

# Student Advisory Board on Education



2021

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Preface                             | 2  |
| I. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion | 3  |
| II. Post-High School Preparedness   | 8  |
| III. Student Wellness               | 13 |
| IV. Civic Engagement                | 18 |
| V. Equitable Education              | 22 |
| VI. Socioeconomic Support           | 26 |

# P R E F A C E

The first Student Advisory Board on Education (SABE) took place in 1963, and was established as an avenue for the California State Board of Education to receive feedback from the main stakeholders of the education system, students. Additionally, students at SABE are tasked with the election of the top six semi-finalists for the position of Student Board Member on the State Board of Education. As such, students at SABE have served as representatives for the needs and perspectives of California students for the last fifty-seven years.

The 2021 Student Advisory Board on Education took place virtually from October 30th through November 1st. The delegation was composed of 60 high school students, from all grades, representing all regions of California. At SABE, delegates discussed the issues in the California education system that they, as students, identified as most pertinent. Delegates then researched and developed proposals for the Board of Education on how to best address these issues.

The proposals outlined in this packet are the direct result of the work of students. Over three days, students brainstormed and conducted thorough research to create effective and informed proposals to make tangible change in their communities and statewide. We commend the delegation and their extraordinary initiative.

It must also be noted that this year's conference was directly reflective of the times. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the Student Advisory Board was transitioned to an online platform, utilizing the technology and software employed by schools nationwide following the shift to distance learning. The digital ecosystem has become instrumental in the facilitation of learning as well as advocacy on behalf of the underrepresented.

**The Student Advisory Board of Education**  
Wednesday, November 3, 2021, Item #1

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

Speaker: Kavya Suresh, San Marcos Senior High School, Santa Barbara  
Writer: Madyson Chung Lee, Portola High School, Irvine  
Research: Adalia Luo, Newbury Park High School, Newbury Park  
Facilitator: Heidi Andrade, San Benito High School, Hollister  
Group Members: Sissi Zhang, Irvington High School, Fremont; Emma Lee, Fullerton Union High School, Fullerton; Emma Lindroth, Newbury Park High School, Newbury Park; Fiona Lu, Northwood High School, Irvine; Toni Martin, International Polytechnic High School, Pomona; Acelyn Nguyen, Portola High School, Irvine; Chris Pak, Granada High School, Livermore

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**I. PRIORITY**

The Student Advisory Board on Education has identified that California faculty, district staff, and board members inefficiently teach/work with matters pertaining to diversity, equity, and inclusion in Local Education Agencies. As a result, students are not taught the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion thus contributing to minority students receiving unequal support from the education system.

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**II. RECOMMENDED SBE ACTION**

The Student Advisory Board on Education advises that the State Board of Education work closely with the California Department of Education’s Professional Learning Support Division to create a comprehensive framework for diversity, equity, and inclusion professional development training for all K-12 faculty, district staff, and board members in the state to be incorporated into the Quality Professional Learning Standards.

- The framework developed by the SBE and CDE will be available for county education boards, district boards, and individual school sites to implement and modify based on their relevant priorities.
  - The framework for this training will encompass topics such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, classism, religious discrimination, etc., and aims to help influencers in the education system create a safer space for students of all identities to combat discrimination, marginalization, and oppression.
  - The SBE identifies the professional training of all K-12 faculty and staff in diversity, equity, and inclusion education as a priority for local school districts to participate in.
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**III. LOCAL AND STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS**

1. The California State Board of Education will direct the California Department of Education to create a professional development training framework to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion training for K-12 educators and recommend this training to all California Local Educational Agencies. It is recommended that this professional development training be offered to all K-12 faculty and staff, including district staff and board members.

- a. This training will include restorative justice and anti-discriminatory discipline training to participants so they will create safer and more equitable learning environments.
2. The CDE can publish this framework for diversity, equity, and inclusion professional development in the resources section of their professional learning section under “tools”.
  - a. Moreover, DEI training guidelines can be included in a number of existing resources such as the Digital Chalkboard.
3. Following the implementation of this blueprint for diversity, equity, and inclusion training into local and statewide professional development training, relevant district and state-wide boards will conduct research to measure the effectiveness of training in regards to:
  - a. How teachers modify their instruction to teach from a more intersectional and inclusive approach.
  - b. How well students feel represented, celebrated, and acknowledged in their education.
  - c. How well district and school administrators feel that they are providing for their underprivileged students.

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#### IV. KEY ISSUES

Topics regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion are introduced to students too late in the education system, resulting in a shallow understanding of the importance of said topics.

- The CDE has introduced virtually nothing regarding DEI topics in K-5 general education.

When teachers are unable to create a classroom setting that is accepting of all students, it only leaves space for discrimination.

- A 2015 Stanford study found that teachers are likely to interpret students’ misbehavior differently depending on the student’s race. The stereotype of Black students as “troublemakers” led teachers to want to discipline Black students more harshly than white students after two infractions. They were more likely to see the misbehavior as part of a pattern, and to imagine themselves suspending that student in the future.
- In California, 1 out of 3 students cannot identify a single caring adult (California Healthy Kids Survey), and over the course of a single day, nearly 1 out of 5 students did not have a single teacher or staff member make eye contact or greet them by name (Californians for Justice Relationship Centered Schools Survey).
- In California, Black students are twice as likely as white peers to feel unsafe or very unsafe at school.
- More than half of Latinx students in California report feeling disconnected from school, and less than half report that they are treated fairly.
- In California, Asian students were among the least likely to believe their schools had caring adult relationships (30% of respondents, compared to 39% of White students).
- Black girls are suspended six times as often as white peers, and Black and Latinx students, in general, are more likely to be referred for discipline violations and then suspended or expelled than White students.
- Low-income students often receive inequitable education as highlighted by a 2015 UCLA study:
  - Teachers in high-poverty schools were more likely to report that academic instructional time was eroded by problems with school facilities, lack of access to

