

K-12 Advocacy Issues Background

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Issues

Give School Districts Charter - Like Flexibility and Autonomy to Compensate for Fiscal Crisis

Temporarily provide more categorical flexibility and waive various educational code restrictions so that California school districts can manage imminent layoffs and survive current budget constraints. Waiving restrictions for layoffs that trigger bumping rights for existing teachers, administrators and staff will be particularly important to minimizing district actions on students and learning.

Build Multiple Pathways to improve Completion Rates for Secondary and Post Secondary Education

By combining an engaging college-preparatory curriculum with career and technical education, and expanding work-based learning programs, Multiple Pathways will lead to real-world success for our youth, and to a world-class labor force for our state.. Additionally, quality partnerships between school districts and community college districts that provide high school students opportunities will result in increased college participation rates and expedite college completion rates.

Promote Increased Accountability for Student Performance and Learning Outcomes

Investment in a comprehensive education data system, as proposed by the McKinsey's *Framework for a Comprehensive Education Data System in California*, will help manage cost effective outcomes from our publicly funded education system. By creating a Statewide Education Data Governing Board we can develop a high quality system that will be invaluable as we work to make smart and cost-effective choices that will actually change student outcomes and inform program decisions.

Develop Long Term Strategy for Funding Early and K-16 Education

Quality Early and Pre-K education provides significant returns on investment and is a much needed strategy to ensuring an educated workforce. As our state struggles with significant fiscal challenges, it must be recognized that establishing a comprehensive strategy to fund early and P-16 education should be a cornerstone.

Give School Districts Charter - Like Flexibility and Autonomy to Compensate for Fiscal Crisis

-BACKGROUND-

The Governor's May Revision proposes additional cuts of \$4.5 billion or almost \$800 per child. That means that every classroom will have to make additional reductions of almost \$20,000 per classroom. This is in addition to the \$11.6 billion of reductions that the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has had to make since the passage of the September Budget. Even though, they have done everything possible to protect the classroom, these cuts have forced layoffs of valuable employees and increases in class size. Thus, our children's education will unfortunately suffer.

The Chamber supports several principles for any additional reductions and recommendations that would enable LAUSD to better serve the students by minimizing the negative impact of any additional reductions. The following are the overall principles for any additional reductions:

Local Control – As difficult as it may be, we want to be able to determine how those reductions should be made at the local level.

Flexibility – School districts need as much flexibility as possible in implementing the reductions in order to minimize the negative impacts on the students.

Integrity of Proposition 98 – It is essential that the committee follow the legislative and constitutional requirements of Proposition 98.

The following are specific no-cost recommendations that would greatly allow us to better meet the needs of our students:

Increased Flexibility: Currently, there are 41 categorical programs where school districts have the flexibility to decide the best allocation for those funds. There are 18 categorical programs that have no flexibility. Given the severe nature of the additional reductions, we would recommend that school districts be allowed to have increase flexibility over all existing categorical programs.

Eliminate Unfunded Mandates: During these difficult times schools districts should not be required to implement unfunded mandates.

Remove Class-Size Penalties: This recommendation would reduce or eliminate the class-size penalties during these difficult times.

Build Multiple Pathways to improve Completion Rates for Secondary and Post - Secondary Education

-BACKGROUND-

Tradition, comprehensive high schools are not working for the majority of students. Approx. 33% of new California 9th graders drop out before graduating. In some areas, like Los Angeles, the number of drop outs is up to 54%. Another 33% of California students finish school but lack the skills necessary to succeed in college or career. If these students continue their education after high school, they will need additional remediation in mathematics, reading, and writing—skills they should have acquired in high school. If these students seek employment, they will be limited to low-skill, low-pay jobs with limited career growth. This hurts our economy and our business climate.

Multiple Pathways offer students a choice among several different multi-year programs of study. Students are engaged through hands-on, group projects that develop vital interpersonal and work-based skills on which to build a successful career and prepare for additional post-high school education, including 2- and 4-year college or university, apprenticeships, and formal employment training. Multiple Pathway programs ensure students are not tracked into separate college bound, non-college bound, or career specific pathways.

Last year the L.A. Area Chamber co-wrote and sponsored AB 2648 (Speaker Bass) requesting that the California Department of Education, in conjunction with California Community Colleges, California State University, University of California, Office of the Secretary of Education, Employment Development Division, Assembly, Senate and other stakeholders develop a report on ways to increase student access to Multiple Pathway programs.

