Subject: Superintendent’s Monthly Report to the Board
March 21, 2013

The following matters and events have occurred since the report of February 21, 2012:

**Regional Occupational Programs WASC Review**
Our Regional Occupational Program hosted a WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) review team during the first week of March. The visitation team arrived Sunday, March 3rd for a reception with staff members, the ROP Leadership Team and School District and Site representatives. The visitation team toured programs Monday and Tuesday and reported their findings Wednesday, March 6th. Findings were positive with the improvement suggestions mirroring those outlined in the ROP self-study. They were impressed with the caliber of our programs and the personnel that we have brought together to teach our students. One WASC Visiting member was quoted as saying "The way you operate your program should be a model for the state".

**Grind Out Hunger**
Danny Keith a couple years ago. We explored strategies for working with high schools to form clubs at the high schools that would bring an awareness of the needs that exist in the community.

**Food What**
Food What, is a non-profit that uses food, through sustainable agriculture and health, as the vehicle for growing strong, healthy, and inspired teens. The organization works with our Alternative Education programs and invited me to attend their winter celebration that took place in February.

**FosterEd Initiative Launch Event**
The FosterEd Initiative, an educational support system for foster youth, held its launch event at the Watsonville Courthouse with Judge Denine Guy, and Judy Yokel, Family and Children’s Services joining me in addressing the attendees. Lisa O’Conner, Foster Youth education liaison talked about her life experiences as a foster youth and how this initiative will make a difference in the lives of today’s foster children.

**United Way Annual Campaign Celebration**
The County Office of Education earned the Silver Award for Education for their contributions to the United Way Annual Campaign. The campaign hit a new all-time high with over $1 million dollars pledged to the many agencies supported by the United Way. I would like to thank those employees that give so generously to support those less fortunate in our county.
Honoring Mike Chavez
A reunion of former staff and students along with current staff and students gathered at Watsonville Community School to honor Mike Chavez, former counselor for Alternative Education. The event was held on a Saturday and drew a crowd of around 100 to honor Mike. I read the Board approved resolution to recognize his work with the at-risk youth of Watsonville.

John Hendrickson, Interim President, Cabrillo College
I met with Interim President John Hendrickson to bring him up to date on partnerships and collaborations between our office and Cabrillo College. We will continue to work with Cabrillo on projects such as S4C, the CAP Program, and School to Career Programs among others.

English and Math Collaborative
I was honored to stop by to welcome instructors in Math and English and other personnel from local high schools and Cabrillo College who met to discuss the gap between high school proficiency upon graduation and college level expectations. They also explored the Common Core Standards for K-12 and the Student Success Act of 2012 for community colleges and how they can work together for student success.

Justice Sandra Day O’Connor
At the invitation of UCSC Chancellor George Blumenthal, I attended a reception for Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. She was in Santa Cruz to speak to promote iCIVICS, an online program to prepare young Americans to become knowledgeable, engaged 21st century citizens by creating free and innovative educational materials. She is concerned with the decline of civic knowledge in young people ages 18-25 who are eligible to vote but do not always have the understanding of the system of government to participate fully.

Downtown College Prep – San Jose, CA
Downtown College Prep in San Jose is dedicated to preparing students who will be the first in their families to attend college and graduate. I met with Mike O’Farrell, Community Foundation and Jennifer Andluz, Santa Cruz County College Commitment met with me to discuss the strategies used by Downtown College Prep and how and where they might be implemented in Santa Cruz County.

Santa Cruz Symphony
The Santa Cruz Symphony held its annual concerts for fourth graders in February. One is held at the Mello Center and the other at the Santa Cruz Civic where I attended the performance this year. The symphony plays for students, talk about the various instruments and then let the children come forward to see the instruments up close and ask questions of the musicians. The County Office of Education has been a co-sponsor of these performances for a number of years.

Together for Kindergarten Forum
The annual Together for Kindergarten Forum was once again a success with approximately 200 participants. This forum brings together preschool teachers with kindergarten teachers to provide articulation of program thereby preparing preschool children both emotionally and academically for kindergarten. Janis Keyser, teacher and parent educator and Linda Brault, WestEd’s Senior Program Associate were the keynotes, leading the participants through a series of activities for mutual sharing of resources, knowledge and expertise.
Memorial for Slain Santa Cruz City Police Detectives
Along with Bryan Wall, Deputy Superintendent, I attended the memorial service in San Jose for the two Santa Cruz City Police detectives.

