

July 7, 2023

Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond, President
California State Board of Education
1430 N Street, Suite 5111
Sacramento, CA 95814
Via email only (sbe@cde.ca.gov)

Comments Regarding: June 19, 2023 State Board of Education Memos

Dear President Darling-Hammond and State Board Members,

On behalf of Californians Together, we are writing to share our feedback on four of the memos that were released by the State Board of Education on June 19, 2023. We hope that this feedback continues to be considered by the State Board of Education and staff and informs the preparation of related items when they come before the SBE at a future meeting.

[California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress and English Language Proficiency Assessments for California Student Score Reports Redesign and Development](#)

It was great to see important improvements on the updated score report. The new format and wording appears to be more accessible for families.

[Review of Methodology for Establishing Cut Points for Status and Change on the California School Dashboard and Establishing a Performance Level Color Scheme for the Five-by-Five Grid](#)

The analysis in this memo focused on Graduation Rate and Chronic Absenteeism Rate is helpful. However, it would be informative for future memos to include the distribution and percentile charts for the Academic Indicators and ELPI. This would provide a more holistic picture of the percentage of LEA's being identified. We suggest for staff to also separately report the distribution of school districts, charters schools, and COEs. The percentage of school districts identified seems to be considerably lower than what is reported with the aggregate of all LEAs together. We also elevate the following areas:

- **Setting High Expectations.** In an equity-focused system, we should start with high expectations and build the system towards meeting those expectations. Unfortunately, the distribution charts for very low do not take into account what we should expect for our students and the vast majority of districts. As another example of low expectations, California used the US Department of Education's minimum 65 percent expectation for graduation rates as the threshold for "very high" as opposed to seeing it as the minimum.
- **Additional Discussion on the ELPI.** At the March SBE meeting the board specifically requested a discussion and memo on ELPI cut scores. We request that this memo and discussion happen as an informational item at a future board meeting before it is

brought back as an action item. While Item 2 on the July 12 SBE agenda will discuss cut scores, we do not consider this addressing the specific request made by the Board.

We also request for the draft of the five by five matrix for ELPI be released at least one month prior to the September board meeting and with the opportunity for the field to review and provide feedback to staff. Seeing it one week prior to SBE meeting adoption is not enough time to seriously understand and enter into a constructive conversation about the recommending structure and targets.

Update on the California Golden State Pathways Program

We recommend that within the awarding of Golden State Pathway award grants, there be a priority and incentive for districts to establish teacher pathways with an emphasis on teachers of color and bilingual teachers. This would motivate students who are working to attain the State Seal of Biliteracy to enter the profession, and build the bilingual teacher pipeline.

Release of Resources to Assist Local Educational Agencies in the Development of the Local Control and Accountability Plan

The resources shared in these memo can support the field with some additional improvements that we flag below. We also want to emphasize that these resources should be updated after the current legislative session concludes to reflect any new legislative language requirements for the LCAPs. We request an opportunity to provide feedback on those changes. Below is additional feedback for some of the specific resources.

- Attachment 2: This is a good resource and we appreciate the EL example. However, we request that the following bullet point be included in page seven: “Provides differentiated growth targets for student groups to close gaps.”
- Attachment 4: We recommend the following additions:
 - Under “Focus Goal”, add “Does the description demonstrate an intention to close gaps for student groups by differentiated growth targets?”.
 - Under “Measuring and Reporting” add “Does each metric measure progress toward closing gaps?”.
 - Under “Actions”, add “Does each action specify a specific set of schools or student group(s) aligned to each goal?”

We look forward to collaborating with the Board and Department in addressing the issues raised in this letter. We stand ready to assist in working with your staff regarding our recommendations and addressing our significant concerns.

Sincerely,



Martha Hernandez
Executive Director