

**BUSINESS AND NONINSTRUCTIONAL OPERATIONS**  
**DEBT ISSUANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

Note: Government Code 8855, as amended by SB 1029 (Ch. 307, Statutes of 2016), **mandates** that the Governing Board adopt a debt management policy prior to issuing any debt, such as general obligation bonds, tax and revenue anticipation notes (TRANs), and certificates of participation. The policy must include (1) the purposes for which the debt proceeds may be used; (2) the types of debt that may be issued; (3) the relationship of the debt to, and integration with, the district's capital improvement program or budget, if applicable; (4) policy goals related to the district's planning goals and objectives; and (5) internal control procedures to ensure that the proceeds of the proposed debt issuance will be directed to the intended use. SB 1029 declares the intent of the Legislature that, consistent with the recommendation of the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), local agencies adopt comprehensive written debt management policies that are reflective of local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Districts are encouraged to consult legal counsel and their financial advisor in developing this policy. The following policy should be revised to reflect district practice.

The Governing Board is committed to long-term capital and financial planning and recognizes that the issuance of debt is a key source for funding the improvement and maintenance of school facilities and managing cash flow. Any debt issued by the district shall be consistent with law and this policy.

*(cf. 3000 - Concepts and Roles)*

*(cf. 3460 - Financial Reports and Accountability) (cf. 7110*

*- Facilities Master Plan)*

*(cf. 7210 - Facilities Financing)*

Note: Article 16, Section 18 of California Constitution contains the basic "debt limitation" (i.e., the constraints on discretionary borrowing) applicable to school districts. Under so-called "traditional authority," a measure authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds may be approved by two-thirds of the electorate; under Proposition 39, a measure authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds may be approved by 55 percent of the electorate (see BP/AR 7214 - General Obligation Bonds). Lease financings, such as certificates of participation, are not considered "indebtedness" for purposes of the Constitutional debt limitation and are not subject to voter approval. For further information, see the California Debt and Investment Advisory Commission's (CDIAC) [California Debt Issuance Primer](#).

The district shall not enter into indebtedness or liability that in any year exceeds the income and revenue provided for such year, unless two-thirds of the voters approve the obligation or one of the exceptions specified in law applies. (California Constitution, Article 16, Section 18)

When the Board determines that it is in the best interest of the district, the Board may issue debt or order an election to issue debt. The Superintendent or designee shall make recommendations to the Board regarding appropriate financing methods for capital projects or other projects that are authorized purposes for debt issuance. When approved by the Board and/or the voters as applicable, the Superintendent or designee shall administer and coordinate the district's debt issuance program and activities, including the timing of issuance, sizing of issuance, method of sale, structuring of the issue, and marketing strategies.

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Note: Pursuant to 15 USC 78o-4 (Section 15B of Securities Exchange Act of 1934), any financial advisor retained by the district must be duly registered with both the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (MSRB) and must also hold any certifications and/or licenses required by the SEC and/or MSRB.

The Superintendent or designee shall retain a financial advisor, municipal advisor, investment advisor, and other financial services professionals as needed to assist with the structuring of the debt issuance and to provide general advice on the district's debt management program, financing options, investments, and compliance with legal requirements. Contracts for services provided by such advisors may be for a single transaction or for multiple transactions, consistent with the contracting requirements in Education Code 17596. In the event that the district issues debt through a negotiated sale, underwriters may be selected for multiple transactions if multiple issuances are planned for the same project. In addition, the district shall select a legal team on an as-needed basis to assist with debt issuances or special projects.

*(cf. 3312 - Contracts) (cf.*

*3600 - Consultants)*

*(cf. 9270 - Conflict of Interest)*

**Goals**

Note: Government Code 8855, as amended by SB 1029 (Ch. 307, Statutes of 2016), **mandates** that the district's debt management policy include policy goals related to the district's planning goals and objectives. The following section should be revised to reflect district goals.