- technology and libraries, classroom lockdowns, standardized test preparation, teacher absences, and uncertified or insufficiently qualified substitute teachers.
  - Three to four times more students at high-poverty schools than at low-poverty schools struggled with economic and social stressors, including unstable housing, hunger, and lack of medical and dental care. On any given day, students at high-poverty schools faced a 39% chance that life problems would decrease their time for academic learning in contrast to a 13% chance for students at low-poverty schools.
- LGBTQ+ Students
  - An analysis of the California Student Survey (CSS) and the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) found that LGBTQ youth across the state experienced disparities in school climate, victimization reports, and substance use:
    - LGBTQ youth had lower grades and more school absences in the past year compared to non-LGBTQ youth in California.
    - LGBTQ youth reported higher rates of experiencing victimization in the form of verbal and physical harassment and abuse compared to non-LGBTQ youth.
    - LGBTQ youth reported feeling less safe at school than their non-LGBTQ peers.
    - LGBTQ youth reported more frequent usage of cigarettes and marijuana compared to non- LGBTQ youth over their lifetime and more frequent use of cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana in the past 30 days.

Other forms of professional development training have proven to be ineffective.

- Implicit bias training as a diversity support system has been proved to be ineffective, and oftentimes even have the opposite impact. As such, different diversity, equity, and inclusion training strategies have been developed throughout many different facets of society such as cultural competency training and teacher and student empathy interventions. The SBE will need to draft teacher training curriculums partially from scratch using existing tools, resources, and strategies explored in many studies, some of which are directly cited on the “Equity” page of the CDE’s “Quality Schooling Framework” website branch. Some examples of possible strategies are summarized and recorded below:
  - Out of 64 teachers that participated in a 2005 WestEd cultural competency study, 14 changed their classroom practices based on what they learned in professional development. 31 out of the 64 teachers stated that they believed that they have seen improvement in student learning because of changes they have made in their instructional strategies to make them more culturally responsive.
  - According to this 2016 Stanford study on the efficacy of empathy-based interventions, a one-time intervention to help teachers and students empathize with each other halved the number of suspensions at five diverse California middle schools and helped students who had previously been suspended feel more connected at school

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## V. PROVEN RESULTS

- In a CA study, 14/64 teachers who participated in a cultural competency study changed their classroom practices based on what they learned in professional development. 31 out of the 64 teachers stated that they believed that they have seen improvement in student learning because of changes they have made in their instructional strategies to make them more culturally responsive.

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## VI. FISCAL ANALYSIS

The implementation of a framework for state-wide or local professional development training would come at minimal cost to the State Board of Education. Because we are proposing the CDE create a blueprint for the anti-discrimination and inclusivity curriculum that would be utilized during educator training, there would be no exorbitant costs.

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## VII. RATIONALE

Teacher Impact on Students: General

- The Student Board on Education has found that teachers, and specifically what is being taught at school, have a strong impact on students, especially in grades K-5.
- Teachers that undergo DEI training will be able to open a classroom setting that allows students to feel more accepted.
- More acceptance, acknowledgment, and open spaces of these topics will encourage students to participate actively in school.

Teacher Impact on Students: Examples

- Teachers have a very significant, lifelong impact on all of their students. This impact involves not only the teaching of particular academic skills but as importantly, the fostering of student self-esteem. Reinforcing self-esteem in the classroom is associated with increased motivation and learning (Robert Brooks, *ldonline.org*).

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## VIII. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DISCUSSION AND ACTION

- Assembly Bill 493 (LGBTQ+ School Resources)
  - Requires the State Department of Education to provide training on how to best support LGBTQ+ students at their school sites at least once every 2 years to teachers and other certificated employees at middle and high schools.
- Assembly Bill 54 (Cultural Competency Training Access Study)
  - Required the CTC, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to contract with an independent evaluator to conduct a study of the availability and effectiveness of cultural competency training for teachers and administrators. It showed that 31/64 teachers who participated in the training saw student improvement in the classroom.
- Senate Bill 48 (FAIR Education Act)

- Requires instruction in the social sciences to include a study of the role and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans, persons with disabilities, and members of other cultural groups
- Amendments to Ed Code 51204.5, 51500, 51501, 60040, 60044
- Strength in Diversity Act of 2020
  - Directs the Department of Education to award grants to specified educational agencies (e.g., local educational agencies) to develop or implement plans to improve diversity and reduce or eliminate racial or socioeconomic isolation in publicly funded early childhood education programs, public elementary schools, or public secondary schools.
- Educator Excellence Task Force
  - In 2012, Superintendent Torlakson appointed an Educator Excellence Task Force that focused on teacher ability to address educator quality. The task force was a joint effort between the California Department of Education and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
- Federal Policy
  - In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education released a free, two-part training toolkit designed to reduce incidents of bullying, for use by classroom teachers and educators. The toolkit was developed by the Safe and Supportive Schools Technical Assistance Center, supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Healthy Students, in collaboration with the NEA and the American Federation of Teachers. This included creating a culture of respect for differences.



**Student Advisory Board on Education**  
Wednesday, November 3, 2021, Item #2

**POST-HIGH SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS**

Speaker: Mina Lee, John Marshall Sr. High School, Los Angeles  
Writer: Kyle Loth, Lincoln High School, Stockton  
Group Members: Ellie Jiang, Arnold O. Beckman High School, Irvine; Katie Cheng, Dublin High School, Dublin; Naomi Porter, Palos Verdes Peninsula High School, Rancho Palos Verdes; Neela Mohanpuhr, The College Preparatory School, Oakland; Nichelle Jefferson, Santiago High School, Corona; Randy Xu, Westlake High School, Ventura; Vyshnavi Mannepalli, Santiago High School, Corona  
Facilitator: Mina Lee, John Marshall Sr. High School, Los Angeles  
Research: Miriam Waldvogel, Lincoln High School, Stockton

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**I. PRIORITY**

The Student Advisory Board on Education has identified that students are exposed to counselors’ presences and contact typically only during junior and senior year when they start more rigorous courses, the college application process, and standardized test prep. The subsequent result is that students are not adequately prepared for life beyond high school, be it college or career.