Rally Against Gun Violence
I joined Trustee Jack Dilles and others in a rally at the Town Clock against gun violence and was one of the featured speakers. The event was well-attended with representatives from many walks of the community.

California Law Regarding Storage of Firearms
I met with Trustee Nichols and Shari LaRoche to discuss the Brady Campaign’s program to ensure safety at schools by reminding parents that by law they are required to safely store firearms in the home in a locked container or in a location that a reasonable person would believe to be secure; that a firearm is locked with a locking device that renders the firearm inoperable; or the person has no reasonable expectation based on objective facts and circumstances, that a child was like to be present on the premises. Most times when a student brings a gun to school, they have brought it from their own home. This memorandum was provided to district superintendents to sign and share with their parents.

First 5
I met with Angela Cline, director for First 5 to discuss future plans for the organization and the role of the County Office of Education and its Child Development Programs in carrying out the organization’s goals and objectives. We also spoke about the ways in which we will work together to carry out the Race to the Top program to provide quality preschools. Santa Cruz County is one of only sixteen counties in California to acquire these funds.

Santa Cruz Writes
Santa Cruz Writes held a fund raiser at Chocolate Restaurant on February 26th with special guest Wallace Baine, journalist and writer. The organization has been doing wonderful work tutoring fourth and fifth graders through the use of volunteers in an afterschool setting. They are currently working on becoming a self-sustaining program.

Pacific Educational Group
The Pacific Educational Group was founded to support families in their transitions within and between K-12 and higher education. Glenn Singleton, president and CEO and I have been communicating about how we might collaborate to our mutual benefit. They provide consulting and training services to districts and schools. Mr. Singleton is the co-author of Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools.

Conflict Resolution Center & Educational Support Systems
Shauna Mora, Conflict Resolution Center met with me to discuss how to better serve the schools in addressing issues such as bullying to ensure a safe environment for students and build their self-esteem. The Conflict Resolution Center of Santa Cruz offers workshops, mediation services and conflict resolution services to many segments of our county’s population.

Special Education Art Show
The annual Special Education Art Show was held on February 28th in the Tech Center. It was well attended by staff, students and families. Three winners were selected that will hang at the end of the hall beyond Human Resources for the next year. The pictures are still up for a few more days if you would like to see them.
Read Across America
Each year since I was elected I have been invited to participate in the Read Across America Program at San Lorenzo Valley Elementary School. This year, I read the book, *Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs* by Mo Willems to a group of Kindergarten and first graders. It is a treat to do this each year with a different group of children.

Advocacy for Categoricals
When in Sacramento, I met with Senator Monning, Assembly Member Mark Stone, Assembly Member Luis Alejo and their staff to talk about the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and the possible effect on programs like the Regional Occupational Programs, our Alternative Education Programs, and technology support programs among others. I also met with Senator Carol Liu, chair, Senate Education Committee to discuss the Local Control Funding Formula and its possible effect on County Offices.

In preparation for this advocacy trip, I spoke with the following people:
- Ellen Moir and I met to strategize about the BTSA/New Teacher Project and how to continue to meet the needs of first and second year teachers in order to support them and have them remain in education;
- Rowland Baker, TICAL; John and Ruthmary Cradler, Educational Support Systems met with me to discuss the various technology support programs that are threatened by LCFF;
- Mark Hodges and Jim Howes assisted in preparing an advocacy statement on Regional Occupational Programs to include in the packets delivered to our representatives.
- Judge Denine Guy wrote eloquently outlining the reasons to maintain funding to support our Foster Youth through their educational process.

(See attached packet presented to legislators)

CCSESA Board of Directors & CCSESA Videoconference
I attended the Board of Directors meeting for the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association meeting and a videoconference with superintendents throughout Californian to discuss the Local Control Funding Formula. The formula will redistribute funding with some of the funding that will be going to districts coming from funding for programs such as Regional Occupational Programs, Alternative Educational Programs, and staff development funding among other programs run through our office.

