



April 22, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
The Honorable Los Angeles County Delegation Members
The Honorable San Diego County Delegation Members
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, California 95814

The Honorable Tony Thurmond
California Department of Education
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Newsom, Superintendent Thurmond, and Members of the Los Angeles and San Diego Delegations,

You received a letter dated March 23 from Austin Beutner and Cindy Marten. We write as elected leaders of our CTA and CFT educator union locals, and as members of the California Alliance for Community Schools (CACS).

We wish to echo the call for much more immediate state funding that will be necessary to address the COVID-19 crisis and the inequities our students face during this crisis. Moreover, you, as our state officials, must be front and center in fighting to right the decades-long wrong of shameful per-pupil spending levels in California. We are calling on you to endorse a crucial piece of the long-term solution – the Schools and Communities First measure on the November 2020 ballot. It has never been clearer that our students, parents, and educators can no longer be victims of corporate loopholes that rob schools and social services of \$12 billion per year.

On the topic of inequities and the digital divide, we support all families having access to devices and the internet. This is basic infrastructure – essential to school, but also to so many other aspects of life and work. It should not fall on school districts to pay for this – the state and other public entities must be involved.

Ensuring access to devices and internet is separate and apart from investing in distance learning. We are calling for any contracts at the state and local levels related to distance learning to be temporary, only for the length of the closure of schools. Collective learning in brick-and-mortar schools in a humane environment with caring staff is what is needed and effective for our students and our society, particularly around issues of equity, and it is what we will return to. That is what we need to invest in and make excellent – not distance learning contracts.

We acknowledge Governor Newsom and Superintendent Thurmond’s leadership during this pandemic and ask that you continue to work to ensure that all District’s adhere to the *Framework for Labor-Management Collaboration* that was issued on April 1, 2020, as LAUSD and SDUSD have done.

Finally, we as elected union leaders representing tens of thousands of educators across the state, and our community allies, must be brought into any and all local and state discussions on education and spending during this crisis. We raise this with the utmost urgency because it would be fundamentally cruel to ask our students and educators to return to schools facing cuts after such a traumatic and disruptive experience. It is vitally important that we all work together, jointly advocating for both appropriate state funding and hundreds of billions of dollars of additional federal stimulus devoted to public education, so that we not only protect our students from further damage to their education and well-being, but do all we can to help them progress. In the absence of such critically needed funding, educators and community members will organize unprecedented actions across our state to protect our schools and communities from the harm that will be caused by such devastating cuts.

We will be pursuing these conversations with you, with state officials representing each of the respective undersigned local unions, and with each of our respective school districts.

We look forward to your response.



Grant Schuster
President
Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association



Kisha Borden
President
San Diego Education Association



Steven S. Comstock, Jr.
President
Bakersfield Elementary Teachers Association



Patrick Bernhardt
President
San Jose Teachers Association



Matt Meyer
President
Berkeley Federation of Teachers



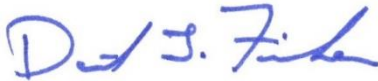
Barbara Pearson
President
Santa Ana Educators' Association



Keith Brown
President
Oakland Education Association



Susan Solomon
President
United Educators of San Francisco



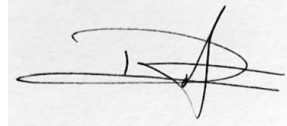
David Fisher
President
Sacramento City Teachers Association



Alex Caputo-Pearl
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Ashley Bettas-Alcalá
President
San Bernardino Teachers Association



Demetrio Gonzalez
President
United Teachers of Richmond

CC: Austin Beutner
Cindy Marten
LAUSD School Board
SDUSD School Board