

# CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA  
95814

March 30, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

We request that your administration work with the Legislature to ensure that local educational agencies (LEAs) and charter schools are held accountable for providing meals and instruction to California students during the school closures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your March 13<sup>th</sup> Executive Order ensures that LEAs and charter schools continue to receive funding for the purpose of providing meals and instruction to students, but it does not require that these services be provided. In the absence of such a requirement, and in the absence of any fiscal consequence for non-compliance, it appears that provision of these critical services has been uneven around the state.

Many LEAs and charter schools are going to extraordinary lengths under highly challenging circumstances to ensure that students are receiving meals and are receiving instruction. However, we are concerned that this is not the case for all students.

According to data provided by the California Department of Education (CDE), prior to the crisis, approximately 1,300 school districts, county offices, and charter schools were providing meals through the National School Lunch Program. As of March 24<sup>th</sup>, only 55% of them have applied to the CDE to provide meals during the school closures. Additional school districts and charter schools are applying to CDE for approval to participate, but we are concerned that some school districts and charter schools have insufficient plans, or no plans at all, to provide meals to children during this critical time.

Statewide data regarding instruction is not available, but it appears that not all LEAs have a plan in place to begin instruction by teachers. Voluntary or "enrichment" activities are not sufficient

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
March 30, 2020  
Page 2

during these long-term school closures. Of particular concern are high school students who need to earn credit for graduation and to fulfill A-G course requirements.

We recognize that the causes of these problems are numerous and complex, and that LEAs and charter schools are operating under many constraints. We would welcome the opportunity to work with your administration to ensure that these critical services are provided to all California students in an expeditious manner.

Thank you for all of the efforts of your administration to support schools during these unprecedented school closures.

Sincerely,

Patrick O'Donnell, 70<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Laura Friedman, 43<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District  
Jim Frazier, 11<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Mark Levine, 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Cristina Garcia, 58<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Eduardo Garcia, 56<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Mark Stone, 29<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Autumn Burke, 62<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District  
Kevin McCarty, 7<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Mark Berman, 24<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Luz Rivas, 39<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
William Brough, 73<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

Frank Bigelow, 5<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
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Ed Chau, 49<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Marie Waldron, 75<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Robert Rivas, 30<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Jose Medina, 61<sup>st</sup> Assembly District  
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David Chiu, 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Reginald Jones-Sawyer, 59<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Cottie Petrie-Norris, 74<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Blanca Rubio, 48<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

CC:

Honorable Tony Thurmond, Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Linda Darling Hammond, President, State Board of Education  
Ben Chida, Chief Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Governor's Office  
Karen Stapf Walters, Executive Director, State Board of Education  
Keely Martin Bosler, Director of Finance  
Jennifer Johnson, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Governor's Office