Celebrating Arts Learning in California
CCSESA in partnership with the California State PTA hosted a luncheon and discussion with state, regional, and parent arts education leaders in Sacramento. This arts initiative supported by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation is taking a leadership role in providing support, technical assistance, and services for teachers, administrators, and parents in an effort to keep arts in the schools. As president of CCESEA, I was invited to welcome the attendees and participate in the meeting.
TipNow
Cyril Rayan of TipNow met with Bryan Wall and me to discuss the program that allows a person to send tips by text, email or voice. The tip is encrypted to ensure anonymity of the sender and routed to the proper authorities. It has been used effectively in other communities and I will be sharing it with local law enforcement and others at the next BASTA meeting in an effort to see if there is enough interest to try the program locally.

Statewide Integrated Learning Summer Institute
As president of CCSESA, I participated in a phone conference with Louise Music, Executive Director, Department of Integrated Learning, Alameda County Office of Education to discuss the possibility of having a Statewide Integrated Learning Institute this summer. The institute would be based on the Project Zero Classroom and the Region 4 Integrated Learning Summer Institute “Inventing Our Future.” I have been lead a team of assistant superintendents from county offices for a one week program at Harvard Graduate School this summer to learn more about Project Zero.

Science Fair Awards Ceremony
Fifty-five schools and 457 students comprised over 350 individual and team presentations that were presented at the 2013 Science Fair. The Awards Ceremony was held this past Tuesday at the Civic Auditorium with over 140 awards given out to students. The top forty winners of the fair will be advancing to the statewide Science Fair. The top two high school winners will be attending the International Science Fair where they will be competing against 1500 students from around the world and have the opportunity to win scholarship monies as well as other awards. For the first time ever, students from Watsonville High School participated in the county Science Fair.

Inside Education
The Inside Education meeting for March emphasized our Middle Schools. Participants began at the County Office getting an overview from Michael Watkins and Bryan Wall and then visited Branciforte Middle School and Mission Hill Middle School. They returned to the office to debrief and learn more about what is being done to curb youth and gang violence.

Ag Board Luncheon
As a member of the AgriCulture Board, I attended the annual luncheon at the fairgrounds where the Al Smith Friend of Agriculture Award and the Jimmie Cox Memorial Scholarship were presented.

Monthly Meetings
CCSESA Finance Committee
S4C Steering Committee
Board Legislative Outreach Committee
Agenda Committee
S4C Steering Committee Meeting
Migrant Headstart Videoconference

CCSESA Executive Committee
Children’s Network Executive Committee
Children’s Network
Superintendents Council
Managers Meeting
What might happen if BTSA Induction Programs Lose Their Dedicated State Funding?

- 50% of teachers in their first three years of teaching will leave the profession.
  - Nationwide, it is estimated that about 30% of beginning teachers leave the profession within the first 5 years and this proportion reaches 50% or more in some urban and rural districts (Linda Darling Hammond).
  - Studies have shown that high quality teacher induction programs lead to teachers who stay in the profession at higher rates, accelerated professional growth among new teachers and improved student learning (Torlakson, *Greatness by Design*).
  - Beginning teachers are expected to implement district programs at the same level of proficiency as veteran teachers. For example, at one school site, new teachers are expected to implement Systematic English Language Development, Response to Intervention (RTI), and Accelerated Reading, as they collaborate, are observed by DAIT and are learning about Common Core State Standards. Without the support of a BTSA mentor in implementing all these initiatives in the individual classrooms, more teachers will be overwhelmed and quit.

- **Districts will spend more on recruitment and hiring.**
  - The costs of replacing a teacher who leaves in the early part of the career range from $15,000 to 20,000 at a national cost of more than $7 billion annually, an unfortunate way to spend scarce resources that should be used to improve teachers’ effectiveness (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2009 – *The High Cost of Teacher Turnover*).
  - As a result of teachers leaving, districts will need to spend more on recruitment and hiring.
  - Due to the revolving door of beginning teachers leaving the profession expenditures on recruitment and hiring will not be a one-time cost, but could occur annually.
  - One California study found a positive return from investments in comprehensive teacher induction: $1.66 for every dollar spent after 5 years, as a result of teacher turnover savings and enhanced teacher effectiveness (Educational Research Survey, 2007 Is Mentoring Worth the Money?)

- **Student achievement will decrease, especially for sub groups.**
  - At the school level, teacher turnover results in significant loss of student achievement because of the instability it creates (Torlakson, *Greatness by Design*).
  - Without BTSA support, beginning teachers’ effectiveness will decrease resulting in a decrease in student learning and achievement.
Beginning teachers focus on the BTSA Induction standard of pedagogy and equity with their mentors (Induction Standards 5 and 6). Without strategic support addressing the learning needs of all students, achievement for students in the subgroups of English language learners, special education students, and students in poverty will decrease.