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**II. RECOMMENDED SBE ACTION**

The Student Advisory Board on Education advises the California State Board of Education to direct the California Department of Education to create a digital handbook detailing practices high school counselors can use to support students with post-high school pathways. The handbook would focus on counselor conduct, including office hours and school-wide meetings, rather than opportunities that students have to pursue for themselves, and would be developed with input from high school students, counselors, administrators, and experts in Career and Technical Education (CTE) industry sectors. We also advise the State Board of Education to recommend the handbook on a local level across local schools in California.

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**III. LOCAL AND STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS**

The California Department of Education will create a digital handbook featuring best practices for high school counselors to support students with their post-high school lives, to be approved by the State Board of Education. The handbook shall focus specifically on counselor rather than student conduct. Educational partners such as high school students, counselors, administrators, and CTE industry workers will contribute to the development of the handbook. With the growing number of California students who feel unprepared for post-high school life, there comes a growing need for high-school counselors to offer support and guidance.

- A. Topics in the handbook will include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. Guidelines for counselors on how to support students in managing their post-high school lives.
  - b. Details recommending standard office hours during the school day that will give students a time to approach counselors.
  - c. School-wide and grade-level meetings that counselors can set up to provide information regarding the different pathways beyond college, helping students make rational and well educated decisions.
  - d. Community outreach to local businesses and organizations for opportunities such as internships, hands-on experiences, and job training. This especially involves post-secondary options.
- B. The handbook will be digital in order to maximize accessibility and distribution. It will also ensure that there are no printing costs associated with this proposal.
- C. The handbook will incorporate feedback from a variety of educational partners, including, but not limited to:
  - a. High school students
  - b. High school counselors
  - c. Administrators
  - d. Members of CTE industry sectors, such as construction and hospitality

This feedback will ensure that the handbook contains relevant, accurate, and well-rounded information on how counselors can guide their students into their future. This input will be gained through an online survey facilitated by the California Department of Education.

- e. We urge the State Board of Education to recommend the handbook across local high schools to ensure that counselors will implement this tool and help guide students to post-high school preparedness. This ensures that the handbook would be widely implemented.

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#### **IV. KEY ISSUES**

- At Dublin High School in Dublin, many students tie their self worth to post-secondary plans, leading to stress and overall confusion with the college application process.
- There is a lack of communication between counselors and students about the college application process, scholarships, financial aid, grants, and other opportunities involving future careers. At Lincoln High School in Stockton, most students avoid counselors altogether for college preparedness reasons, as counselors are mainly viewed as resources for struggling students.
- Many counselors neglect community outreach and networking for local businesses and organizations for community service and internships, contributing to students' lack of real-world experience and technical and leadership skills.

- At Peninsula High School in Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified, students are frustrated with the lack of exposure to non-college post-secondary options, including entering the workforce, joining the military, and pursuing internships.
- Counselors are a vital resource to students on-campus and provide guidance throughout their post-high school preparation period. However, many students are not aware of this resource, and many others that are available to them because there is no connection between counselors and students due to a lack of meetings, a sentiment frequently expressed at Beckman High School in Irvine.
- Schools in Conejo Valley Unified School District tend to put greater emphasis on domestic colleges, making the international application process completely unknown.

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## **V. PROVEN RESULTS**

Counselors play a key role in students' post high school preparedness.

- In a 2018 report, the American School Counselor Association identified that counselors contribute to virtually every metric of post-high school preparedness, including graduation rates, FAFSA completion, and test scores. Counselor intervention proved to be particularly critical for students with underserved and low-income backgrounds, showing that those who consistently meet with their counselors are more likely to pursue a higher education. Counselors' impact among all areas of college readiness proves that providing guidance to counselors should be of utmost priority.
- From a survey by Public Agenda for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, it is evident that the guidance counseling system needs to be refined and updated. It was reported that 67% of high-school graduates rated their counselors as having a “fair to poor” impact on their post-high school lives, while 6-7% of students rated their counselors as “fair to poor” in terms of their career guidance. Therefore, giving counselors guidance, tips and ideas would make their lives as well as their students' lives much easier and successful.
- In 2017, the Massachusetts Department of Education found that students with an effective counselor were two percentage points more likely to graduate high school, with even more dramatic improvements demonstrated for low-income and non-white students (these groups were more than three percentage points likely to graduate with an effective counselor).

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## **VI. FISCAL ANALYSIS**

The only fiscal impact of this proposal will be staff costs for creating the handbook.

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## **VI. RATIONALE**

This solution is necessary because existing counseling practices regarding college and career preparedness are inadequate. The Student Advisory Board on Education has identified that many

students do not have easy access to the support that their school counselors can offer. California schools average a student-to-counselor ratio of more than 600:1, far higher than the 250:1 recommended by the American School Counselors Association. Thus, counselors have limited one-on-one time with students. To corroborate this idea, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development found that counselors rarely provide individualized feedback. This is because counselors are unaware as to what they can do to help students on an individual level. If counselors are unclear as to how to successfully guide students, confusion and discouragement will ensue. To avoid this, counselors should be given a specific set of suggestions and recommendations. Only then could they successfully assist students in choosing a career path specific to their qualities and assets.

This handbook will not only benefit students, but counselors as well. Counselors are not mandated to refresh their skills and learn about changes throughout their career after getting their credentials. By having a digital handbook, updates can be made accordingly and notify them at any moment. The handbook will also give them the proper guidance to help their students in spite of the overwhelming student-to-counselor ratio. Increasing counselor effectiveness is also much more cost-efficient than addressing teacher quality, as there are far more students per counselor than students per teacher.

