



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Mission Accomplished! ***A Record-Setting Year for California Lottery and the Public Schools It Serves***

SACRAMENTO – As the California Lottery gets ready for a new year and another 12 months of making dreams come true, 2023 is ending as arguably one of the most thrilling and extraordinary years since Lottery games first went on sale in our state in 1985.

Unquestionably, 2023 has been the most lucrative year to date for not only California Lottery players, but also in terms of the money raised for public education. Generating additional, supplemental funding for public education is California Lottery's sole mission and the reason voters created the Lottery nearly 40 years ago. The achievements this past year are wide-ranging; the following is a roundup of some of the most memorable.

California Lottery's Mission

The Lottery celebrated its 38th anniversary in grand style by raising a record of [more than \\$2 billion for public schools](#). This also marked the 23rd consecutive year the California Lottery has raised more than \$1 billion in supplemental funding for [public education](#), kindergarten through college and the university level.

Monster Jackpots Make History

It wasn't just the record TWO billion-dollar-plus *Powerball*® jackpot tickets sold in Los Angeles and Kern County that once again had global attention on California. As if the [\\$1.08 billion jackpot](#) on July 19th and [\\$1.765 billion jackpot](#) on October 11th weren't jaw-dropping enough, they were back-to-back. It marked the first time in the game's history that consecutive [Powerball jackpot cycles](#) produced billion-dollar grand prizes, and remarkably, both winners bought their tickets in California.

Speaking of record-breaking wins, a lot of love was shown for California public schools this past Valentine's Day. That's when during a [news conference](#), the [California Lottery announced](#) the name of the player who won the world-record \$2.04 billion *Powerball* jackpot just three months earlier. That historic jackpot sequence raised a record \$156.3 million public education in California – the most ever earned from a single jackpot roll.

Exactly three weeks earlier on January 24th, the Lottery announced that another player had won an [enormous \\$247 million](#) after hitting the *Mega Millions*® jackpot on a ticket he bought in San Jose.

Later in the year, on October 25th, the Lottery revealed the name of the player who won the [\\$82 million Super Lotto Plus®](#) jackpot. That prize pot had been growing for nine months and was the largest for that California-only game in 15 years.

It's Not Just About Jackpots!

The Lottery's prize payments department was exceptionally busy in 2023, paying out 197,753 prize claims compared to 134,764 last year. An overwhelming majority of million-dollar paydays this year were yet again claimed by Scratchers® players – some with remarkable stories about how they won:

- It's difficult to forget the heart-warming story of a [once homeless player](#) who won \$5 million.
- Or how about the player who asked the store clerk to pick which game he should buy and then [walked outside an instant millionaire?](#)
- Then there was the winner who stopped to buy food at a taco truck and drove home with dinner and a delicious [\\$1 million prize](#).
- And let's not forget the superstitious player with the [itchy palms](#) who scratched her way to an instant \$1 million win.
- And finally, there was the player who told the story of how his [quirky way](#) of playing California Lottery Scratchers finally paid off for him – literally – in the form of a \$5 million prize!

The California Lottery created a **record 175 instant millionaires** in 2023 – a figure that could get even higher once the final total is added up next month. Whatever the number turns out to be, it smashes the previous record high of 153 millionaires made in a single year.

Of the many Scratchers games the Lottery released in 2023, *Mystery Crossword* was the most popular game based on sales and player feedback. It's not a bit puzzling at all, considering *Mystery Crossword* was also the most popular Scratchers game last year.

Distinctive Awards

The California Lottery's commitment to energy-savings gave public schools a different kind of green. This year the Lottery announced it had received yet [another award for its sustainability efforts](#). The energy-saving features of its buildings help reduce operating costs which, in turn, allows those savings to be passed on to public schools.

California Lottery TV commercials, radio spots, and digital ads all [won international acclaim](#) for excellence in 2023. Advertising helps elevate the California Lottery brand and further propels the Lottery's mission of generating extra money for schools – a grand total now of more than \$43.8 billion since 1985 and counting.

Going Out Like a Lion

This year's wrap-up concludes on yet another high note. Considering *Powerball's* incredible showing this year, it should surprise no one that the last jackpot of 2023 is steaming yet again toward the billion-dollar mark with a top prize currently projected at [\\$760 million](#) for this Saturday night's draw. This final sequence of the year has already earned more than \$55 million for California public education.

Looking ahead to 2024, the Lottery intends to build on its record achievements and continue fulfilling its sole mission – maximizing contributions for public schools – for years to come.

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The California Lottery's mission is to provide supplemental funding to California public schools, including kindergarten and grades 1-12, community colleges, the California State University, the University of California, and other California public educational entities. The funds the Lottery transferred to public education totaled more than \$2.07 billion for fiscal year 2021-22, which amounted to a modest percentage of education's overall budget. However, this funding is largely discretionary, meaning schools can use this for important, yet unfunded instructional programs they would otherwise not afford. During the same period, the Lottery generated more than \$8.85 billion in sales, more than 95% of which went back to the community in the form of prize payments, retailer commissions and bonuses, and contributions to education. As jackpots rise, the California Lottery would like to remind players that gambling should be fun. Borrowing money to play, spending above a person's budget or using money intended for other purposes can ultimately lead to significant problems for players and their families. If a player recognizes that they have a gambling problem or if someone knows of someone who may have a problem, the Lottery recommends calling the California Problem Gambling Help Line at 1-800-GAMBLER.

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