

February XX, 2013

RE: Saving K-12 Based Adult Education

On behalf of the signatories of this letter, we wish to convey our strong support for K-12 based Adult Education in California. **In our community....**

- # served, types of programs, # of locations/sites
- Information on partnerships
- Information on outcomes (community-beneficial outcomes)
- Expand on info relative to K-12 based Adult Education in your community/region

Since 2010, over 30 K-12 based adult schools have closed statewide and over 40 have had their budgets cut by more than 50%. At its peak in 2005, nearly 1.4 million Californians were enrolled in K-12 based Adult Education programs statewide including English as a Second Language (ESL), citizenship, High School Diploma/GED and basic skills, workforce and career technical training and more. These educational programs play an integral role in providing the means and opportunity for these students to prepare themselves for successful entry into the workforce and as participating members of their communities.

With the intense focus on year-over-year budget shortfalls for California education, the very real economic benefits derived from the state's public investment in K-12 based Adult Education and workforce development programs have been overlooked and decimated. Numerous studies have shown that even, in difficult economic times, a preemptive focus on Adult Education actually saves governments money by reducing healthcare, public assistance and incarceration costs. Adult Education also improves and expands the nation's available pool of human capital by helping motivated but under educated people achieve gainful employment in today's increasingly high-tech and global job market. K-12 based Adult Education and Career Technical training are one of the most cost-effective tools in the state, with infrastructure and capacity currently in place to meet the need.

Shifting the responsibility for Adult Education to community colleges is not the answer! This will eliminate access for those most in need. The bottom line is that K-12 based Adult Education is too important to allow it to be eliminated – whether through a shift of responsibility to the community college system or through continued categorical flexibility. While we can appreciate the difficulties school districts have faced in recent years, the success of K-12 students depends on the success and engagement of their parents and community. In many districts, K-12 students' parents are the ones relying on the Adult Education programs the most. Furthermore, the consolidation of other K-12 categorical programs will fund supplemental services for students (K-12) who will always have a seat in a classroom. When adult schools close, however, there is no place for adult students to go for these very basic skills and programs, leaving them disenfranchised with no options or access. The needs of these students are more appropriately aligned with the mission and educational responsibilities of the K-12 system versus the mission and educational responsibility of the community colleges that is geared towards a higher level of remediation.

Adult Education is an investment in the future of our community, state and our families, as research shows that better educated parents raise better educated, more successful children, who are less likely to end up in poverty or prison. In this regard, March 11-15 is Adult Education week in communities throughout the state. However, the upcoming proclamation is bitterly ironic. While we prepare to celebrate the success of Adult Education, others begin to mourn its impending demise if nothing is done to stop it. We strongly urge the State to reinstitute K-12 based Adult Education as its own standalone education program with dedicated

revenue and work to strengthen the pathways being developed locally around the State with our community college and Workforce Investment Board partners.

We look forward to working with you to accomplish this goal and develop a framework that maintains the Governor's desire for local decision making and control, assures K-12 based access for adult learners, provides a sufficient level of dedicated funding, and above all else ensures successful outcomes for adult learners. If you have any questions or would like to discuss these issues further, please contact **Xxxx** **Xxxx** at **(XXX) XXX-XXXX**. Thank you!

Sincerely,

No signatures necessary, just names, titles and logos at the top of the letter

Xxxx **Xxxxx**
<Title>

Cc: California Adult Education Administrators Association (CAEAA)
California Council of Adult Education (CCAEE)
Association of California School Administrators (ACSA)