

March 6, 2018

Mr. Nelson Enos
Democratic Party of El Dorado
Education Policy Committee

Dear Mr. Enos,

On behalf of the Board, thank you for taking time to attend and address the Board through public input at our January and February 2018 regularly scheduled meetings. This letter is written to you regarding your request for suggestions from the Board to be included in your policy position. As you expressed in your written communication to the Board, our comments would be reviewed by your general committee, incorporated in your political position and forwarded to your regional organization.

Below are several areas that we believe are important to continuing and increasing high student achievement, development, and positive outcomes for our students in El Dorado County.

Full and Fair Funding

We want to ensure that all students benefit from the resources needed for a high-quality education. As a member of the California School Boards Association (CSBA), we are discussing, and possibly adopting, a resolution to be forwarded to CSBA in which they will call on the Legislature to raise school funding to the national average by 2020 and to the average of the top 10 states by 2025. In the 1970s, California ranked in the top five nationally in school funding; currently, California is 41st and trails the average of the top 10 states by almost \$7,000 in per-pupil funding, depriving students of critical opportunities for academic, social and emotional development and essential preparation for a rapidly changing economy. (For more information on the sample resolution, www.csba.org)

Increase Support in the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP).

Despite boasting the sixth largest economy in the world and the highest gross domestic product of any state, California ranks at or near the bottom nationally in nearly every measure of school funding and staffing. Under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), revenue for K-12 schools has only recently returned to 2007 levels, meaning funding has not substantially increased, on an inflation-adjusted basis, for more than a decade. Among many required

responsibilities, County Offices of Education provide responsibilities in fiscal oversight (solvency) over local districts and LCAP approval of districts in the county. Additionally, El Dorado County Office of Education provides a highly desirable level of district support (professional development, program improvement, technical and fiscal support, information and communication support, and special education support and services). Funding is inadequate to address both LCAP responsibilities in addition to the needed services provided in support of our districts.

Provide Adequate and Sustainable Funding for Education Innovation and Improvement

We believe that the El Dorado County Office of Education and many other County Offices of Education in California, have the highly skilled personnel, knowledge, experience, and respect to work alongside school districts, charter schools and other county offices desiring improvement in student results.

County Offices of Education, including El Dorado County Office of Education, are being called upon to work in partnership with the California Department of Education and the Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) as established by the legislature and Governor. This collaborative work is designed to assist school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools in their achievement of locally adopted goals and objectives in their LCAP. These collaborative efforts are directed to provide support, identify and implement evidence-based practices and be part of networks that provide mutual assistance within a hub of innovation statewide. To fulfill this important endeavor, funding must be adequate to design, implement, evaluate and sustain this work.

Support Funding and Initiatives that Increase Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Teacher shortages persist in California. While El Dorado County has been able to recruit and retain highly qualified staff, competition exists for these individuals due to a statewide shortage. We support funding and initiatives that address these shortages. Highly qualified teachers and highly qualified classified staff are the backbone and essential asset that provides the best instruction and learning environment for our students. We must support efforts to ensure continued ability to recruit and retain the best and brightest. (For more information, www.csba.org, www.edsource.org, www.ccbe.org)

I hope this brief information is helpful to your organization. Once again, thank you for taking the time to speak to us.

Sincerely,

Georgianne Knight, President
El Dorado County Board of Education