- **Common Core State Standards will not be appropriately implemented**
  - As districts gear up to transition to implementing the Common Core State Standards, sites are currently providing teachers with CCSS overview and foundational knowledge. Teachers hired after the initial site support around CCSS will miss this professional development and will be expected to implement CCSS at the same application level as their trained colleagues, but without the foundational knowledge.
  - Without the support of a BTSA mentor, beginning teachers will not have individualized support around the CCSS as it applies to the context of their own classroom and students.

- **School site administrators will be impacted**
  - School site administrators serve as both site managers and instructional leaders. Currently, most site administrators evaluate beginning teachers, but, due to the high demands of their role, do not have the time or capacity to support beginning teachers. Without the support of a BTSA mentor, site administrators will need to take on the additional task of supporting beginning teachers in effective pedagogy, CCSS, classroom management and supporting the learning needs of all students.
  - Student discipline issues will increase. Many beginning teachers need support around classroom management. Without the weekly support of a mentor, beginning teachers will struggle with behavior issues and refer students to the site administrator.

- **There will be a severe teacher shortage**
  - "Not only are there fewer teachers in the profession, fewer teachers are entering the profession as well....it is also a result of the decrease in demand as budget cuts trigger layoffs and growing discouragement among prospective teachers with the conditions of teaching work....shortages still exist in fields such as special education, mathematics, physical science and bilingual education/English language development (ELD), as well as in many high poverty schools. However, projected increases in student enrollment and teacher retirements, along with reduction in class size, will likely increase the demand for teachers in coming years. (Torkelson, Greatness by Design)
  - Without BTSA support fewer teachers will be interested in teaching in these challenging conditions.
  - Staff turnover, especially in hard to staff schools and schools in program improvement, will increase. Working conditions at hard-to-staff and program improvement schools are already challenging. Traditionally, these sites are staffed with a high percentage of beginning teachers. Without the support of a BTSA mentor beginning teachers at these
schools will leave the teaching profession at a higher rate than other schools and the already high turnover rate at these sites will get worse.

- **Inequities in the clearing of California Preliminary Credentials will become even greater**
  - Teachers with a preliminary credential must complete an induction or clear credential program to earn a clear credential.
  - Currently beginning teachers who participate in a state-approved BTSA induction program clear their preliminary credentials at no cost to them.
  - Today, districts no longer are required to operate BTSA programs. This places an added burden on beginning teachers in those districts to locate a provider (often a college or university) at their own cost. This creates an inequitable situation in which some California teachers pay for clearing and some do not.
  - Without dedicated funding for BTSA, more teachers will end up paying for their induction, increasing inequities between districts.
  - Districts who do not fund BTSA induction may find it challenging to recruit and hire new teachers.
  - Tom Torlakson’s Educator Excellence Task Force, recommends strengthening and reinvesting in BTSA, so all new teachers receive much-needed, personalized instructional support.
A cost-effective plan for providing the professional development and technical support needed to help enable teachers and school administrators to implement the Common Core Standards and related Smarter Balanced Assessment System.

Draft prepared by John Cradler

The intent of the Governor's proposed budget is to equalize funding across school districts based on student needs. To be consistent, it would also be important to equalize the access to professional development and technical support needed to implement the Common Core Standards and related Smarter Balanced Assessment System.

This could be done with a modification of the process for allocating existing funding to County Offices of Education as proposed in the Governor's budget. With the current budget proposal, County Offices receive the same amount allocated as was allocated for the past school year but can move these funds to any program desired. Eleven of the County Offices received a higher level of funding to support the eleven regional California Technology Assistance Projects (CTAP) and three Statewide Educational Technology Assistance (SETS) projects. Most of these projects provide direct support to districts to enable implementation of Common Core while others have found other uses for these funds. CTAP provides regional professional development; the California Learning Resource Network (CLRN) serves as an online information clearinghouse for online courses, open educational resources, and supplemental electronic learning resources aligned to the Common Core Standards; the Technology Information Center for Administrative Leadership (TICAL) is an information and professional development resource focused on assisting school administrators to plan and implement technology applications to support instruction; and TecSETS provides an online technology support help desk and related information.

