



CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

TOM TORLAKSON

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

June 14, 2016

Dear Superintendent King and School Board President Zimmer:

I received Superintendent King's letter dated June 14, 2016, and am currently reviewing it with my staff. As representatives from the California Department of Education (CDE) and I have said in phone meetings with you, we stand ready to work through all of these fiscal issues very carefully. Our staffs are scheduled to meet on June 16, 2016, to discuss ways in which the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) can comply with the Department's May 27, 2016, decision in the appeal filed by Reyna Frias and to do so in a way that minimizes any budget disruptions.

Unfortunately, there has been considerable misunderstanding of the decision. I hope this letter can provide clarity. Respectfully, the CDE decision does not require LAUSD to identify \$1 billion in programmatic cuts.

Furthermore, some media reports were not accurate. It was not the finding of CDE that LAUSD inappropriately expended \$450 million or that it "shortchanged" unduplicated students. Instead, CDE reviewed the complaint and concluded that LAUSD did not provide an adequate explanation of how \$450 million in special education funds met the proportional spending requirements for services for unduplicated students in Local Control and Accountability Plans.

Districts receive extra funds for unduplicated students – foster youth, low income students, and English learners – and are required to demonstrate how the extra funds increase or improve services to these students.

It is our understanding that LAUSD may be able to justify counting a significant portion of the \$450 million or it may be able to identify in its LCAP other expenditures that are principally directed towards unduplicated students.

In doing so, LAUSD would be able to minimize disruption to its budget. Alternatively, it could redirect spending in its budget toward services that principally benefit unduplicated students, or it could take some combination of both actions.

In discussions with LAUSD staff, it has become clear that in 2016-17, the maximum amount of additional funds that LAUSD would have to identify as going towards unduplicated students or redirect in spending toward unduplicated students is \$245 million. But in order to allow LAUSD to make thoughtful adjustments to its LCAP and budget, CDE will not require LAUSD to make any significant spending adjustments until the 2017-18 fiscal year.

June 14, 2016
Page 2

CDE staff looks forward to discussing these issues in more detail with LAUSD and helping staff implement the decision in a way that is fair and complies with the law and avoids disruptions to students and faculty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Torlakson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent horizontal stroke at the top.

Tom Torlakson

TT:ba