



MARIN COUNTY

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April 10, 2015

Hon. Marty Block
State Senate
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

SB 191: SUPPORT
Senate Appropriations Committee

Dear Senator Block:

The Marin County Association of Superintendents, which includes all Marin County district superintendents and the county superintendent of schools, has reviewed your SB 191 and has taken a position of strong support for the bill.

SB 191 will gradually raise the home-to-school transportation reimbursement rate for severely underfunded districts to 50 percent over a 7 year period and will provide a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for transportation funding for all school districts.

Marin County school leadership is in favor of this legislation primarily because we believe the state needs to establish greater equity in the school transportation program. The current average statewide district reimbursement rate for Home-to-School Transportation is 38 percent. In Marin County, while the average funding percentage is 41%, the funding ranges from as low as 0.5% to a high of 79%. These significant discrepancies are due to a long outdated reimbursement formula that has failed to keep up with increased costs and student population growth and migration. Marin County in particular has seen a 15% increase in K-12 student enrollment driving the need for home to school transportation to ease traffic congestion countywide and ensure that our students arrive at school safely.

In addition, the significant amount of encroachment that many districts face in their transportation programs makes it difficult to fully implement their Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP) and prioritize Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) funding for the needs of at-risk students and English language learners. The LCFF maintained home to school transportation as a stand-alone categorical program. The state now has an obligation to create the same equity for students in that program

that it is creating in the broader goals of the LCFF. SB 191 will help to fulfill these goals.

The most recent data that has been collected is quite clear. The California Department of Education indicates that school districts spent over \$1.2 billion transporting students but there was only \$492 million in program reimbursement in 2012-13. SB 191 will ensure that this inequity is addressed and ultimately eliminated.

Again, the Marin County Association of Superintendents strongly supports SB 191. If we can be of further assistance please contact Marin County Superintendent of Schools Mary Jane Burke at (415) 499-5801.

Sincerely,



Mary Jane Burke
Marin County Superintendent of Schools



Thomas J. Lohwasser
Dixie School District Superintendent

cc: Senator Vidak
Senator McGuire
Assembly Member Levine
Senate Appropriations Committee Members