The district's debt issuance activities and procedures shall be aligned with the district's vision and goals for providing adequate facilities and programs that support student learning and well-being. When issuing debt, the district shall ensure that it:

1. Maintains accountability for the fiscal health of the district, including prudent management and transparency of the district's financing programs
2. Attains the best possible credit rating for each debt issue in order to reduce interest costs, within the context of preserving financial flexibility and meeting capital funding requirements
3. Takes all practical precautions and proactive measures to avoid any financial decision that will negatively impact current credit ratings on existing or future debt issues
4. Maintains effective communication with rating agencies and, as appropriate, credit enhancers such as bond insurers or other providers of credit or liquidity instruments in order to enhance the creditworthiness, liquidity, or marketability of the debt
5. Monitors the district's statutory debt limit in relation to assessed valuation within

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the district and the tax burden needed to meet long-term debt service requirements

6. When determining the timing of debt issuance, considers market conditions, cash flows associated with repayment, and the district's ability to expend the obtained funds in a timely, efficient, and economical manner consistent with federal tax laws
7. Determines the amortization (maturity) schedule which will fit best within the overall debt structure of the district at the time the new debt is issued
8. Considers the useful lives of assets funded by the debt issue, as well as repair and replacement costs of those assets to be incurred in the future
9. Preserves the availability of the district's general fund for operating purposes and other purposes that cannot be funded by the issuance of voter-approved debt
10. Meets the ongoing obligations and accountability requirements associated with the issuance and management of debt under state and federal tax and securities laws

*(cf. 0000 - Vision)*

*(cf. 0200 - Goals for the School District) (cf. 7000*

*- Concepts and Roles)*

**Authorized Purposes for the Issuance of Debt**

Note: Government Code 8855, as amended by SB 1029 (Ch. 307, Statutes of 2016), **mandates** that the district's debt management policy include the purposes for which debt proceeds may be used. The following section should be revised to reflect purposes that the Board has determined may be appropriate purposes for issuing debt in the district.

The district may issue debt for any of the following purposes:

1. To pay for the cost of capital improvements, including acquiring, constructing, reconstructing, rehabilitating, replacing, improving, extending, enlarging, and/or equipping district facilities
2. To refund existing debt
3. To provide for cash flow needs

*(cf. 3100 - Budget)*

*(cf. 3110 - Transfer of Funds)*

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Pursuant to Government Code 53854, general operating costs, including, but not limited to, items normally funded in the district's annual operating budget, shall not be financed from debt payable later than 15 months from the date of issuance. The district may deem it desirable to finance cash flow requirements under certain conditions so that available resources better match expenditures within a given fiscal year. To satisfy both state constitutional and statutory constraints, such cash flow borrowing shall be payable from taxes, income, revenue, cash receipts, and other moneys attributable to the fiscal year in which the debt is issued.

**Authorized Types of Debt**

Note: Government Code 8855, as amended by SB 1029 (Ch. 307, Statutes of 2016), **mandates** that the district's debt management policy include the types of debt that may be issued. The following section should be revised to reflect the types of debt instruments authorized by the Board.

The Superintendent or designee shall recommend to the Board potential financing method(s) that result in the highest benefit to the district, with the cost of staff and consultants considered. Potential financing sources may include:

1. Short-Term Debt

- a. Short-term debt, such as tax and revenue anticipation notes (TRANs), when necessary to allow the district to meet its cash flow requirements (Government Code 53850-53858)
- b. Bond anticipation notes (BANs) to provide interim financing for capital bond projects that will ultimately be paid from general obligation bonds (Education Code 15150)
- c. Grant anticipation notes (GANs) to provide interim financing pending the receipt of grants and/or loans from the state or federal government that have been appropriated and committed to the district (Government Code 53859-53859.08)

2. Long-Term Debt

Note: The California Constitution, Article 13A, Sections 1(b)(2) and 1(b)(3), Education Code 15100-15262 and 15264-15276, and Government Code 53506-53509.5 authorize the district to issue general obligation bonds requiring either two-thirds voter approval or 55 percent voter approval, subject to specific accountability requirements. Voter-approved general obligation bonds typically provide the lowest cost of borrowing and, by providing for the levy of additional ad valorem property taxes to service the debt, do not impact the district's general fund. See BP/AR 7214 - General Obligation Bonds for requirements pertaining to the issuance of general obligation bonds.

