

**It's now 2020, and that means new laws went into effect as of the first day of January. Here's a helpful summary of the most important new special education laws:**

[Assembly Bill 605](#) adds a section on assistive technology to the state's Education Code. The new section states that if a local education agency or school district (including charter schools) provides a student with an assistive technology device, they have to continue providing that device to the student after the student leaves the district for up to two months or until new arrangements can be made (whichever happens first).

[Assembly Bill 947](#) adds a section about students who are blind, low vision or visually impaired to the Education Code. It states that when determining an IEP for a student who is blind or visually impaired and requires an orientation and mobility evaluation, the evaluation must be done by certified experts and in both familiar and unfamiliar environments to make sure that the student receives the most appropriate related services.

[Assembly Bill 1172](#) adds protections for students enrolled at nonpublic schools. It requires school districts to do additional on-site monitoring of nonpublic schools and requires reporting of any event where a student is injured and/or law enforcement is involved. It also requires additional licensing and training for nonpublic school staff in evidence-based interventions for students with behavioral issues.

**Those were the biggest new laws, but several others went into effect that also might apply to students with disabilities:**

[Senate Bill 419](#) prohibits schools from suspending students up through eighth grade for "willful defiance." (That prohibition was already in place for students up to third grade.)

[Assembly Bill 34](#) says that every school district has to have information on bullying prevention somewhere easy to find on their website.

[Assembly Bill 189](#) adds autism service providers to the list of people who are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse.

[Assembly Bill 1534](#) applies to transition-age students with an IEP who are also in the juvenile justice system. It adds responsibilities to the County Office of Education to work with the County Probation Department in transition planning.

[Senate Bill 223](#) gives school districts, county boards of education and charter schools the option to allow parents to possess and provide medical marijuana to students.