



July 2, 2018

The Honorable Toni Atkins
President pro Tempore, California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Atkins:

With the 2018-19 state budget now signed, the California School Boards Association (CSBA) and the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) are writing with an urgent request to put the future of K-12 public education funding at the forefront of legislative discussions. **Before the current legislative session ends on August 31, CSBA and ACSA are asking you to help lead the fight by introducing a Constitutional amendment to move California to the top 10 states in per-pupil funding.**

California recently jumped from the sixth largest economy in the world to the fifth largest. Our state's economy is a source of pride, with only four countries in the world listed ahead of us. Conversely, California's per-pupil funding is cause for shame, as we rank behind 40 of the 50 U.S. states.

The question that we must ask ourselves is whether California is content with being the fifth strongest economy in the world and, at the same time, the ninth weakest state in the union in terms of per-pupil funding. Can California, the home of leaders and innovators, tolerate below-average investment in the students who will determine the state's future? For lawmakers, policy leaders and education leaders throughout our great state, this is not acceptable. Our 6.2 million students, as well as our parents, families, teachers, school administrators, classified employees, school boards and, indeed, our entire state, deserve far better.

If we want *all* children to achieve at high levels — as we say that we do — then we must be willing to invest in school conditions that are conducive to success. That starts by giving our schools the resources needed to prepare all students for success in college, career and civic life. If we don't reprioritize public schools and reverse the trend of attempting to educate a high-need student population with some of the worst student-support ratios in the country, we continue to put our children's futures, the vitality of our communities and the prosperity of our state at risk.

As your work on the 2018-19 state budget is now finished, we urge the Legislature to consider how this budget will provide the support that our students truly need. Fully funding the LCFF targets is an important milestone, but it is crucial to bear in mind that fully funding a formula is not the same as fully funding the needs of our students.

More importantly, we urge the Legislature to consider how state budgets in 2019-20, 2020-21 and future years will address student needs as costs to local education agencies soar, making it more difficult — if not altogether impossible — to meet the needs of California's diverse student population.

With the future of California on the line, we eagerly await your reply. You may contact CSBA at (916) 371-4691 or ACSA at (916) 444-3216.

Sincerely,

Vernon M. Billy
CEO & Executive Director, CSBA

Dr. Wesley Smith
Executive Director, ACSA