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- a. General obligation bonds for projects approved by voters (California Constitution, Article 13A, Section 1; Education Code 15100-15262, 15264-15276; Government Code 53506-53509.5)  
*(cf. 7214 - General Obligation Bonds)*

Note: Districts may establish a community facilities district for school facility purposes in accordance with the Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act (Government Code 53311-53368.3). The boundaries of the Mello-Roos district may include the entire school district, but usually include only a portion of the district, such as an area with new housing developments. The bonds sold by the community facilities district are paid for by a special tax on the properties within that community facilities district's boundaries. See BP 7212 - Mello Roos Districts.

- b. Special tax bonds issued pursuant to the Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982 (Government Code 53311-53368.3)  
*(cf. 7212 - Mello Roos Districts)*
3. Lease financing, including certificates of participation (COPs)
- a. Lease financing to fund the highest priority capital equipment purchases when pay-as-you-go financing is not feasible (Education Code 17450-17453.1)

Note: Authority for lease financings is based in part on judicial rulings finding that leases that meet certain conditions do not constitute indebtedness subject to a vote of the electorate.

- b. Lease financing to fund facilities projects when there is insufficient time to obtain voter approval or in instances where obtaining voter approval is either not feasible or unavailable (17400-17429)
4. Special financing programs or structures offered by the federal or state government, such as Qualified Zone Academy Bonds or other tax credit obligations or obligations that provide subsidized interest payments, when the use of such programs or structures is determined to result in sufficiently lower financing costs compared to traditional tax-exempt bonds and/or COPs
5. Temporary borrowing from other sources such as the County Treasurer

Note: Education Code 42133 prohibits the issuance of non-voter approved debt when the district has a qualified or negative certification regarding the district's ability to meet its fiscal obligations, except as provided below. Pursuant to Education Code 42131, a "qualified certification" indicates that the district may not meet its financial obligations for the current fiscal year and two subsequent fiscal years, and a "negative" certification indicates that the district will be unable to meet its financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year or the subsequent fiscal year. See BP 3460 - Financial Reports and Accountability for further information about such certifications.

COPs, TRANs, revenue bonds, or any other non-voter approved debt instrument shall not be issued by the district in any fiscal year in which the district has a qualified or negative

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certification, unless the County Superintendent of Schools determines, pursuant to criteria established by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, that the district's repayment of that indebtedness is probable. (Education Code 42133)

**Relationship of Debt to District Facilities Program and Budget**

Note: Government Code 8855, as amended by SB 1029 (Ch. 307, Statutes of 2016), **mandates** that the district's debt management policy include the relationship of the debt to, and integration with, the district's capital improvement program or budget, if applicable. The following section should be revised to reflect district practice.

Decisions regarding the issuance of debt for the purpose of financing capital improvement shall be aligned with current needs for acquisition, development, and/or improvement of district property and facilities as identified in the district's facilities master plan or other applicable needs assessment, the projected costs of those needs, schedules for the projects, and the expected resources.

Note: The following paragraph is **optional**.

The cost of debt issued for major capital repairs or replacements shall be evaluated against the potential cost of delaying such repairs and/or replacing such facilities.

When considering a debt issuance, the Board and the Superintendent or designee shall evaluate both the short-term and long-term implications of the debt issuance and additional operating costs associated with the new projects involved. Such evaluation may include, but is not limited to, the projected ratio of annual debt service to the tax burden on the district's taxpayers and the ratio of annual debt service secured by the general fund to general fund expenditures.

The district may enter into credit enhancement agreements such as municipal bond insurance, surety bonds, letters of credit, and lines of credit with commercial banks, municipal bond insurance companies, or other financial entities when their use is judged to lower borrowing costs, eliminate restrictive covenants, or have a net economic benefit to the financing.

**Structure of Debt Issues**

The district shall consider the overall impact of the current and future debt burden of the financing when determining the duration of the debt issue.

The district shall design the financing schedule and repayment of debt so as to take best advantage of market conditions, ensure cost effectiveness, provide flexibility, and, as practical, recapture or maximize its debt capacity for future use. Principal amortization will be structured

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to meet debt repayment, tax rate, and flexibility goals.