Finally, instituting this proposal will ensure that students feel that their counselors are more accessible, as it will contain guidelines for entire grade-level presentations and other needed mass communication methods. By doing so, counselors will feel more satisfied by giving students the support that they need and students will feel more confident and empowered with the resources that they are given. Students will also be able to make informed decisions and have a clear and set goal for their future. Meeting these goals will allow for students to achieve their full potential and will be especially helpful for students to have successful and happy lives.

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## **VII. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

### *Legislative History*

- AB 103 (2020) - Holden
  - Would clarify access to College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) partnership to include continuation high schools, community schools, and juvenile court schools. A CCAP partnership is an agreement between a community college and a secondary school for CTE and college/career readiness.
- AB 751 (2019) - O'Donnell: Pathways to College Act
  - Would reduce the burden of access to standardized tests by allowing school districts to administer the SAT or ACT instead of the SBAC for high school

- AB 1743 (2018) - O'Donnell: California Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program
  - Would extend funding to \$500 million per year and specify \$12 million in existing funding for regional CTE coordinators in select areas.
- SB 309 (2021) - Leyva
  - Establishes the A-G Completion Improvement Grant Program, totaling \$150 million a year, to provide funds to districts to increase the number of high school students who graduate having met the a-g requirements.

*CDE Precedent*

- Existing CDE Resource List
  - The CDE provides a list of resources for high school counselors working with students on college and career readiness. However, the resources are inadequate, as they are very general and do not specify. For example, the list includes information about the types of universities and helpful websites, but it does not include specific guidelines for counselor practices.
- California Career Readiness Initiative (2015), headed by SPI Tom Torlakson
  - Comprises 21 objectives to support CTE programs in California high schools, including, but not limited to:
    - Drafting and promoting standards for career readiness
    - California Career Pathways Trust
    - Supporting student CTE organizations and clubs
    - Promoting workplace hazard education in the workplace
- Career Technical Education Incentive Grant
  - Provides CTE funding for K-12 students. \$150 million was allocated to 341 schools and educational institutions for the 2020-2021 school year.

# The Student Advisory Board of Education

Wednesday, November 3, 2021, Item #3

## STUDENT WELLNESS

Speaker: Alicia Del Toro, St. Francis High School, Sacramento  
Writer: Madhuhaas Gottimukkala, Los Osos High School, Rancho Cucamonga  
Research: Karina Pan, Temple City High School, Temple City  
Facilitator: Simi Shetty, California High School, San Ramon  
Group Members: Ethan Tam, West Campus High School, Sacramento; Sue Oh, Sunny Hills High School, Fullerton; Yichen (Steven) Ma, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, San Juan Capistrano; Elijah Qin, Temple City High School, Temple City; Eleanor (Ella) Mitchell, Tesoro High School, Las Flores; Lindsey Jiang, Beckman High School, Irvine; Risha Jain, Monte Vista High School, Danville.

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### I. PRIORITY

The Student Advisory Board on Education has identified that student mental health is a pressing issue in the California education system. Due to low prioritization of mental health in schools, students, parents, and administrators are unaware of student wellness and ways to receive support. Therefore, receiving support for mental health is unaccessible and stigmatized.

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### II. RECOMMENDED SBE ACTION

The Student Advisory Board on Education recommends that the State Board of Education issues a strong recommendation to local school districts to create on-campus, school-based wellness centers. Additionally, we recommend that schools utilize pre-existing resources and blueprints from the Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF), California School Based Health Alliance, etc. This would provide professional help, education, and overall support for student mental health.

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### III. LOCAL AND STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS

The wellness center will serve as a resource for students to reach out on issues related to mental health and to seek guidance from mental health professionals. Students should be able to access the mental health center during the day to calm down, compose themselves, and prepare to head back to class. Families of students may be provided with contact information to off-campus mental health professionals in order to provide them with guidance.

Students can participate in stress-relieving activities at the wellness centers, such as physical workouts, meditation and yoga. In addition, there can be mental health counselors to help students deal with their depression, anxiety, or any other crisis that they may be facing. Lastly, there can be food and drinks to get students energised.

The student wellness centers will be created and monitored by a diverse, district-wide task force that would include, but not limited to, students, parents, teachers, mental health professionals, district officials, and administrators. The task force would increase communal connections, build student representation and inclusivity, and give opportunities to all individuals to make an impact in their own schools. These individuals would collaborate together on creating a blueprint for wellness centers for the schools in their district to help address the growing concerns of mental health from both the COVID-19 pandemic and present. Simultaneously, all representation would be of equal value inside the task force and they will promote an environment that maintains inclusivity, addressing the stigma of mental health, and focusing on benefiting the wellbeing of students.

In order to destigmatize mental health, this space can be also utilized for club meetings and other on-campus events. That way, students feel more comfortable using the space for their own needs. This is crucial as getting support for mental health must be normalized, not stigmatized.

Additionally, these student wellness centers can be used to hold events related to mental health such as during Yellow Ribbon Week, which raises awareness for suicide prevention. These centers will provide a common space that can be used to educate students about mental health through fun activities.

Regarding financial needs, the State Board of Education should recommend districts to select the method/s that is most appropriate to their financial circumstances and allows equal distribution of money per school. Some possible solutions, but are not limited to, include:

- Requesting grants through the Board of Education
- Establishing partnerships with organizations and community providers that deal with mental health (e.g hospitals/healthcare programs such as Blue Shield or Kaiser)
- Requesting donations throughout the year from parents
- Holding community fundraisers to receive adequate funds (also increases awareness for mental health throughout the community)

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#### **IV. KEY ISSUES**

- According to the ACLU Youth Liberty Squad, 65% of students rated their mental wellness at 7 or above on a scale from 1-to-10 pre-pandemic. Less than 40% of students rated their current COVID-19 mental wellness at the same level. 23% of students rated their mental wellness at a three or less, and this requires immediate action.
- Due to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), a widespread decline in the youth's mental health has risen. ACEs are traumatic events occurring before age 18. Additionally, ACEs encompass parental substance use, mental illness, incarceration, and domestic violence. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention mentions that adverse childhood experiences are linked to

chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse in adulthood. COVID-19 is now one of the most prominent forms of ACE's in all youth. It is vital to recognize youth issues.