Most state education policy makers as well as State Superintendent Tom Torlakson have made it clear that there is an urgent and critical need to provide professional development and technical assistance to school district teachers and administrators relating to the implementation of Common Core Standards and the related Smarter Balanced Assessment system. For this reason, it is proposed that the State require that the funding now available to the County Offices for CTAP and SETS be directed to providing professional development and technical assistance needed for all school districts to enable them to implement the Common Core Standards and related Smarter Balanced Assessments. Since CLRN, TICAL, and TecSETS already provide needed information resources widely used to support both implementation of Common Core as well as support for classroom and online learning, they should be continued as statewide projects for this purpose.

This could be done through new legislation or a rider to the budget bill that would establish specific guidelines for the use of County Offices funds previously earmarked for CTAP and SETS to provide regional and statewide support services related to Common Core implementation based on local needs of districts in each region. Each COE receiving these funds would provide an annual report to the CDE to document the extent to which they were able to assist districts in their implementation of Common Core. The CDE would provide the guidance to the County Offices needed to help ensure that Common Core and the Smarter Balanced Assessments are implemented as planned and according to the established schedule. To reflect this new and broader emphasis, the CTAP/SETS program could be named the California Curriculum and Technology Implementation Network.

This approach would not add additional cost to the state as it leverages and targets the use of funding already allocated to County Offices of Education to address a major state initiative. Additionally, in most cases, the County Offices would be able to use the same staff already assigned to CTAP and SETS as well as increasing regional coordination and use of technology, curriculum, and assessment staff within these offices. This would focus the County Offices on supporting implementation of Common Core. Statewide coordination of these programs could be facilitated by a coordinating committee representing the CDE, CCESSA, County Offices of Education, and school-Districts. The model being suggested is similar to what was done about 20 years ago with the implementation of the SB 1862 regional Professional Development Consortia and before that, the regional Teacher Education and Computing (TECC) Centers.
A bill to continue and focus existing Statewide Services to help enable the implementation of California education priorities and programs

Background on Statewide Programs: For the past 15 years, the CA Legislature has authorized and funded three statewide programs known as Statewide Educational Technology Services (SETs) to support California schools that have been documented to effectively provided:

1. The Technology Information Center for Administrative Leadership (TICAL) provides training and support for school administrators to include principals, superintendents, school and county office of education program managers on topics to include, Common Core and SBAC, 21st Century School leadership strategies, and are planning to help school administrators implement the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).

2. The California Learning Resource Network (CLRN) serves as an online information clearinghouse for online courses, open educational resources, supplemental electronic learning resources aligned to the Common Core Standards, and electronic assessment data analysis applications.

3. The TechSETS project provides assistance for educators responsible for planning, installing, maintain, and supporting school technology systems.

All three of these programs are closely coordinated with the California Department of Education to help enable school districts and county offices to have the information and assistance needed to implement current and emerging State education priorities. The eleven regional California Technology Assistance Projects (CTAP) help to disseminate and link the SETs resources to school districts in their respective regions. The California High Speed Network (included in the proposed budget) will be the primary network to enable access to the three SETs resources.

Supporting LCFF: To be consistent with the rationale for LCFF, it is necessary equalize the access to professional development and technical support needed to implement the Common Core Standards, the Smarter Balanced Assessments and other State education priorities.

Legislative Proposal: This bill would authorize these three state programs to continue with the following modifications:

1. Statewide coordination of these programs to be facilitated by a coordinating committee representing the CDE, CCESSA, County Offices of Education, and school Districts.

2. Each of the three statewide programs would annually report to the CDE and the State Board of Education the extent of access to, use of, and impact of all services provided.

3. Each program would annually revise their priorities as needed to align their services to current and emerging educational priorities.

4. An independent evaluation would be conducted to document equity of access and use of these resources by all school districts across the State.

(See next page for some of the arguments in support of this legislation)
Benefits of this proposed bill

- Insure Equity and Parody of Leadership Training (consistent with LCFF model)
- Supports the State Superintendent’s Technology Task Force Recommendations
- SETS functions not spelled out in current CTAP Spot Bill
- Funding included in LCFF to the COEs covers initial operational costs
- Facilitates communications between CDE, COEs, and districts regarding priorities
- Provides for partnerships with education associations - CCCessa, ACSA, CUE, etc.
- Annual reporting and the Coordinating Committee helps to engage CDE, SBE,
- Strengthens the role of County Offices of Education
- Provides the major source of educational content to be delivered over the already budged California High Speed Network.