Note: Education Code 15106 limits the district's total outstanding bonded debt (i.e., the principal portion only) to 1.25 or 2.5 percent of the assessed valuation of the taxable property of a non-unified and unified district, respectively. Consequently, Education Code 15106 limits the issuance of new debt when the district has total bonded indebtedness in excess of the applicable percentage of the assessed valuation in the district. TRANs and lease payment obligations in support of COPs generally do not count against this limit except as provided in Education Code 17422.

For new money debt issuances for capital improvements, the district shall size the debt issuance with the aim of funding capital projects as deemed appropriate by the Board, as long as the issuance is consistent with the overall financing plan, does not exceed the amount authorized by voters, and, unless a waiver is sought and received from the state, will not cause the district to exceed the limitation on debt issuances specified in the California Constitution or Education Code 15106.

To the extent practicable, the district shall also consider credit issues, market factors, and tax law when sizing the district's bond issuance. The sizing of refunding bonds shall be determined by the amount of money that will be required to cover the principal of, any accrued interest on, and any redemption premium for the debt to be paid on the call date and to cover appropriate financing costs.

Any general obligation bond issued by the district shall mature within 40 years of the issuance date or as otherwise required by law. (California Constitution, Article 16, Section 18; Government Code 53508.6)

The final maturity of equipment or real property lease obligations will be limited to the useful life of the assets to be financed but, with respect to a lease purchase of equipment, no longer than a period of 10 years. (Education Code 17452)

**Method of Sale**

For the sale of any district-issued debt, the Superintendent or designee shall recommend the method of sale with the potential to achieve the lowest financing cost and/or to generate other benefits to the district. Potential methods of sale include:

1. A competitive bidding process through which the award is based on, among other factors, the lowest offered true interest cost
2. Negotiated sale, subject to approval by the district to ensure that interest costs are in accordance with comparable market interest rates

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3. Private placement sale, when the financing can or must be structured for a single or limited number of purchasers or where the terms of the private placement are more beneficial to the district than either a negotiated or competitive sale

**Investment of Proceeds**

The district shall actively manage the proceeds of debt issued for public purposes in a manner that is consistent with state law governing the investment of public funds and with the permitted securities covenants of related financing documents executed by the district. Where applicable, the district's official investment policy and legal documents for a particular debt issuance shall govern specific methods of investment of bond-related proceeds. Preservation of principal shall be the primary goal of any investment strategy, followed by the availability of funds and then by return on investment.

*(cf. 3430 - Investing)*

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 15146, the proceeds of the sale of bonds, exclusive of any premium received, must be deposited in the county treasury to the credit of the building fund of the district. As amended by AB 2738 (Ch. 472, Statutes of 2016), Education Code 15146 prohibits districts from withdrawing proceeds from the sale of bonds at any time for purposes of making investments outside the county treasury.

With regard to general obligation bonds, the district shall invest new money bond proceeds in the county treasury pool as required by law. (Education Code 15146)

The management of public funds shall enable the district to respond to changes in markets or changes in payment or construction schedules so as to ensure liquidity and minimize risk.

**Refunding/Restructuring**

Note: The following section may be revised to reflect district practice. The GFOA's Analyzing and Issuing Refunding Bonds states that a test often used to assess the appropriateness of a refunding is the achievement of a minimum net present value savings. According to the GFOA, a common threshold is that the savings, as a percentage of the refunding bonds, should be at least 3-5 percent. However, the GFOA recognizes that it may be appropriate to approve refunding that results in lower anticipated savings in some circumstances, such as when interest rates are at low levels or the time remaining to maturity is limited and thus future opportunities to achieve greater savings are not likely to occur.

The district may consider refunding or restructuring outstanding debt if it will be financially advantageous or beneficial for debt repayment and/or structuring flexibility. When doing so, the district shall consider the maximization of the district's expected net savings over the life of the debt issuance and, when using a general obligation bond to refund an existing bond, shall ensure that the final maturity of the refunding bond is no longer than the final maturity of the existing bond.

