California Association of Student Councils

Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education

2014 Proposals

Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education (SABLE)
Proposals Developed February 24-26, 2014

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COMMENDATIONS

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education commends the Assembly Committee on Education for speaking with the students of California for the 2014 SABLE conference.

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education commends Rick Pratt, Chief Consultant for the Assembly Committee on Education, for his invaluable knowledge and continued support of the California Association of Student Councils and the Student Advisory Board program.

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education commends Adonai Mack, Legislative Advocate for the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), for his work with the delegation, helping them hone their proposals and granting them honest and accurate insight into the world of education policy.

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education commends Bruce Holaday, member of the California State Board of Education, for his continued dedication to the Student Advisory Board of Education (SABE) and the Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education (SABLE), speaking and working with the delegation.

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education commends John Mockler of John Mockler & Associates (writer of Proposition 98 and former Executive Director of the State Board of Education) for his work with the delegation in helping them crystallize their proposals.

STAFF MEMBERS
Director: Ajay Shanmugham, Brea Olinda High School, Brea
Assistant Director: Maggie Wang, Troy High School, Fullerton
Adult on Site: Dr. Anysia Mayer, CSU Stanislaus
Gamma (Counselor Trainer): Karina Hwang, Claremont McKenna College
Research Team Lead: Cameron Keegan, Analy High School, Sebastopol
Administrative Team (A-Team): Megan Wong, Mira Loma High School, Sacramento
Counselors: Hiro Bower, University of California at Santa Barbara; Hector Delgado, University of California at Los Angeles; Samantha Hunt, Enterprise High School, Redding; Esha Lal, Granite Bay High School, Granite Bay; Jennifer Yi, Troy High School, Fullerton
Presented to the Assembly Education Committee

Wednesday, February 26, 2014, Item #1

Topic: District Student Board Members
Presenters: Shawn Ahdout, Beverly Hills High School, Beverly Hills; Justin Ingram, Bellarmine College
Preparatory, San Jose; Milan Zhou, Folsom High School, Folsom
Facilitator: Hiro Bower, University of California at Santa Barbara
Group Members: Emma Boggs, Oakdale High School, Oakdale; Kristin Hsu, Fairfield High School, Fairfield; Jay Nam,
Troy High School, Fullerton; Emily Sim, Troy High School, Fullerton; Grace Song, John A. Rowland
High School, Rowland Heights; Judith Zhu, Ayala High School, Chino Hills

I. PRIORITY

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California
Association of Student Councils, supports student involvement in the decision-making process.

II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature amend education code 35012 to
remove the requirement that students obtain evidence that 10 percent of the district's students
support a student board member. We support an amendment that allows for any high school
student to create a student board member position by submitting a formal written request to the
school board chairperson.

III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE

- Students deserve meaningful involvement in the decision-making process because they are
the main stakeholders in the education system. Research suggests students who are
engaged do better academically.
- Districts across the state that have student members on their board of education and this
creates a beneficial environment where students understand that their opinions matter.
- Folsom Cordova Unified School District (FCUSD) has a student board member who has
led a dedicated group of high school representatives in providing a student perspective to
the district board meetings.
- The State Board of Education has a student member who represents the students of
California at the State Board Meetings.

IV. KEY ISSUES

- Student voices and opinions are not fully heard due to the absence of the Student Board
Member position in various school districts. This stems from a lack of awareness and
support from the local school districts.

V. FISCAL ANALYSIS

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The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement. This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursements for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

VI.   **PREVIOUS ACTION**

Relevant Education Code
- California Education Code Section 35012, Part D: Any district where 10% of the high school students, or 500 student, whichever is less, sign a petition to create a student board member, the Board of Education is required to include pupil representation.
- California Education Code Section 33000.5, Part A: the Governor shall also appoint a student member to the State Board of Education, with the advice and consent of two-thirds of the Senate.

Previous Legislative action
- AB 1007 (2009-2010) – Amended petition process in 35012 to include a preferential vote for the SBM through a petition. Passed through congress. Vetoed by governor.

Student/CASC action
- Campaign to have all school boards have a student board member by the year 2020 (CASC 2020).
- Increase student involvement in the education system (SABE/SABLE).