Areas to be supported by SETS include but are not limited to:

- Common Core/SBAC
- 21st Century Schools Leadership
- Budget Planning Strategies under LCFF
- Technology planning and support
- Aligning electronic learning resources and online courses to Common Core Standards.
2013 Legislative Forum
CAROCP Legislative Priorities

If CTE does not receive some level of restricted funding adequate to support and maintain robust programs currently in existence, the potential unintended consequences of the governor’s LCFF include:

- Failure to meet maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements for federal Perkins funding resulting in a loss of up to $140 million.

- Loss of more than $30 million per year in local property taxes currently allocated for use exclusively by ROCPs.

- Loss of funding resources provided by ROCPs for the startup costs, transportation costs, teacher advisors, teacher stipends, etc. for Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) such as SkillsUSA, FBLA, and HOSA chapters in local high schools.

- A reduction in the number of CTE elective options available to students, since many current ROCP courses would be eliminated.

- Increased district class sizes and a need for larger and a greater number of classrooms, due to the loss of CTE elective courses.

- Increases in dropout rates and decreases in graduation rates, since research establishes that a mix of academic and CTE programs support student retention and graduation rates.

- Loss of ROCP Lottery funding distribution.

- Unknown disposition of permanent student records, of which ROCPs have been the custodian.

- Loss of Community Classroom, UC A through G, and articulation agreements in place under the ROCPs; these agreements would have to be reestablished by each individual school district.

- Loss of long established work-based learning opportunities through community classroom etc.

- Loss of ROCP offered coursework which provide the coursework backbone for many CTE programs, including California Partnership Academies, Agricultural Education programs, and Linked Learning projects.

- Loss of administrative expertise and leadership of CTE in the areas of industry standards, CTE standards, CTE/Academic content integration, and workforce and economic development within the K-12 education system.

- Loss of consistency in program, course content and titles, which constitute our regional workforce preparation pipelines.
Who are foster children and why is there a special program aimed at improving their educational outcomes?

Population:
- Foster children are children taken from their families because they have suffered abuse or neglect.
- Once they are taken from their families, the state assumes a special responsibility for these children, including ensuring they receive the services and supports needed to succeed in school.
- At any given time, there are approximately 60,000 California foster children.
- Approximately 42,000 of these children are school-aged.
- There are over 3,000 in San Diego County alone.

Foster children face a unique collection of educational challenges:
- Their academic progress is hampered by trauma
- They miss important building blocks that are foundational to the learning process
- They experience frequent school changes
- They frequently have no parent-figure supporting their educational success
- They are often funneled into low-quality or alternative schools
- They frequently experience a delay in enrollment and time out of school
- Their educational records are frequently lost or transferred belatedly, resulting in foster children frequently being enrolled in the wrong classes
- Foster children are found to need special education services at a much higher rate than the general population, and frequently do not receive the special education services they need

As a consequence, the educational outcomes of foster children are tragically poor. Recent studies have found that foster children:
- Have significantly higher rates of absenteeism and disciplinary referrals than their peers
- Are more likely to perform below grade level (75% perform below grade level)
- Are about twice as likely to be held back in school (83% are held back by third grade)
- Drop out of school nearly twice as frequently (50% obtain a high school diploma/GED)
- Attend a four-year college at a significantly lower rate (fewer than 3% do so)

What is California’s Foster Youth Services program?

California’s Foster Youth Services program is a categorical program of California’s Department of Education. It was created because:
- California has a special responsibility to foster children
- The educational outcomes of foster children are worse than even their disadvantaged peers
- Improving the educational outcomes of foster children requires specialized educational supports different than those provided to disadvantaged children generally.
- Ensuring that these vulnerable students receive the supports they need while in school results in a long term cost savings to the State of California.
The state provides approximately $15 million dollars to county offices of education and six “core” school districts to support local Foster Youth Services programs. California’s local FYS programs provide critically important:

- Educational case management, oftentimes in close collaboration with county child welfare workers and child welfare agencies.
- Data sharing services, allowing districts to know which of their students are in foster care and allowing child welfare workers and judges to know how foster children are performing in school.
- Educational advocacy of the sort typically provided by a parent.
- Reducing the frequency with which foster children are moved from school to school.