- The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) found that LGBTQ+ youth receive substantially less social support from teachers and school peers than their non-LGBTQ+ peers. Reports of suicide ideation indicate that high schoolers who identify as non-trans have identified those impacted at a percent of 16. On the contrary, 53 percent of high school students who identify as transgender and 44 who prefer to not identify themselves experience suicidal ideation at higher rates. As a result, LGBTQ+ youth are disproportionately affected by mental health issues.
  - In a 2016-2017 survey from HRC, 28 percent of LGBTQ youth — including 40 percent of transgender youth — said they felt depressed most or all of the time during the previous 30 days, compared to only 12 percent of non-LGBTQ youth (HRC Foundation 2017).
- Students often lack the tools or knowledge to recognize signs of declining mental health within themselves and others. School psychologists and mental health counselors often individualize plans per student and academic interventions to address any mental health services and issues students may have.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that approximately 4,600 lives are lost each year due to mental health struggles and fatal suicide attempts—and that suicide among teens and young adults has nearly tripled since the 1940s.

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## V. **PROVEN RESULTS**

- According to the American Association of School Psychologists anxiety-based school refusal affects 2 to 5 percent of school-age children. A decline in our mental health leads to increased dropout rates. In order to mitigate this issue, the State Board of Education must address the needs of our mental health. Dropout rates can increase the chances of students becoming financially troubled or committing a crime.
- According to the National Association of School Psychologists: Longitudinal research employing the California Healthy Kids Survey indicated that an increasing decline in our mental health among students was related to subsequent declines in test scores; yet, student reports of relationships through empathy and social-emotional connection were related to increases in test scores.
- According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): Suicide is the 2nd most leading cause of death in those of the ages 10-34 in the U.S. With symptoms of depression high school students are more than twice as likely to drop out compared to their peers. Of all youth in the U.S. 16.5% ages, 6-17 experienced a mental health disorder in 2016 (7.7 million people). This further emphasizes the importance to recognize the symptoms of our mental health and address student needs.
- According to a Community Preventive Services Task Force study, students reported a median decrease of 5.7% in mental health problems after schools implemented school-based wellness



centers. Additionally, there was a reduction in suicide attempts. By establishing wellness centers, students may feel that they have a location to reach out to in respect to their mental health. This demonstrates the positive effect that they have on the perceived mental health of students.

- At St. Francis High School in Sacramento, the wellness center is a popular hub that many students turn to when feeling stressed, or when they need advice from a mental health professional. There have been multiple cases where a student was having a mental health crisis, but they were able to visit the wellness center, collect themselves, and return to class prepared for the day. Had this center not been an option, they would have had to leave school and miss out on more of their education.

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## **VI. FISCAL ANALYSIS**

While recommending that school districts create wellness centers within each specific school site, the implementation would require the State Board of Education to uphold no costs. The state would assume minimal costs and allow for each school district within the state to provide resources.

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## **VII. RATIONALE**

Due to the long-term implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health, it is essential for schools to provide student wellness centers as a designated safe space students can turn to and readily receive adequate support. This allows students to reach their maximum potential. An inclusive group environment would decrease anxiety and depression rates among students by decreasing stigma in the school community, as well as building stronger relationships between students and staff.

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## **VIII. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

- Past Education Code Implementations:
  - Section 51210.8 (2005-2006) - Mandates that the SBE will adopt the content standards in the curriculum area of health education and the content standards shall provide a framework for instruction that a school may offer in the curriculum area of health education. Currently in effect.
  - Section 41533 (2013) - This authorizes school districts to use a portion of their Professional Development Block Grant funding to pay specifically for suicide prevention training. Currently in effect.
  - Section 215 (2015-2016) - Mandates that the governing board of any local educational Agencies (LEA's) that serves students in grades seven to twelve adopts a policy on pupil suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. Currently in effect.
- Previous State Legislation:
  - Senate Bill 972 (2018) - Increases awareness of services available to students by requiring public schools, private schools, and public and private institutions of higher

education to issue pupil identification cards to include the telephone number for a suicide prevention hotline or the Crisis Text Line. Currently in effect.

- Assembly Bill 309 (2021) - Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop model mental health referral protocols for voluntary use by local educational agencies (LEAs), and to post the protocols on its website.
- Senate Bill 14 (2021) - Makes mental health a reason for excused absence and develops training programs for schools to address youth behavioral health.
- Senate Bill 224 (2021) -Requires local educational agencies (LEAs) and charter schools to include mental health curriculum in health courses.

**The Student Advisory Board of Education**  
Wednesday, November 3, 2021, Item #4

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

Speaker: Jennifer Tran, Bolsa Grande High School, Garden Grove  
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Research: Michelle Kim, Portola High School, Irvine  
Facilitator: Kaylin Chung, Arnold O. Beckman High School, Tustin  
Group Members: Anne Wu, Portola High School, Irvine; Anousha Athreya, Archbishop Mitty High School, San Jose; Michael Joo, Lincoln High School, Stockton; Rhea Dhama, Santiago High School, Corona; Calvin Yang, Hayward High School, Hayward; Tyler Nguyen, Santiago High School, Corona; Allison Dana, Albany High School, Albany; Esther Kim, Chino Hills High School, Chino Hills

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**I. PRIORITY**

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, has identified that Local Education Agencies only require the SSPI to consider civic engagement successes such as completion of government and history courses; therefore, there is less encouragement for schools to implement civic engagement opportunities, which discourages students to prioritize it.

The Student Advisory Board on Education has built a vision that all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, have access to and are educated about everyday avenues of civic engagement, that are fitted to their own way of communication, redefining civic engagement as one of the core standards of the California education system and this student role, not as subjects but as collaborators and stakeholders of education.