Presented to the Assembly Education Committee
Wednesday, February 26, 2014, Item #2

Topic: Gauging School Climate
Presenters: Cecellia Tsui, Oxford Academy, Cypress; Gathenji Njoroge, Bakersfield Christian High School, Bakersfield

Group Members: Richard Duan, Mira Loma High School, Sacramento; Davis Katakura, Marina High School, Huntington Beach; Sarah Lopez, Moorpark High School, Moorpark; Eleyna Guerrero, River City High School, West Sacramento; Sierra Pilgrim, Lincoln Jr. High, Taft; Jasdeep Sihota, San Marcos High School, Carlsbad; Jinnie Rhee, Valencia High School, Placentia

I.   PRIORITY

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation and Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, establishes a method of measuring school climate to enhance student wellness as a priority.

II.   RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature
1. Create a pilot survey for both high school students and administrators based on criteria, such as bullying and mental wellness, in order to accurately gauge school climate. After the success of the pilot survey has been determined, a permanent survey may be established based on the feedback from the pilot survey.
2. Mandate that students are aware of resources, such as mental health psychologists, available in order to help improve the school climate.
3. Require a semi-annual incident report of all pertinent incidents that affect student climate (e.g. suicides and assault) that will be anonymous and released to the County Board of Education.

III.   PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE

- Students desire to feel comfortable, accepted, and safe in their school environment. We believe that with more specific guidelines to quantify student climate, funds will be more accurately and efficiently distributed to benefit the schools.
- It is the intention of this revision to not only improve the measurement of school climate, but also to encourage students to stay in school and use the most of their education for the betterment of California in the future.

IV.   KEY ISSUES

- School climate is currently measured by drop-out rates. There is no method known that can accurately measure climate due to varying factors between schools.
- Local district issues are also taken into account. However, these issues can vary between districts, making it difficult to assess the school climate of California.

V.   FISCAL ANALYSIS

Even though the immediate implementation will have a cost, the ultimate goal is the well-being

and best education for the students. Funding our students' education is a long term investment, and we will be repaid by having a better economy due to a more productive generation of children.

What will cost money?
- The creation and maintenance of the survey's website will cost some money.
- It will cost time and money to send an incident report to the County Board of Education.

What will not cost money?
- Mandating that students are aware of their resources will only cost the time taken to present to the students.
- Printing the evaluations out and mailing them.
- Convincing the schools to take the survey will not cost money because the incentive of better distributed funding will be sufficient.

VI. **PAST ACTIONS**
- California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey (Cal-SCHLS) System
  - California School Climate Survey (CSCS)
  - California School Parent Survey (CSPS)
  - Healthy Kids Survey (2010)
    - Students and parents feel uncomfortable
    - Lack of participation among administration

Presented to the Assembly Education Committee
Wednesday, February 26, 2014, Item #3

Topic: Teacher Feedback
Presenters: Srilekha Bonala, Mira Loma High School, Sacramento; Alex Kim, South Pasadena High School, South Pasadena; Phillip Oh, Northwood High School, Irvine
Facilitator: Hector Delgado, University of California at Los Angeles
Group Members: Sunshine Cho, South Pasadena High School, South Pasadena; Emily Duan, Mira Loma High School, Sacramento; Marika Gregory, Kit Carson Middle School, Sacramento; Shania Harsono, Analy High School, Sebastopol; Julie Hong, Troy High School, Fullerton; Asad Hussain, Troy

I.   PRIORITY

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student
Councils, establishes improving SB 1422 as a priority.

II.   RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature
1. Implementing a student-developed statewide system for student-teacher feedback in
   high schools and junior high schools.
2. Establishing a finalized set of criteria which guide students in providing feedback of their
   teachers' performance based on student-developed guidelines recommended by the
   Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education.

III.   PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE

Students should have a voice within their education because students ultimately are the most
significant stakeholders involved. Students' perspective of an ideal teacher often differs from
that of administrators. Therefore, students can use an effective feedback system, based off
student-created criteria, to voice observations and solutions to help improve their teachers'
performance. The criteria includes items with which students have prior experience and
exposure, such as how well teachers effectively integrate technology into their lessons, utilize the
time provided during lessons, and control the classroom atmosphere. Not only will the criteria
for the feedback system benefit students, but teachers will improve by receiving feedback in a
structured and positive manner. The state of California will implement the Common Core
Standards, which aims to provide a holistic learning experience. A student developed feedback
system would complement Common Core by incorporating student views and ideas into this
new system. Above all, the establishment of constructive student-to-teacher feedback criteria
will create a comfortable relationship between of both students and teachers and and improve
the performance levels of both parties.

