



OPPOSED: Serving Adult Students in Charter School Programs

Dear Senators Skinner, Laird and Assembly Members Ting and McCarty:

On behalf of the undersigned county offices of education and statewide education organizations represented on this letter, we write to express strong opposition to the proposed trailer bill language that would arbitrarily freeze the enrollment for a small number of specialized schools that focus on meeting the needs of the state's most vulnerable populations.

These WASC-accredited dropout recovery schools operated by county offices of education were established to meet the academic needs of, and provide support for, at-risk students, including high school dropouts, homeless pupils, immigrants, and students with disabilities, among others. Students are offered opportunities for credit recovery, career-technical education, work experience and internships, pre-apprenticeships, and in some schools the opportunity to visit colleges and trade schools to learn about financial aid and the college matriculation processes.

The impact of these schools and programs is multigenerational. For example, in Alameda County's Opportunity Academy, many students have experienced homelessness, have been on probation or are returning from incarceration, or have struggled to find ways to complete high school while parenting and working. In San Joaquin County's Come Back Kids (CBK) program, many students seeking a high school diploma as a way out of generational poverty are family members of children in the county office of education's alternative education programs. In the Riverside County CBK program, a large segment of CBK learners are parents of our students. In many of these cases, neither the older nor younger student had a parent graduate from high school. These families are establishing a learning culture as a lifelong goal that transcends generations.

The opportunities a high school diploma offers community members who are already in the workforce allow for upward mobility in jobs that wouldn't otherwise be afforded to them. The flexible schedules offered by these schools allow students in the workforce to maintain their current positions, and meet with teachers at a time that works for their schedule. A high percentage of the older learners in these dropout recovery programs are socio-economically disadvantaged or come from families in that status. The programs offer hope to many students and families that allows them to break the cycle of poverty, change the trajectory of their lives, and have a lasting impact in their communities.

We believe these schools are vital tools in the state's arsenal of strategies to combat multi-generational poverty and do not believe the Governor's proposal is intentionally targeting these

types of programs. Therefore, we request you oppose this proposal. We stand committed to continue working with your staff, the Legislative Analyst's Office and the Newsom Administration to ensure that any changes in this area do not negatively impact the students, families and communities that are at the heart of the mission of the programs described in this letter.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

On behalf of:

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