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**II. RECOMMENDED SBE ACTION**

The Student Advisory Board on Education, recommends the State Board of Education implements an additional 7th goal regarding civic engagement within the Equity Section of the Quality Schooling Framework.

This goal would state:

**Goal 7**

**Quality schools will provide equitable access to civic engagement opportunities and applicable education to all students.**

High-quality schools recognize the need for equitable access to civic engagement opportunities and applicable civic education, understanding that it is a key aspect to pupil education and post high school civic preparedness. In fulfilling this goal, LEAs ensure that students have accessible avenues to participate in civic engagement, including but not limited to school site councils, voter registration, district board meetings, and advocacy training; reward students who demonstrate excellence in civics education and participation, and an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government; and equip students for a lifetime of civic engagement.

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### **III. LOCAL AND STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS**

In order to ensure that LEAs have the flexibility to implement appropriate action plans pertaining to our goal, the implementation for the recommended action would be based at the local level. LEAs can implement the recommended action using methods such as consulting the CDE Resources to Support Civic Engagement, the California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning, and . Further examples are available in the research packet attached to this proposal.

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### **IV. KEY ISSUES**

- School districts prioritize core courses such as Math, English, and History over civic engagement because they are not required to report on levels of civic engagement among students. According to a 2018 study on education policy from the Brookings Institute, studies have shown that 11 out of the 50 states in the nation lack the service learning component within their school education system. In 2013, President Obama formed a plan focusing on students' education in STEM, science, technology, engineering, and math, thus forgoing a focus on civic engagement and on the humanities.
  - Governing bodies are not in communication with students in a large capacity. Therefore, students are not readily surveyed and their opinions are not necessarily collected. This makes collecting student opinions the responsibility of the students themselves, even though they are the primary stakeholders in California education.
  - Because of a lack of emphasis on civic engagement in school districts across California, students do not feel they are educated enough about the system to coherently communicate the issues they would like to address.
  - There is a misconception that civic engagement requires state level experience firsthand or a radical stance in politics.
  - Current forms of student centered civic engagement disproportionately represent disadvantaged students.
  - Students are not introduced to civic engagement opportunities, due to the very minimum exposure from school districts, admin, and other adults.
  - According to manpowergroup.com, managers are struggling to find students and teenagers with set skills such as social skills, due to the lack of education on these topics in schools.
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## **V. PROVEN RESULTS**

Results from similar actions initiated by the State Department of Education include the State Seal of Civic Engagement and Civic Learning Award. The State Seal of Civic Engagement recognizes pupils who have demonstrated excellence in civics education and participation and an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government.

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## **VI. FISCAL ANALYSIS**

The addition of a civil engagement goal to the Equity element of the QSF would incur little to no cost by the SBE. At the district level, districts may need to divert resources with the implementation of this addition in order to fulfill LCAP goals.

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## **VII. RATIONALE**

The Student Advisory Board on Education believes that the aforementioned recommended action would lead to a strengthening of the connection between equity and student engagement, as it allows for minority or underrepresented student communities to have a starting point that is easily accessible to them. The promotion of civic engagement at the local level will empower students to take hold of the responsibility and rights that they are given as stakeholders of the education system, and allows for flexibility for LEAs. Exposure to civic engagement allows students to develop important life long skills such as communication, local and national service, and leadership skills. Furthermore, the recommended action encourages school districts to acknowledge the amount of student engagement in schools and provides an avenue in which districts can measure engagement, alongside students gaining interpersonal effectiveness.

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## **VIII. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

Previous discussions within the State Department of Education regarding civic engagement include but are not limited to actions pertaining to civic education curriculum, recognition of civic engagement, and student board membership at local and state level boards of education.

Civic education curriculum currently is included in social studies or history standards at each grade level. In order to graduate, high school students must complete a semester-long course in civics and government.

Ways in which students and schools can be recognized by the State Department of Education include the State Seal of Civic Engagement and the Civic Learning Award for California Public Schools.

Student board membership laws have been recently amended to include charter schools and county boards of education; students may be appointed to be a student board member at the state, district, and site level as well. [Sections 33000.5; 47604.2; 35012; 65000]

Previous adopted legislation includes the following:

- AB 24: State Seal of Civic Engagement
  - Recognition of youth who are particularly engaged in civic engagement. Adopted in 2020.
- AB 773: Voter Education
  - Ensures IQC includes local voter education for American government/civics curriculum required in high school (specifically grade 12). Adopted 2019.
- AB 1446: Free Voter Registration
  - All high schools and higher education institutions will get free voter registration forms to match the number of students who are at or will be of voting age by the end of the year. Adopted 2014.
- AB 261: Preferential Voting Rights
  - SBM on LEA will get preferential voting rights (a vote that is heard but not counted). Adopted 2017.
- AB 46: California Youth Empowerment Act
  - Creates a commission of youth ages 14 to 25 to advise the Governor, Legislature, and Superintendent of Public Instruction on youth-related issues. Adopted 2021.
- AB 824: Charter and County Boards of Education
  - Allows for student board members at the charter school and county board of education levels. Adopted 2021.

# The Student Advisory Board of Education

Wednesday, November 3, 2021, Item #5

## EQUITABLE EDUCATION

Speaker: Linda Nong, Portola High School, Irvine

Writer: Christopher Tan, Granite Bay High School, Granite Bay

Research: Ellie Lian, Portola High School, Iriine

Group Members: Amber Zhao, Walnut High School, Walnut; Maana Kolagotla, Christopher High School, Gilroy; Ko Er (Carol) Rau, Chino Hills High School, Chino Hills; Mary Zawalick, San Luis Obispo High School, San Luis Obispo; Daniel Penaloza, Moorpark High School, Moorpark; Chloe Wang, Ruben S. Ayala, Chino Hills

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### I. PRIORITY

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, has identified that widespread inequities in education, especially towards marginalized student groups, is a critical issue facing the state of California.