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Note: Government Code 8855, as amended by SB 1029 (Ch. 307, Statutes of 2016), **mandates** that the district's debt management policy include the internal control procedures that the district has implemented or will implement to ensure that the proceeds of the proposed debt issuance will be directed to the intended use. Examples of internal control standards for the management of bond funds are contained in the U.S. Government Accountability Office's Internal Control System Checklist. These include factors related to the internal control environment, risk assessment, control activities, information and communications, and monitoring. Because internal controls and accountability measures may be lengthy, districts may choose to develop an administrative regulation, exhibit, or other document that provides further details and that may be updated as needed. Also see BP 3400 - Management of District Assets/Accounts. The following section should be revised to reflect district practice.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish internal control procedures to ensure that the proceeds of any debt issuance are directed to the intended use. Such procedures shall assist the district in maintaining the effectiveness and efficiency of operations, properly expending funds, reliably reporting debt incurred by the district and the use of the proceeds, complying with all laws and regulations, preventing fraud, and avoiding conflict of interest.

*(cf. 3314 - Payments for Goods and Services)*

*(cf. 3400 - Management of District Assets/Accounts)*

The district shall be vigilant in using bond proceeds in accordance with the stated purposes at the time such debt was incurred as defined in the text of the voter-approved bond measure. (Government Code 53410)

When feasible, the district shall issue debt with a defined revenue source in order to preserve the use of the general fund for general operating purposes.

The district shall annually conduct a due diligence review to ensure its compliance with all ongoing obligations applicable to issuers of debt. Such a review may be conducted by general legal counsel or bond counsel. Any district personnel involved in conducting such reviews shall receive periodic training regarding their responsibilities.

In addition, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the district completes, as applicable, all performance and financial audits that may be required for any debt issued by the district, including disclosure requirements applicable to a particular transaction.

**Records/Reports**

Note: Government Code 8855 requires that the district report any proposed issuance of debt to the CDIAC at least 30 days prior to the sale of the debt issue. Typically, bond counsel will file the report on behalf of the district.

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As amended by SB 1029 (Ch. 307, Statutes of 2016), Government Code 8855 requires that the report include a certification that the district has adopted a debt policy and that the issuance is consistent with that policy.

At least 30 days prior to the sale of any debt issue, the Superintendent or designee shall submit a report of the proposed issuance to the California Debt and Investment Advisory Commission (CDIAC). Such report shall include a self-certification that the district has adopted a policy concerning the use of debt that complies with law and that the contemplated debt issuance is consistent with that policy. (Government Code 8855)

Note: SB 1029 (Ch. 307, Statutes of 2016) amended Government Code 8855 to add the following requirement for an annual report of debt issuance, applicable to any final sale of debt on or after January 21, 2017. The report covers the period from July 1 to June 30, and must be submitted electronically on a form provided by CDIAC within seven months of the end of the reporting period (January 31).

On or before January 31 of each year, the Superintendent or designee shall submit a report to the CDIAC regarding the debt authorized, the debt outstanding, and the use of proceeds of the issued debt for the period from July 1 to June 30. (Government Code 8855)

Note: Pursuant to 17 CFR 240.15c2-12, most financings are required to have official disclosure statements which include the terms of the bond, security, risk factors, financial and operating information concerning the issuer, and background information. In addition, districts must provide ongoing disclosure in the form of annual reports and event notices pursuant to 17 CFR 240.15c2-12. Such disclosures must be made to the MSRB through its Electronic Municipal Market Access repository or any successor repository, as well as to investors and other persons or entities entitled to disclosure. For further information, see CDIAC's [California Debt Issuance Primer](#) and the GFOA's [Understanding Your Continuing Disclosure Requirements](#).

The Superintendent or designee shall provide initial and any annual or ongoing disclosures required by 17 CFR 240.10b-5 and 240.15c2-12 to the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board, investors, and other persons or entities entitled to disclosure, and shall ensure that the district's disclosure filings are updated as needed.

Note: 26 CFR 1.6001-1 requires districts to retain records for as long as the contents thereof are material in the administration of any internal revenue law. Records related to debt issuance may affect tax liability in both past and future tax years. In order to be consistent with specific record retention requirements, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) publication [Tax Exempt Bond FAQs Regarding Record Retention Requirements](#), available on the IRS web site, recommends that material records should be kept for as long as the debt is outstanding, plus three years after the final payment of the debt. Although the IRS recommendation is specific to tax-exempt bonds, districts should also retain records related to other forms debt issuance for the same length of time.

