



CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

TOM TORLAKSON
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

February 10, 2012

Dear County and District Superintendents and Charter School Administrators:

ELIMINATION OF ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

The economic and educational success of all Californians in the 21st century is a goal stated succinctly within the California Department of Education's (CDE) newly crafted mission statement:

California will provide a world-class education for all students, from early childhood to adulthood. The Department of Education serves our state by innovating and collaborating with educators, schools, parents, and community partners. Together, as a team, we prepare students to live, work, and thrive in a highly connected world.

It is our goal at the CDE to consider the "whole student" in our daily work of providing technical assistance and oversight of the multitude of state and federal programs we are responsible to administer. As such, we consider adult education a vital and integral part of the entire educational spectrum.

It is through adult education that the parents of the students within our kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) schools can gain the education and literacy skills necessary to better their personal situations, thus benefiting all of California. It is here that they can advance in their own careers, obtain the skills for gainful employment, and become better parents and more active participants in our communities.

Documentation shows that with minimal fiscal resources, adult education still produces long term and far reaching benefits. Research has proven over and over again that children of educated and active adults are more successful and more engaged in their education. The benefits of a strong and dynamic adult education program are a priceless asset for all the districts that have built and supported it over the 155 years of its existence.

In these tight fiscal times, I urge all superintendents and district boards of education to consider this invaluable asset. Look hard at the benefits in adult education's high school recovery programs, teaching English literacy to the 26 percent foreign-born Californians that presently make up our population, and the opportunities and tax dollars that could

February 10, 2012
Page 2

be generated if the 5.4 million adults without a diploma or GED were able to advance in their employment.

We hope that you execute deep research and evaluation of the benefits of adult education before you consider eliminating opportunities for students by sweeping up the adult education funds. Once a program such as this is dismantled, the extensive infrastructure and work that has gone into building this program cannot be readily recovered.

If you have any questions regarding this subject, please contact Patricia Terry, Education Administrator I, Adult Education Office, by phone at 916-322-2175 or by e-mail at PTerry@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Tom Torlakson

TT:gj

cc: Vernon M. Billy, Executive Director, California School Boards Association