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### II. RECOMMENDED SBE ACTION

The Student Advisory Board on Education suggests that the State Board of Education approves a blueprint called RISE - Raise in School Equity. The creation of this blueprint would be tasked to the Educator Excellence & Equity Division of the Instruction, Measurement & Administration Branch of the California Department of Education to create this state-level blueprint. This blueprint would outline clear practices for more student-centered interactions with all aspects of the school system and recommend that teachers follow inclusive teaching practices for a curriculum that will accommodate the learning needs of all student groups.

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### III. LOCAL AND STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS

The Student Advisory Board on Education recommends that the Educator Excellence & Equity Division of the Instruction, Measurement & Administration Branch of the California Department of Education create a blueprint that outlines tangible and feasible practices for more equitable education called RISE - Raise in School Equity. RISE would function as a general guideline, with local school districts being given the ability to implement RISE as they see fit within their local districts' needs. RISE should easily integrate with existing curriculum, and take inspiration and build upon existing equity resources such as the Universal Design for Learning and Multi Tiered, Multi-Domain System of Supports. The California Department of Education should work with students, teachers, administration, and parents of a variety of cultural backgrounds, races, socioeconomic statuses, genders, language abilities, disabilities, and academic proficiencies to make this blueprint to ensure it is representative of the entire state.

The blueprint should include but not be limited to:

- Recommending accessible professional development courses for teachers, with the aim of serving diverse ways of learning.
- Methods for enabling student choice in their education and allowing multiple forms of expression of knowledge.
- Promoting more frequent and accessible ways of communication with teachers and students.
- Facilitating Allowing anonymous forms of communication between students and administrators to provide more honest feedback.
- Promoting teachers' use of open source and translated materials to help with accessibility.
- Providing districts with survey templates that better address stakeholder concerns.
- Promoting methods of accommodating disabilities by using multiple media forms for communication.
- More student friendly forms of communication such as social media.
- More representative materials that express a diverse background and are more reflective of the student body, such as books with authors of various ethnicities.
- Various methods of support for different levels of proficiencies such as peer tutoring for ELD students by bilingual students.

Once R.I.S.E is approved, then the State Board of Education would reach out to local education agencies and recommend that they implement these practices in any capacity possible (relevant to each local districts' unique situations) into their own guidelines, similar to how frameworks like MTMDSS have been implemented in the past.

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#### **IV. KEY ISSUES**

- Students are disengaged with their curriculum since it often does not represent them and fit their learning needs.
  - Walnut High School, and a variety of others, have a lack of course variety regarding various cultures and communication between counselors made the process very difficult and led to general dissatisfaction.
  - At Portola High School, in the English curriculum there is very little required reading written by writers of color or reflecting non eurocentric writing.
- Communication methods between the student body and faculty are not properly implemented, leading to a disconnect between the needs of the students and the actions taken.
  - In several districts, we noticed a trend that students refused to take surveys or feared giving their honest opinions since it either collected identifying information or students were not aware that the results were anonymous.



- At Walnut High School, and a variety of others, poor communication between students and counselors made the course selection process very difficult and led to general dissatisfaction.
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## **V. PROVEN RESULTS**

- RJUHSD has good practices surrounding co-teaching programs to support special needs. This helps empower disadvantaged students and give them access to a quality education.
  - Every student at Granite Bay High School has one on one appointments with their counselor for course selection and finalization leading to higher satisfaction.
  - In Moorpark High School, administrators can share what they're doing to support Spanish speakers at ELAC (English Language Advisory Committee) meetings.
  - Bilingual assistants in San Luis Obispo High School classes have helped English Language Learners absorb the material and perform better in school.
  - Granite Bay High School has courses that offer choice assignments (choice of medium such as video, essay, poster, etc.) which have been well received by students
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## **VI. FISCAL ANALYSIS**

The creation of the R.I.S.E blueprint will incur little to no cost. Because the development of R.I.S.E is to be placed under an existing division of the California Department of Education, no monetary investments are necessary to support the establishment of this endeavor. Furthermore, research should also be of minimal cost as there is plenty of existing resources and research that this blueprint can use to form its equitable practices.

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## **VII. RATIONALE**

- Inequities in our education system detriment the outcomes of every student in California.
  - It has been shown that equity can strengthen a student's health and social-emotional development.
  - The blueprint would assist not only those in marginalized groups, but every student as their education becomes more responsive to their needs.
  - Knowing that their voices will be heard, students will be more likely to engage with their curriculum.
  - By improving engagement, this blueprint would help reduce dropout rates.
  - Improving education outcomes for undeserving student groups can increase net economic benefits to society and save billions of dollars in public assistance programs.
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## VIII. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DISCUSSION AND ACTION

- Previous Legislative Action
  - Assembly Bill 967 - Special education: COVID-19 Special Education Fund
    - This bill would establish the COVID-19 Special Education Fund in the State Treasury to be used by the State Department of Education to, among other points, provide services to pupils with disabilities relating to individually determined impacts to learning associated with COVID-19 pandemic school disruptions. The bill would require a local educational agency to submit an application for funding to their special education local plan area to be eligible for these funds
  - Senate Bill 237 - Special education: Dyslexia risk screening
    - This bill helps eliminate educational barriers by requiring LEAs with students from kindergarten through 2nd grade to screen each student for dyslexia, starting in the 2022-23 school year. Costs will be reimbursed by the state. This bill has been amended twice and is currently referred to the Committee on Education.
  - Senate Bill 50 - Early learning and care
    - This bill will “strengthen and promote a mixed-delivery early learning and care system in California to better meet the needs of working parents and their children, particularly infants and toddlers, as envisioned in the state’s bold, new Master Plan for Early Learning and Care” (Early Edge California). It also removes barriers to access such childcare programs for families already eligible for other financial assistance such as CalFresh and Medicaid.
  - Assembly Bill 1363 - Preschool: dual language learners
    - Existing law, the Early Education Act, requires, among others, an inclusive and cost-effective preschool program that provides high-quality learning experiences and referrals for families to access health and social-emotional support services. The act requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop standards for the implementation of high-quality preschool programs and requires that indicators of quality include, among other things, program activities and services that meet the cultural and linguistic needs of children and families.
    - This bill would require the above-described quality indicator to include program activities and services that meet the need of dual language learners for support in the development of their home language and English. The bill would also require the development of procedures for state preschool contractors to identify and report data on dual language learners enrolled in a preschool program, as specified, and would require the reported data to include, among other things, a child’s home language and the language composition of the program staff.

