



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 1, 2021

CONTACT

Virginia Drake
Public Affairs and Communications Director
California Transit Association
M: (914) 924-0120
Email: virginia@caltransit.org

****STATEMENT****

**Governor Newsom and State Lawmakers
Strike Deal to Reopen Schools**

***Transit Workers Who Will Play A Critical Role in Delivering Students Back to
the Classroom Are Still Not Prioritized for the COVID-19 Vaccine***

Sacramento – The California Transit Association issued the following statement today in response to the agreement reached by Governor Gavin Newsom and state lawmakers to reopen California’s schools for in-person instruction by March 31:

“After nearly a year of California’s schools remaining shuttered, we applaud Governor Gavin Newsom and the State Legislature for reaching this significant deal that will begin reopening the state’s public schools for in-person instruction to over 6.1 million students. It’s incredible news for children, educators and caregivers across the state. While it’s an enormous and positive step forward, we remain concerned that frontline transit workers who will play a critical role in delivering students back to the classroom are still not prioritized for the COVID-19 vaccine,” said Michael Pimentel, the Association’s Executive Director. “Moving forward, we encourage the state to make mobility, particularly for the low-income students that so often rely on public transit, a central consideration for the reopening of schools. As part of this consideration, the state should also acknowledge the role transit plays in mobility, including for fellow frontline workers, in equitable access to the vaccine, and in state and local emergency response.

As public transit stands ready to once again provide millions of school rides per year, we urge the state to protect frontline transit workers with priority vaccine access, including from the 10% of vaccines that will be set aside for educators.”

###

Michael Pimentel is the executive director of the California Transit Association, a 501(c)(6) non-profit trade organization comprised of nearly 250 member organizations, including all of the state’s largest urban transit operators, as well as dozens of transit agencies in suburban and rural areas. Its membership also extends to include commuter rail agencies, transit support groups, national and international transit suppliers, and government agencies. The Association is the leading advocate on behalf of public transit in California, representing transit’s interests before the California State Legislature, the Governor and regulatory agencies on the local, state and federal levels.