An increasing number of counties use their state FYS dollars as a Title IV-E match to bring in federal dollars that are used to support the educational success of foster children. This process results in millions of dollars of federal funding flowing into California each year that would otherwise be unavailable.

FYS Programs work with current and former foster youth, as well as foster parents, biological parents, relatives, staff members of group homes, schools, juvenile detention facilities, juvenile court, child welfare agencies, probation departments, and community service agencies to influence foster children’s day-to-day routines, both during and after school.

The vast majority of California’s local Foster Youth Services programs operate at the county level, within county offices of education. This makes sense because:

- The other agencies serving foster children, such as child welfare agencies and the judicial system, operate at the county level.
- County-wide Foster Youth Service programs are able to more easily collaborate, inform, and support other county-wide agencies.
- Many school districts have few foster children. For the same reason the state has Special Education Local Plan Areas (SEPLAs), locating local Foster Youth Service programs at the county level makes it economically feasible to establish specialized programming for this population of children.
- Foster children are highly mobile, and often move from school district to school district. This makes it difficult to hold school districts accountable for their performance. Foster children more likely to be moved between districts, but less likely to be moved outside of their home counties, making it easier to hold counties accountable for their academic performance.

California’s Foster Youth Service program has successfully improved the educational outcomes of foster children and serves as a model for other states:

- Studies estimate that nearly 17% of the general foster youth population has been expelled at least once. In 2010, of the 3,645 students served by California’s Foster Youth Services core district programs, only 0.69% faced expulsion.
- In 2008-2009, the FYS core district programs achieved a 96% attendance rate for youth enrolled in comprehensive school programs and 92% for youth attending alternative education programs.
- A recent study revealed that only 54% of foster youth complete high school. However, foster youth in the core FYS districts experienced a 71% high school completion rate.
- In San Diego County, in the current school year, 79% of children who changed foster home placements remained in their school of origin.
• In the last year, Alameda County Foster Youth Services provided tutoring, educational mentoring and advocacy on behalf of over 800 local foster children.

**What will be the effect of the Governor’s proposed budget?**

Governor Brown’s proposed budget eliminates 47 out of 62 “categorical” education programs, combining their funding into a “local control funding formula”. This has several major implications:

• School districts will no longer be obligated to spend money according to the rules of the categorical programs that have been eliminated.

• The funding from these eliminated categorical programs will be lumped with the general education funds and distributed to school districts according to the following formula:
  - School districts will receive a base amount per pupil they serve.
  - School districts will receive an additional dollar amount for every student who is an English Learner, Free and Reduced Price Lunch eligible, or in foster care.

• The local control funding formula uses a duplicated formula, which means school districts get the same amount of additional money regardless of whether a student falls into one, two or three of the above categories.

• Because all foster children are eligible for the Free and Reduced lunch program, school districts will not receive a single additional dollar as a result of a student being in foster care.

Funds school districts receive as result of serving an EL, FRLMP eligible or foster student must be spent such that it benefits that subgroup, allowing districts to spend such funds on general school improvement. In contrast, FYS funding must be used exclusively to serve foster children.

California will lose millions of dollars of federal funding currently used to support the educational success of foster children because state FYS dollars will no longer be available to use as a state match.

The intention of the local control funding formula is to give school districts additional flexibility over how they spend their funds, while holding them accountable for results. Unfortunately, the vast majority of school districts do not have internal mechanisms to identify which of their students are in foster care. School districts are required to track and report the educational outcomes of EL students and students eligible for the Free and Reduced Price Meal Program, and are held accountable for the performance of these subgroups. Nothing in law or the Governor’s proposed budget requires LEAs to track or report the educational outcomes of foster children, nor is there any meaningful accountability mechanism for these children. The FYS program, in contrast, is a grant program, such that failure to serve and meet the educational needs of foster children results in a funding being sent elsewhere.

Most categorical programs require funds to be spent on a certain activity, such as:

• Summer school programs
• Grade 7-12 counseling
• Principal training
• Staff development
• Educational technology
• High school class size reduction

California’s Foster Youth Service program, by contrast, focuses funds on a select population of children, for whom the state has a special responsibility, who suffer from tragically poor educational outcomes, and who require specialized educational supports.
Recognizing the need for a program targeting this population, previous reports, such as the 2007 Students First report, produced by the Governor’s Committee on Education Excellence, recommended eliminating many categorical programs and creating a weighted student formula similar to Governor Brown’s Local Control Funding Formula, but specifically excluded California’s Foster Youth Services program. Governor Brown’s current budget proposal includes Foster Youth Services in the list of categorical to be eliminated. If enacted, this will eliminate any requirement that school districts spend these funds on foster children.