# The Student Advisory Board of Education

Wednesday, November 3, 2021, Item #6

## **SOCIOECONOMIC SUPPORT**

Speaker: Audrey Hong, Beckman High School, Irvine

Writer: Sarah Joo, Lincoln High School, Stockton

Research: Harper Johnston, C.K. McClatchy High School, Sacramento

Facilitator: Ava Gebhart, Foothill High School, Palo Cedro

Group Members: Eliana Morris, Newbury Park High School, Thousand Oaks; Dylan Choi, Chaparral High School, Temecula; Victoria Cho, Troy High School, Fullerton; Bonika Gudeta Vanden High School, Fairfield; Jihoo Yoon, Northwood High School, Irvine; Dawson Kelly, San Marcos High School, Santa Barbara; Matthew Rodriguez, Santiago High School, Corona

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### **I. PRIORITY**

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, has identified that LEAs lack adequate methods of relaying information on accessible resources such as scholarship opportunities, job opportunities, or peer tutoring to help students of all socioeconomic backgrounds, especially students coming from low income families.

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### **II. RECOMMENDED SBE ACTION**

The Student Advisory Board on Education suggests that the State Board of Education develop a recommended plan for Local Education Agencies to better communicate to both students and parents about accessible resources.

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### **III. LOCAL AND STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS**

1. The State Board of Education will recommend a plan created by the Educational Program Consultants and the Communications Division of the CDE for the Local Education Agencies to allow for accurate and consistent communication on accessible resources for both students and parents from grades K-12.
  - a. The recommended plan would incorporate communication strategies to prevent the intrusion of misinformation and provide accessible ways of communication that the LEAs can adopt.
  - b. The communication professionals and the Communications Division of the CDE will be given a month to develop and implement these recommendations.
2. On a local level, elements of this plan may include publicization through:
  - a. School newspapers
  - b. Posts on social media
  - c. Digital pamphlets provided for both students and parents
  - d. Flyers handed regularly to students

3. Accessible resources that can be recommended that LEAs share include but are not limited to:
    - a. Scholarship opportunities
    - b. Job opportunities
    - c. Volunteer opportunities
    - d. Tutoring services
    - e. Financial aid programs
    - f. Extracurricular opportunities
    - g. Available webinars
  4. In the future, feedback will be gathered by the above parties from the schools and districts that choose to adopt these recommendations in order to measure the effectiveness of CDE proposed communication methods.
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#### **IV. KEY ISSUES**

Students are not given resources or are not informed of resources available that can help them to succeed.

- In Fullerton Joint High School District, higher level classes do not take the mental health of students seriously, and instead of being given sources to help them, they are advised to drop the class or leave the school.
- Students from Northwood High School in Irvine Unified School District get a newspaper, but students do not always get the information provided in those newspapers, and are unable to access resources provided in the newspapers through alternative sources.
- In Northwood High School, a Chinese student wanted a Chinese dictionary to help prepare for the PSATs, but was unable to access it because of insufficient information on available resources.
- Low income students from Lincoln High School in Lincoln Unified School District feel uncomfortable asking for financial help when their teacher required specific materials the students were unable to afford. However, they still lost points because they didn't have the material.
- In Portola High School, a student in AP Physics was having a mental breakdown in the middle of class, but the teacher was unable to provide any aid for the student.

Students are misinformed on available resources because they and their families do not have access to trustworthy sources to learn about these resources.

- Students get the wrong information on available resources because the information they get is from other students through word of mouth.
  - In Lincoln High School, some students advance ahead of other students because they are not given clear information about what extra courses, such as dual enrollment classes they can take.
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## **V. PROVEN RESULTS**

- A few teachers at Troy High School provide links to hotlines and mental health sources in their Google Classrooms. This is effective towards their students who need it and we hope to expand this.
  - Counselors at Portola High School also provide links to hotlines and mental health resources to their students online. However, many students don't know that their counselors had posted and provided these resources to them. We hope to raise awareness to the students that their counselors have given them these resources.
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## **VI. FISCAL ANALYSIS**

The creation of a LEA communication plan will be the responsibility of the Education Programs Consultants and the Communications Division of the CDE. The only costs will be generated from payment of Education Programs Consultants developing the plan totalling an estimated \$22,062.

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## **VII. RATIONALE**

As the achievement gap between privileged and underprivileged students becomes more prominent, it is evident that the socioeconomic status of a student in California heavily affects their academic success. Moreover, the lack of proper advertising and the spread of misinformation makes it even more difficult for students to seek out assistance.

Developing a plan for Local Education Agencies to promote accessibility would create an inclusive and well-informed environment where students and parents are aware of where they can get guidance. This plan will reach out to all grades from K-12, providing equal opportunities with little to no cost. Offering easier access to resources by pamphlets, social media, etc would benefit students and parents to better approach the information that promotes a higher quality of education.

This plan would further encourage higher education, reaching out to every student in California. These resources could potentially reduce dropout rates as the programs encourage students to take responsibility for their futures. Promoting extracurriculars and webinars provide students with academic enrichment, establishing an equal ground for students regardless of their status. Other opportunities such as tutoring services, job and scholarship opportunities, and financial aid would support students despite their disadvantages. This could increase graduation rates, narrow the achievement and opportunity gap, as well as increase students' trust in the school system. Regardless of social or economic background, every student in California would be able to have an equal opportunity to succeed.