



March 25, 2021

The Honorable Jose Medina
Chair
Assembly Higher Education Committee
State Capitol, Room 2141
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell
Chair
Assembly Education Committee
State Capitol, Room 4001
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1491 (McCarty) – SUPPORT/SPONSOR

Dear Chairmen Medina and O'Donnell:

On behalf of the California Council for Adult Education (CCAE) and California Adult Education Administrators Association (CAEAA), we are pleased to sponsor and strongly support AB 1491 (McCarty) related to the carryover of Adult Education funding.

For over five years, K12 Adult Schools and community colleges have been part of local consortia under the California Adult Education Program (CAEP) as a condition for receiving state funding to provide education and training to adult learners in their communities. At the state level, the consortia model was designed to increase collaboration between the two systems and provide greater access to higher education and career pathways. There have been great strides in this work and despite inherent challenges of bringing together two separate and distinct statewide systems, each with their own policies and processes, adult learners have benefited. However, there are some obstacles that have emerged and persisted.

As you are aware, Adult Education has an on-going funding through the state budget each year to cover Adult Education in the K12 Adult School and Community College systems. A significant portion of these limited CAEP dollars is carried over by individual members from year to year. The California Community College Chancellor's Office has a standard protocol (*not law*) of identifying 'carry over' through a three-year cycle so the practice of not spending allocations on a timelier basis is not readily recognized. While processes currently allow for a three-year spending window, the Legislature and Administration provide the \$500 million each year for adult education with the expectation it is being used in that fiscal year, understanding that some circumstances may result in some minimal carryover.

While annual carry-over may be planned for use for upcoming expenditures and some carryover may be a result of funding distribution delays at the state level, in some areas of the state, there are large – and growing – amounts of carry-over without a consortium-approved plan for expenditure of those funds. This growing carryover within consortia

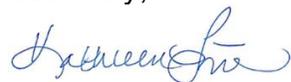
and specifically among individual members is resulting in funding not being used to serve students in the budget year as the needs grow.

Given the overall shortage of funding to serve adult education students and the imperative to address critical learning needs of so many marginalized and disadvantaged adults and their families in California, local consortia need a mechanism for increased accountability of use of funds each year. Having any member carrying over a significant portion of the annual allocation creates undue tension within consortia as so many members struggle to meet unmet need within their communities, a particularly problematic issue for K12 Adult Schools who do not have access to separate apportionment.

AB 1491 would establish clear criteria, accountability and a maximum threshold (proposed at 15%) for consortia members to carryover from year to year so as to ensure the maximum amount is used to support growing student needs in the budget year. That said, the bill is crafted with the intent to allow for exceptions as outlined and defined by consortia plans. Additionally, it builds in grace to allow a consortium member to work within their consortium structure to update their expenditure plan so as to avoid being deemed ineffective and potentially having their allotted funding redistributed within the consortium based on a local consortium vote. This provides for local decision-making supported by a state benchmark that supports CAEP dollars being used for current year students.

AB 1491 intends to increase accountability on consortium spending, or lack thereof, provide grace through a two-year planning and implementation window, and honor local regional decision making. For these reasons we are pleased to sponsor and support AB 1491 and urge your **AYE** vote when it is before you for consideration. If you have any questions regarding AB 1491 and our position, please contact Dawn Koepke with McHugh Koepke & Associates at dkoopke@mchughgr.com or (916) 606-5309. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Porter
President
CCAЕ



John Werner
President
CAЕAA

Cc: The Honorable Kevin McCarty, Author
Members, Assembly Higher Education Committee
Members, Assembly Education Committee
Ellen Cesaretti-Monroy, Consultant, Assembly Higher Education Committee
Debbie Look, Consultant, Assembly Education Committee
Lyndsay Mitchell, Consultant, Assembly Republican Office of Policy
Bob Becker, Consultant, Assembly Republican Office of Policy