



March 3, 2017

President Michael Kirst and Board Members  
California State Board of Education  
1430 N Street, Room #5111  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Agenda Item #4: Update on the development of the ESSA state plan

Dear President Kirst and Board Members

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires state plans to address SEC. 1111(g)(1)(B) of ESSA. That provision requires that each state plan describe how low-income and minority children “are not served at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers, and the measures the State educational agency will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the State educational agency with respect to such description...”

We believe every plan previously submitted by the Superintendent to ensure equitable access to excellent educators has been insufficient to meet the ESSA requirements or to ensure equitable distribution of qualified, experienced and effective educators to low-income and minority children. Particularly given the likely actions of Congress to limit interpretation to the plain English of the statute itself, we call into question the legality of California’s deficient proposals currently under consideration. Specifically, to date, there has been no indication in discussions of the Educator Equity Plan of how the state will monitor effectiveness, disproportionality or leverage the unique capacity or responsibility of the state as the SEA to influence the teacher supply by means of state policies and programs. Nor has the state even defined the terms in “out-of-field,” “inexperienced,” or “ineffective.”

Since the last plan was submitted the shortage of fully trained and experienced teachers in California, particularly in science, math and special education, has increased alarmingly. The acute shortage, seriously deflated numbers of graduates of credential programs, and the unsustainable turnover of over a third of the teaching corps every five years, particularly with baby boomer retirements around the corner, call out for bold state action to address today’s shortage and the supply curve in the teacher labor market.

We urge the Board to recognize that previous iterations of the Superintendent’s plan are inadequate and direct the Department to immediately engage stakeholders between now and May in a robust conversation to re-shape California’s Educator Equity Plan to at a minimum meet legal muster, and hopefully better by demonstrating explicitly state effort to ensure every minority and low income student has a great teacher.

If you any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me directly.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Lucia".

Bill Lucia  
President, EdVoice

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cc: Karen Stapf Walters, Executive Director, California State Board of Education  
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