Several case studies prove the effectiveness of student-teacher feedback systems in improving
teacher performance. A main factor in the majority of the studies is measuring performance and
improvement from a students' viewpoints, as they are the main beneficiaries of teacher
performance. For example, the International Journal of Medicine conducted two studies in 2011
in the Second Military University in China and in the University of Washington School of
Medicine in the United States in which they defined criteria within the feedback mechanism and

measured increases or decreases within student satisfaction. The criteria included the teacher's control of the classroom and interaction with the student. Within the first year, there was about a ten percent increase in student satisfaction and a fifty percent increase by 2013.

Another case study conducted by the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project, endorsed by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, tests a student's ability to identify the effectiveness of a teacher despite the level of resources available. The study set criteria consisted of:

Care: The teacher can identify a problem bothering a student.
Control: The teacher can actively stop disruptive behavior.
Clarify: The teacher knows when the class understands.
Consolidate: The teacher can identify weaknesses within the classroom and individual students and fix them.

The students of the study provided an average of 40 percent positive feedback to ineffective teachers and an average of 80 percent positive feedback to effective teachers. This study suggests that students can clearly identify a teacher's effectiveness.

A study conducted by University of Arizona professor Lawrence Aleamoni in 1999 identifies an 87 to 89 percent correlation between the use of student based feedback towards their teachers and teacher improvement.

The New Haven School system in Connecticut has developed a process and criteria for student, administration, and parent feedback towards teachers. The student sector has seen about 40 percent improvement over the course of the program.

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education suggests that students provide feedback to their teachers within the following criteria:
- Challenges students
- Is organized
- Engages students
- Effectively utilizes time
- Effectively utilizes resources
- Appropriately integrates technology
- Has effective presentation skills
- Teaches to all learning styles
- Helps all students to feel comfortable in the classroom
- Disciplines effectively
- Treats all students impartially

- Behaves appropriately at all times
- Is available to students outside of class

IV. **KEY ISSUES**

- There is no standardized criteria for student feedback on teacher performance. In most schools in California, collection of student feedback is not a commonplace activity. Not all teachers actively seek out student feedback.
- Students are not able to provide balanced, organized comments to their teachers about the teachers' performance. Teachers may feel threatened or victimized by imbalanced or unorganized comments.

V. **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

What will cost money?
- Editing and finalizing the criteria to be used for student-teacher feedback will require moderate funding to financially compensate those involved in the editing process.
- If a paper survey system is implemented as the medium for our criteria-based feedback, then a financial investment would have to be made to pay for the paper used.

How can we pay for it creatively?
- If a paper survey system was implemented as the medium for our criteria-based feedback, then a financial investment would have to be made to compensate for the paper used. An alternative medium to paper could be a school wide survey that would be distributed electronically. Likewise, schools may also use electronic resources to lessen costs of printing and distributing.

Presented to the Assembly Education Committee
Wednesday, February 26, 2014, Item #4

Topic: Technology in the Classroom
Presenters: Tori Sheber, Windsor High School, Windsor; Jenny Wang, Pasadena High School, Pasadena; Madison Zimmerman, University Preparatory School, Redding
Facilitator: Jennifer Yi, Troy High School, Fullerton
Group Members: Tianna Aiken, Kit Carson Middle School, Sacramento; Jordan Blaska, Lincoln Junior High, Taft; Jason Li, Pleasant Grove High School, Elk Grove; Erik Martin, Westlake High School, Westlake Village; Ishan Sinha, Bellarmine College Preparatory, San Jose; Auberta Ting, Zenith Review, Irvine; Sindhuja Vaidhyanathan, Mira Loma High, Sacramento; Jasmine Yong, Oakdale High School, Oakdale; Simon Zhou, Canyon High School, Anaheim

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I. **PRIORITY**

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student

Councils, establishes technological comprehension and application as top priorities on the state educational agenda.

II.   RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature increase the presence of computer programming in California's education system by recommending each educational district to utilize an online program to help teach students about basic computer functions and applications. Although the ultimate decision of which program to use will be made by the individual districts, three programs that caught our eyes were the Hour of Code, a program that teaches the basics of computer programming and the functions of the computer, Code/Racer, an interactive game that promotes coding, and AtomicLearning.Com, a website with a comprehensive set of tutorials in regard to computer usage. Some other potential programs are CodeAcademy.com, W3schools.com, Eloquent JavaScript, Code School, Code Avengers, PythonTutor.com, MIT OpenCourseWare, Udacity, Mozilla Developer Network, K12.com, and TCH010. Although the districts may choose not to use a program to improve computer education, we believe that state influence will be a crucial factor in both the advancement of support for computer programming in core education,as well as the increase of general public awareness for this key area of education. By virtue of having the state government support these programs, the campaign for the inclusion of computer programming in basic education will become a practical and effective symbol in the incorporation of modern technology in the California education system.

