

California Legislature

May 4, 2016

The Honorable Kevin de León
Senate President pro Tempore
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Anthony Rendon
Speaker of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President pro Tem de León and Speaker Rendon:

We respectfully request support for a long overdue, urgently needed increase to the After School Education and Safety (ASES) program, augmenting the funding by \$73 million in 2016-17 in order to raise the daily rate from \$7.50 per student to \$8.50 per student. The proposal also seeks to establish an annual cost of living adjustment beginning in the 2017-18 fiscal year.

ASES providers are finding it increasingly difficult to deliver high-quality services as costs outpace grant revenues. After a decade of flat funding, these programs have been stretched to their breaking point. Since 2006, the cost of living has risen 19%, and a 33% increase to the minimum wage and new benefits (such as mandatory sick leave) have increased personnel costs substantially.

In a recent survey of 700 program providers, 29% indicated that without budget relief, they look to close their doors in two years. Two-thirds of providers have been forced to reduce staff hours, and more than a third are serving fewer children. Other consequences have been to limit professional development, abandon specialized instruction and, in some cases, rescind their program grants altogether.

After school programs, which operate at high poverty schools with an average free and reduced lunch program of over 80%, provide elementary and middle school children with a safe environment to receive meaningful academic and enrichment services. ASES also allows parents to continue to work in the afternoon and keep children off the streets during one of the high crime periods of the day.

California is by far the nation's leader in providing high-quality after-school programs. The citizens of California passed Proposition 49 in 2002, which provides for a continuous appropriation of \$550 million to sustain ASES programs at over 4,000 schools that serve more than 400,000 students daily across the state. The \$550 million went into effect in 2007 and has remained at that level ever since.

Research has proven that these programs have a range of positive impacts including higher graduation rates, improved school attendance, increased English fluency, greater academic



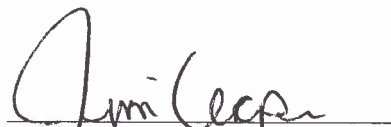
achievement, better health and nutrition and important social-emotional skill development. It is critical that the state protect its commitment to after school.

ASES programs are funded according to an ADA formula for at least 3 hours of daily service. Staffed primarily by highly qualified paraprofessionals, the programs are required to provide rigorous academic content, as well as a broad array of enrichment activities designed to extend and complement core day instruction, at a student-to-staff ratio of not more than 20:1.


Programs are in very real jeopardy of being squeezed out of existence. This cost-effective request, at less than 1/10th of 1% of Proposition 98 funding, will ensure they can keep their doors open and continue to deliver engaging and effective expanded learning services to low-income California students with the greatest needs and fewest resources.

We thank you for your favorable consideration of our request.

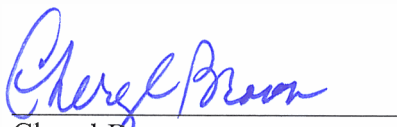
Sincerely,




Jim Cooper
Assembly District 9



Loni Hancock
Senate District 9



Cheryl Brown
Assembly District 47



David Chiu
Assembly District 17



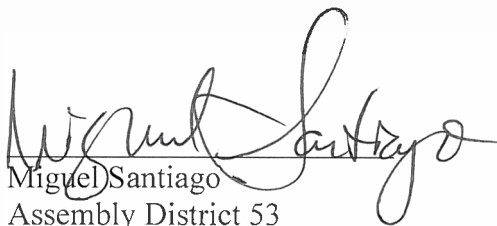
Bill Dodd
Assembly District 4



Rudy Salas
Assembly District 32



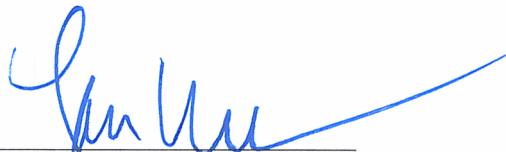
Marc Levine
Assembly District 10



Miguel Santiago
Assembly District 53



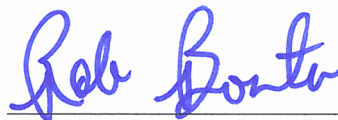
Carol Liu
Senate District 25



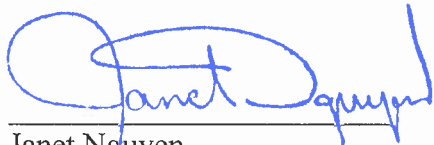
Lois Wolk
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Andy Vidak
Senate District 14



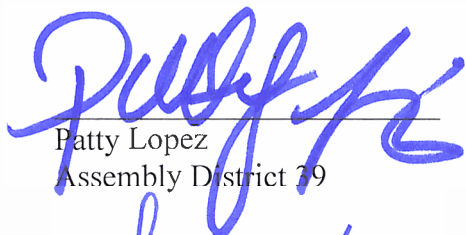
Rob Bonta
Assembly District 18



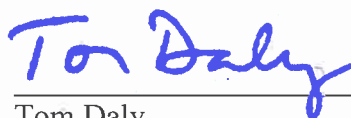
Janet Nguyen
Senate District 34



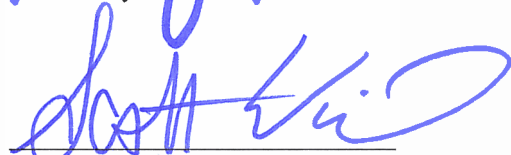
Mike Gatto
Assembly District 43



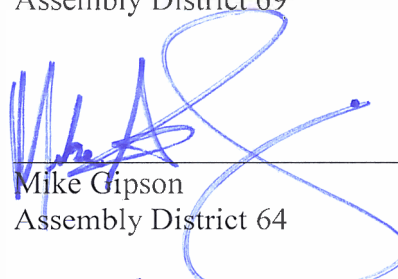
Patty Lopez
Assembly District 39



Tom Daly
Assembly District 69



Scott Wilk
Assembly District 38



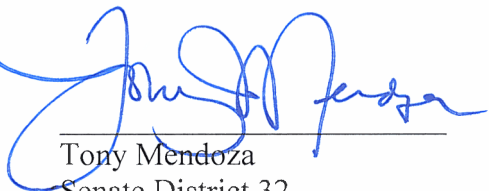
Mike Gipson
Assembly District 64



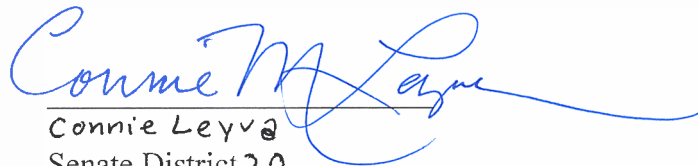
Isadore Hall
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Mike McGuire
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Connie Leyva
Senate District 20



Shirley Weber
Assembly District 79



Susan Bonilla
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Mark Stone

Mark Stone
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