

July 7, 2023

Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond, President
State Board of Education
1430 N Street, Suite 5111
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: ACSA and California County Superintendents Comments Regarding July 12-13,
2023 Agenda Items 2, 11 & 12.**

Dear President Dr. Darling-Hammond and Members of the State Board of Education:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on behalf of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) and the California County Superintendents and our more than 17,000 California education leaders, 1,000 local educational agencies, and 6 million students served in regard to the upcoming State Board of Education (Board) meeting agenda.

Item 3: Update on the Implementation of the Integrated Local, State, and Federal Accountability and Continuous Improvement System: Addendum to the Continuing Work and Revisions Under Consideration for the 2023 Dashboard Related to the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator.

ACSA and the California County Superintendents appreciate the statewide discussions and continued attention to chronic absenteeism, and acknowledge the diligent work done by the California Department of Education (CDE) and Board staff to develop alternative policy considerations.

Chronic absenteeism has emerged as a pressing issue within California schools, particularly in the aftermath of the pandemic. In order to mitigate the negative impacts it can have on students' academic performance and overall well-being, this challenge needs to be addressed. Any policy change, however, should be approached with a balanced perspective and consideration of the potential trade-offs and unintended consequences that might arise. Additionally, ACSA and the California County Superintendents respectfully request the State to continue statewide campaigns that showcase attendance as the key to wellness and educational achievement, and provide local educational agencies (LEAs) with effective strategies and resources to combat chronic absenteeism.

In conclusion, we request that no long-term changes to the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator be made without first vetting the proposal through the CDE Technical Design Group and other educational partners. It is important to include the input of practitioners, including school leaders, who are closest to the work and provide invaluable insight to inform major policy decisions. This process ensures there are no unintended consequences from changes to our accountability system and the policies that impact them.

Item 11: Adoption of the 2023 Mathematics Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve.

ACSA and the California County Superintendents appreciate the work of the Board, Instructional Quality Commission, and Board and CDE staff for reviewing and addressing the concerns raised by parents, educators, and education partners on the 2023 *Mathematics Framework*. The edits represent a step forward in shaping mathematics education. It is crucial, however, to recognize that successful implementation of the *Mathematics Framework* is dependent upon the support and resources provided to teachers and school site leaders at the district level. Professional development opportunities, ongoing training, and access to quality resources are essential components for educators to effectively differentiate instruction and ensure that every student is given the opportunity to thrive. It is important to acknowledge that districts may vary in their capacity to provide these resources, emphasizing the need for statewide support.

Additionally, ACSA and the California County Superintendents appreciate that the *Mathematics Framework* retains local discretion and control, allowing districts to meet their students' unique needs. It would be important to retain standards-aligned textbook options that support the new framework and current frameworks LEAs may choose to retain. The State must also consider its role in providing guidance related to intervention and enrichment strategies to support students and in allocating resources to LEAs. By fostering a collaborative supportive environment, we can maximize the potential of the *Mathematics Framework* and ensure the success of all students.

Item 12: California's Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Stronger Connections Grant Program Proposal: Approval of Criteria to Define High-needs.

A positive school climate is essential for student success. ACSA and the California County Superintendents appreciate the State's attention to gun violence challenges based on recent events. The allocation of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Stronger Connections Grant (BSCA-SCG) demonstrates a commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of communities across the state. We appreciate CDE's proposed criteria for a "high-needs LEA" and request to be included in discussions to further design the scoring of the Request for Applications (RFA) to ensure rural LEAs have equitable access to these funds. Also notable is the hasty timeline for the RFA process, which will prevent many LEAs from applying for these funds. Thus, we request the RFA deadline be extended to early September 2023.

Thank you again for the chance to comment on items pending before the Board, and to join you in the constant efforts to improve outcomes for California students. ACSA and the California County Superintendents remain committed to partnering in this endeavor as we continue to inform practitioners and other education partners of your work. Should you have any questions regarding our positions, please contact Diana Vu, ACSA, at dvu@acsa.org or Lindsay Tornatore, California County Superintendents, at ltornatore@cacountysupts.org.

Sincerely,



Diana Vu
Legislative Advocate
Association of California School Administrators



Lindsay Tornatore, Ed.D.
Director, Systems
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cc: The Honorable Tony Thurmond, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, CDE
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