III.   PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE

- Coding is essential in the education of students as it sets the infrastructure for all software.
- Coding promotes problem solving and allows kids to analyze more effectively.
- It allows students to see how math can be integrated in the learning of computer languages.
- Computer science is a new frontier in the world job market.It is a top-paying college degree and computer programming jobs are growing at 2X the national average. Learning programs inform users of not only vital computer functions but also the basics of computer programming.
- Because of programs such as Hour of Code, one out of every 6 American students knowing how to program. In addition to the president, companies in the Silicon Valley have been lobbying school districts to teach computer science and state to require computer science as a core subject.
- So far, 6 states have committed to requiring instruction in computer science.

IV.   KEY ISSUES

- The K-12 student educational system is not preparing students for the modern age of

technological development and design.

V. FISCAL ANALYSIS

The programs are completely free, with the only cost being time. The state would have no cost because this is simply a recommendation for the districts.

VI. PREVIOUS ACTION

Because coding is such a new frontier, California should take this opportunity to promote computer programming. Obviously, no bills have been passed about this yet and California should take it as a chance to be a role model. Kentucky has already allowed schools to count it as a foreign language. Because programming will be in common core, the education board should definitely consider taking this chance to prepare for such a large leap into something we'll all be tested on.

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Presented to the Assembly Education Committee
Wednesday, February 26, 2014, Item #5

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Topic: Defining Pupil Engagement in the LCAP Rubric
Presenters: Vivian Yang, Mira Loma High School, Sacramento; Zhenrong Shi, Crescenta Valley High School, La
                  Crescenta; Riva Yeo, Troy High School, Fullerton
Facilitator: Esha Lal, Granite Bay High School, Granite Bay
Group Members: Angela Sohng, Troy High School, Fullerton; Sandy Hi, Eagle Rock High School, Los
                  Angeles; Paige Amormino, Cardinal Newman High School, Santa Rosa; Spencer Coon, Cardinal
                  Newman High School, Santa Rosa; Gina Wu, Rio Americano High School, Sacramento; Siena Getz,
                  Kit Carson Middle School, Sacramento; Nicholas Daneshvari, Westlake High School, Westlake
                  Village; Emily Duarte, Eagle Rock High School, Los Angeles

I. PRIORITY

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student

Councils, establishes increasing student engagement by expanding its definition in the LCAP as a priority.

II.   RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature expands the definition of pupil engagement in the LCAP as students having diverse opportunities to be actively invested in the school, both inside and outside of the classroom.

III.   PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE

- School is the opportunity for students to discover themselves and engage in their passions to experience personal growth. The 6.3 million students across California have diverse passions, and if some students are not given an outlet for expression and engagement, they will not experience that same level of motivation and growth.
- The current LCAP list of priorities addresses the topic of "pupil engagement." The problem is that pupil engagement is narrowly defined as absences and dropout ratings (school attendance rates, chronic absenteeism rates, middle school dropout rates, high school dropout rates, high school graduations rates). While attendance and dropout rates should be considered, "pupil engagement" clearly means more. It means that students have diverse opportunities to be actively invested in school, both inside and outside the classroom. We strongly support the ideals of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), which aims to give the district greater flexibility in determining their resource allocation. We want to ensure that district boards keep this definition of pupil engagement in mind while they are distributing our resources. As a result, pupil engagement and interests will be truly accounted for, allowing those districts that provide lesser opportunities to direct their attention toward and cater to their student's interests.
- With more opportunities at schools, students will find engagement opportunities that better align with their interests. Thus, students will feel happier and more confident in their school system because they will feel a greater sense of community and involvement. Therefore, the California education system as a whole will improve and lead to auspicious outcomes such as decreasing dropout rates, and thus a more educated, productive population.

IV.   KEY ISSUES

- Pupil engagement in the LCAP is narrowly defined as K-12 attendance rates and drop-out rates.
- The current definition fails to encompass the true meaning of student engagement: students actively invested in the school both outside or inside the classroom.

V. FISCAL ANALYSIS

The implementation of the expansion of the definition of "pupil engagement" in the LCAP would not change any necessary funding for schools, as the components of this rubric is ultimately decided by the districts.

VI. PREVIOUS ACTION

Relevant Education Code
- LCAP Priority #5: Pupil Engagement

Student/CASC action
- "Funding and Resource Allocation" (SABE 2013) Student surveys to gauge satisfaction with future preparedness opportunities, as well as other areas of priority in the LCAP.