In 2008, the Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO), the Non-Partisan Fiscal and Policy Advisor for the State, strongly agreed that California needed to implement fiscal education reforms, particularly in the area of K-12 Categorical Education funding. Despite this recommendation, the LAO indicated that Foster Youth Services should not be included in the discussions about flexibility and consolidation of funds, due to the unique challenges of students in foster care and because of the lack accountability mechanisms in place to ensure that these students will receive appropriate supplemental services.

**Why should California’s Foster Youth Services program be preserved?**

Because foster children are owed a special obligation by the state, because they require specialized education services, and because their educational outcomes have historically been so poor, consolidating FYS into the local control funding formula only makes sense if school districts:

1. Know which of their students are in foster care
2. Are required to track and report the educational outcomes of foster children
3. Are meaningfully held accountable for the academic outcomes and progress of foster children
4. Are provided additional funding proportionate to the number of foster children they serve
5. Are required to spend the additional funding exclusively on foster children

Unfortunately for foster children, at the current time, none of the above is true.

1. The vast majority of school districts do not have internal mechanisms to identify which of their students are in foster care.
2. School districts are required to track and report the educational outcomes of EL students and students eligible for the FRLMP. Nothing in law or the Governor’s proposed budget requires LEAs to track or report the educational outcomes of foster children.
3. School districts are held accountable for the performance of EL students and students eligible for the FRLMP. Nothing in law or the Governor’s provides any meaningful accountability mechanism for foster children. The FYS program, in contrast, is a grant program, such that failure to serve and meet the educational needs of foster children results in a funding being sent elsewhere.
4. The Governor’s proposed local control funding formula provides school districts additional dollars for students who are English Learners (EL), eligible for the Free and Reduced Price Meals Program (FRLMP), or in foster care. Since every foster child is eligible for the FRLMP, districts will not receive a single additional dollar as a result of a student being in foster care.
5. Funds school districts receive as result of serving an EL, FRLMP eligible or foster student must be spent such that it benefits that subgroup, allowing districts to spend such funds on general school improvement. In contrast, FYS funding must be used exclusively to serve foster children.
Moreover, federal laws such as the Fostering Connections Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-351) require child welfare agencies to monitor and track the educational progress of foster children.

- California’s child welfare and judicial systems operate at the county level, making countywide FYS programs best suited to ensure county school districts, child welfare agencies and courts have the information they need to fulfill state and federal mandates.
- The costs of complying with state and federal mandates would increase for county social service and probation departments, because instead of coordinating education services with one county-level education agency, some would have to work with up to 80 school districts.

Finally, the FYS program should be preserved because the state funding is used to leverage millions of dollars of federal funding, which is used to support the educational success of foster children.

**What will be the effect of eliminating California’s foster youth service program on individual foster children?**

Without a Foster Youth Service Program, individual foster children are unlikely to receive the education services and supports they require to succeed in school. Foster children are already at risk once they exit the foster care systems. Studies have found:

- Over 25% of former foster children experience homelessness
- Approximately 25% spend time incarcerated
- Former foster youth are 50% more likely to experience domestic violence
- About 33% receive public assistance
- Unemployment rates top 50%

Studies have also found that foster children who experience educational success are less likely to experience these outcomes as adults. Eliminating California’s Foster Youth Services program will lead to us, as a state, supporting a significantly greater number of former foster children once they reach adulthood.

More importantly, foster children are our children. We have a collective responsibility to ensure they succeed in school. Eliminating Foster Youth Services is an abrogation of our collective responsibility.

**Why should foster children receive a duplicated weight in the Local Control Funding Formula?**

The educational outcomes of foster children are worse than children who qualify for free or reduced lunch. Improving the educational outcomes of foster children requires specialized supports above and beyond than those provided to disadvantaged children generally.

We commend the Governor for recognizing as much and including foster children as a category of children receiving a weight in his proposed Local Control Funding Formula. But because foster children require greater educational supports than low-income children generally, it will require more funding to provide them the educational services they need. For this reason, they require a duplicated weight in the Local Control Funding Formula.