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain transaction records of decisions made in connection with each debt issuance, including the selection of members of the financing team, the structuring of the financing, selection of credit enhancement products and providers, and selection of investment products. Each transaction file shall include the official transcript for the financing, interest rates and cost of issuance on the day when the debt was sold ("final number runs"), and a post-pricing summary of the debt issue. In addition, documentation

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evidencing the expenditure of proceeds, the use of debt-financed property by public and private entities, all sources of payment or security for the debt, and investment of proceeds shall be kept for as long as the debt is outstanding, plus the period ending three years after the financial payment date of the debt or the final payment date of any obligations or series of bonds issued to refund directly or indirectly all of any portion of the debt, whichever is later.

The Superintendent or designee shall annually report to the Board regarding debts issued by the district, including information on actual and projected tax rates, an analysis of bonding capacity, ratings on the district's bonds, market update and refunding opportunities, new development for California bond financings, and the district's compliance with post-issuance requirements.

**Legal Reference:**

**EDUCATION CODE**

5300-5441 Conduct of elections  
 15100-15262 Bonds for school districts and community college districts  
 15264-15276 Strict accountability in local school construction bonds  
 15278-15288 Citizen's oversight committees  
 15300-15425 School Facilities Improvement Districts  
 17150 Public disclosure of non-voter-approved debt  
 17400-17429 Leasing of district property  
 17450-17453.1 Leasing of equipment  
 17456 Sale or lease of district property  
 17596 Duration of contracts  
 42130-42134 Financial reports and certifications

**ELECTIONS CODE**

1000 Established election dates

**GOVERNMENT CODE**

8855 California Debt and Investment Advisory Commission  
 53311-53368.3 Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act 53410-  
 53411 Bond reporting  
 53506-53509.5 General obligation bonds 53550-  
 53569 Refunding bonds of local agencies 53580-  
 53595.55 Bonds  
 53850-53858 Tax and revenue anticipation notes  
 53859-53859.08 Grant anticipation notes

**CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION**

Article 13A, Section 1 Tax limitation

Article 16, Section 18 Debt limit

**UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 15**

780-4 Registration of municipal securities dealers UNITED

**STATES CODE, TITLE 26**

54E Qualified Zone Academy Bonds

**CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 17**

240.10b-5 Prohibition against fraud or deceit

240.15c2-12 Municipal securities disclosure CODE

**OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 26**

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**Legal Reference: (continued)**

- 1.103 Interest on state and local bonds
- 1.141 Private activity bonds
- 1.148 Arbitrage and rebate
- 1.149 Hedge bonds
- 1.6001-1 Records

Management Resources:

CALIFORNIA DEBT AND INVESTMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION PUBLICATIONS

California Debt Issuance Primer

GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS

An Elected Official's Guide to Debt Issuance, 2nd Ed., 2016

Understanding Your Continuing Disclosure Responsibilities, Best Practice, September 2015

Investment of Bond Proceeds, Best Practice, September 2014

Selecting and Managing Municipal Advisors, Best Practice, February 2014 Debt

Management Policy, Best Practice, October 2012

Analyzing and Issuing Refunding Bonds, Best Practice, February 2011

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE PUBLICATIONS

Tax Exempt Bond FAQs Regarding Record Retention Requirements

Tax-Exempt Governmental Bonds, Publication 4079, rev. 2016

U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE PUBLICATIONS

Internal Control System Checklist WEB

SITES

California Debt and Investment Advisory Commission: <http://www.treasurer.ca.gov/cdiac> Government

Finance Officers Association: <http://www.gfoa.org>

Internal Revenue Service: <https://www.irs.gov>

Municipal Security Rulemaking Board, Electronic Municipal Market Access (EMMA):

<http://www.emma.msrb.org>

U.S. Government Accountability Office: <http://www.gao.gov>

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission: <https://www.sec.gov>

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