitable funding compared to those in more rural areas of California.

This bill, effective January 1, 2026, will enable the establishment of new school districts and elementary and Middle schools in areas of rural California that currently lack sufficient schools.

Communities must advocate for the establishment of a new school district in their area. Based on demand, as per the California Department of Education, the current school district will be reorganized to comply with California Education Code Section 35511, subsection A.2. If the California Department of Education accepts the proposal, the allocation of a new district will be implemented. This bill will allocate funds to the new district for the construction of new schools or the renovation of existing buildings.

This bill requests \$20 million United States Dollars.

Vote: majority Appropriation: yes Fiscal Committee: no Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. “Rural Areas” refers to areas that have fewer than 1,999 housing units or a population of fewer than 4,999.

(a) For a rural area to be eligible for a new district, the child population needs to have a population of 51% or more of children who are aged 5-14 years old.

SEC. 2. Other Eligibility Requirements

(a) For a new school district to be established, the community of said rural area must advocate for a new district and be in constant contact with the California Department of Education

(b) The new district should follow all the rules that the California Department of Education has and must use the allocated funds appropriately for the use of new school districts.

SEC. 3. Construction of New Schools

(a) If the construction of a new school building is required, then the school district must follow all laws presented to them, and construction must be below the budget for construction.

(b) If a school needs to budget for the construction of a new building, it must be stated in the grant proposal to allocate funds for the new building.

(c) If the school building is inside a previously existing structure, then the budget for construction may be used instead for required repairs and creating a safe learning environment

(d) If a new school were to be constructed for the new district, then the construction for the new school must not exceed a population of 599 students. The number 599 includes all grades.

SEC. 3. The bill will run from January 1, 2026, until all the funds have been granted