



LINKED LEARNING
ALLIANCE

March 4, 2016

Dr. Michael Kirst, President
State Board of Education
1430 N Street, Room 5111
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SBE March 2016 Agenda Item #23: Developing a New Accountability System: Update on the Local Control Funding Formula, including, but not limited to, the Local Control and Accountability Plan and Annual Update Template; the Evaluation Rubrics; Discussion on the Every Student Succeeds Act State Plan; Introduction of the California Practitioners Advisory Group; and Revised Timeline for Transitioning to the New Accountability and Continuous Improvement System.

Dear President Kirst,

As the State Board draws closer to finalizing the emerging accountability system, the Linked Learning Alliance (LLA) would like to highlight concerns with proposed recommendations for a College and Career Indicator (CCI) presented by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Torlakson in the February 22 memo to the State Board titled “Developing a New Accountability System: An Overview of Potential College and Career Indicators.” The Superintendent’s memo, which provides guidance on the inclusion of a CCI in an aligned state and federal accountability system, recommends indicators that would effectively move the state away from its commitment to college *and* career readiness.

The LLA supports the goal of aligning the state and federal accountability systems and strongly urges the State Board to include a College *and* Career Indicator as one of the “other indicators” required by ESSA. Findings, including those of David Conley of the Education Policy Improvement Center (EPIC)¹, have shown that students who participate in integrated college and career course sequences in high school are better prepared to make informed decisions about their future once they graduate, and are better prepared for success in postsecondary education and training than their peers.² These findings hold for student subgroups who have low achieving academic histories, and who are often otherwise tracked into career-oriented programs of study or other non-college preparatory academic courses.

¹ David Conley, “Measures for a College and Career Indicator”, EPIC, Presentation to PSAA December 2, 2014, available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/pa/documents/psaadec14item05ho1.pdf>.

² The James Irvine Foundation, “2016 Snapshot: Linked Learning in Motion - Evidence”, available at <http://interactives.irvine.org/linkedlearning2016/evidence/research>.

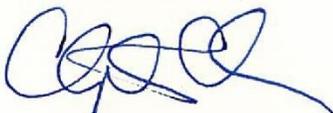
However, the Superintendent's two proposed CCI models, while purportedly College *and* Career indicators, would in practice function as College *or* Career indicators, and may not lead to integrated College *and* Career experiences.

Under the *Standards Model*, students would be expected to complete various criteria (e.g. completing a-g courses, CTE pathways, AP exam scores) that prepare them for college and career, however because "students are placed in the CCI based on their highest achievement" the integration of experiences is not actually a requirement. When only a single standard needs to be met, there is no guarantee that a student will be exposed to both academic and career preparatory experiences, much less the high-quality, integrated opportunities that make the Linked Learning approach effective.

The *Point System Model*, on the other hand, is better designed to incentivize both academic and career preparatory experiences, though it does not ensure that students will actually experience both. As designed, students would be assigned points based on their performance in multiple areas which, for example, may include a-g courses, dual enrollment and AP exams but not career preparatory experiences, or vice versa. A superior *Point System Model* would be outcome-based instead of input-based, and would give substantial weight to high-quality, integrated college and career readiness experiences.

Finally, as the State Board further refines a college and career indicator, the LLA encourages it to review "Recognizing College and Career Readiness in the California School Accountability System" by Soung Bae and Linda Darling-Hammond,³ the LLA's April 2014 presentation to the California Department of Education's Public Schools Accountability Act Advisory Committee Meeting: "Success for All: Multiple Measures for College & Career Readiness,"⁴ and the accompanying framework document "Raising the Bar on College and Career Readiness."⁵

Sincerely,



Christopher Cabaldon
President
Linked Learning Alliance

³ Soung Bae and Linda Darling-Hammond, "Recognizing College and Career Readiness in the California School Accountability System", SCOPE, available at https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/recognizing-college-and-career-readiness-california-school-accountability-system_1.pdf.

⁴ Christopher Cabaldon, "Success for All: Multiple Measures for College & Career Readiness", Presentation to the PSAA April 15th, 2014, available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/pa/documents/apr14item05ho1.pdf>.

⁵ Linked Learning Alliance, "Raising the Bar on College and Career Readiness" presented to the PSAA April 15, 2014 <http://linkedlearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Raising-the-Bar-on-CCR-API-Framework-FINAL.pdf>.