SUPPORT BILLS THAT DEVELOP MULTIPLE PATHWAYS OPPORTUNITIES:

AB 1223 Teacher Professional Development (Block)– similar to Chamber-Sponsored Bill SB 1677 (2008) the bill would implement recommendations from the Legislative Analyst Office to provide teachers and administrators the preparation and professional development needed to implement Multiple Pathway programs, to integrate career technical education and academic content. [Chamber Sponsored- Currently in Assembly Education Committee]

AB 332 Work-based Learning (Fuentes) - Expands quality work-based learning programs for students by encouraging school districts and employers to create work experience programs that reinforce academic learning. [Chamber Sponsored – Currently in Senate Education Committee]

SB 747 Pilot Pre-Apprentice Aerospace Machining Program (Romero) – Creates the pre-apprentice aerospace machining program, implemented by the California Community Colleges system, to provide career technical education to high school pupils in the form of machining and related curriculum that can be applied to various manufacturing industries in California, including, but not limited to, aerospace manufacturing.

The bill encourages the concept of concurrent enrollment in high school and community college giving students early exposure to post-secondary education while giving them the skills to succeed in the real world. Furthermore, the Chamber supports the Senator's efforts to ensure that courses for the program also qualify as A-G should a student decide they also want to pursue a college degree. SB 747 provides opportunities for at-risk youth who have decided that they prefer a successful career in high tech manufacturing over a traditional college education. Thus, SB 747 is aligned with the concept of Multiple Pathways and the Chamber's goals to create a competitive workforce for the 21st Century.

AB 8 Education Finance (Brownley) – Requires the Director of Finance and the Legislative Analyst to convene a working group to make findings and recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor on or before December 1, 2010, regarding restructuring California's school finance system. The bill would require those findings and recommendations to include, among other things, alternative structures for funding public schools, the policy and fiscal implications of the alternative funding structure or structures, and an evaluation mechanism to facilitate continuous improvement, maximum transparency, and accountability of the funding structures.

AB 60 Weighted Formula (Coto) – Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction, no later than March 1, 2010, to select a nonprofit entity or institution of higher education to complete a study related to weighted pupil funding formulas. The bill requires the study to be submitted to the Superintendent for distribution to the Legislature no later than December 31, 2010.

OPPOSE BILLS THAT LIMIT PATHWAYS FOR STUDENTS:

SB 381(Wright)-would prohibit school districts from adopting A-G graduation requirements unless the district also provides an equal amount of career technical education coursework. While the intent of SB 381 may be to increase career choices, the reality is that the bill would limit opportunities and create a tracking and sorting mechanism. California policy should not promote dual graduation requirements that separate college and career opportunities. Today's workforce requires critical thinkers that have real-world knowledge and experience, both academically and technical.

The 21st century workforce increasingly values a post-secondary education and SB 381 would hinder that achievement. The Public Policy Institute of California released a report finding that California's workforce will face a shortage of 1 million college graduates by 2025. California policy should be promoting a multiple pathway approach to high school reform that blends real-world experience with college preparatory skills in order to prepare our workforce for a 21st century global economy-- California needs to move beyond tracking.

Promote Increased Accountability for Student Performance and Learning Outcomes

-BACKGROUND-

McKinsey's *Framework for a Comprehensive Education Data System in California* (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/pc/documents/yr08mckinsey1218.pdf>) reports that data is

important so that all education stakeholders would have the information they need for regularly improving the education system:

- Students and parents have easy access to accurate information about local schools that they use to make decisions about enrollment and course selections, among many other important decisions;
- Classroom teachers are able to share their best ideas with colleagues throughout the state, unimpeded by geography;
- State policymakers can reliably tell which programs are making the biggest difference for students, and use that information to inform funding decisions;
- Researchers use data, in a way that preserves privacy, to rigorously answer critical questions about what works without unnecessary administrative barriers and delays;
- Taxpayers have visibility into the education system's finances, operations, and successes.

The report provides the following recommendations:

- California should continue building the longitudinal student and teacher data systems that are currently underway
- Starting immediately, California should enhance the quality, accessibility, completeness and basic use of its current K-12 data systems
- Next, California should expand the use of that information and data by building more advanced systems
- Lastly, California should create interagency linkages to better inform decisions using data beyond K-12.

SUPPORT SB 19 Education Data System (Simitian) – Authorizes the state's Chief Information Officer use federal grant funds received pursuant the American Recovery Act of 2009 to convene a working group representing specified entities to create a strategic plan to link education data systems and to accomplish specified objectives relating to the accessibility of education data

Develop Long Term Strategy for Funding Early and K-16 Education

-BACKGROUND-

Immediate budget cuts are necessary and appropriate to help address the fiscal crisis. However, the state should refrain from complete elimination of education programs, which are critical to mitigating and ensuring the state's long-term investment in educating

a 21st century workforce. Many of the proposals include severe cuts to programs that support the children and families in greatest need, which will be a tremendous loss to the well being of our children and future workforce. At least in the short term, we can expect that California will continue to lack the funding to serve all preschool-age children who are eligible for subsidized ECE. To gain the most benefit from the resources that are expended, there is an opportunity to restructure the way in which children are allocated to the available spaces in order to achieve greater benefits.