Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education (SABLE)

Proposals Presented February 25, 2015

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The California Association of Student Councils (CASC)
Executive Director: Dr. June Thompson (cascmail@aol.com)
President: Paige Amormino, Cardinal Newman High School (paige.amormino@casc.net)

1212 Preservation Park Way
Oakland, CA 94612
Phone 510-834-2272 | Fax: 510-834-2275
www.casc.net | cascmial@aol.com

Justin Ingram, Bellarmine College Preparatory High School
CASC Education Policy Director
justin.ingram@casc.net
FINALIZED AGENDA

Informational Hearing
February 25, 2015 9:00am – 11:00am
Subject: California Association of Student Councils (CASC)

Introduction by Justin Ingram, CASC Education Policy Director

I. Student Board Members
   a. Proposal (5 minutes)
   b. Question and answer period (10 minutes)

II. Standardized Testing
   a. Proposal (5 minutes)
   b. Question and answer period (10 minutes)

III. Common Core Integration
   a. Proposal (5 minutes)
   b. Question and answer period (10 minutes)

IV. Role of Technology
   a. Proposal (5 minutes)
   b. Question and answer period (10 minutes)

V. Academic Performance Index
   a. Proposal (5 minutes)
   b. Question and answer period (10 minutes)

VI. Instructional Quality Commission
   a. Proposal (5 minutes)
   b. Question and answer period (10 minutes)

Final Questions and Comments (10 minutes)

Closing Remarks by Justin Ingram, CASC Education Policy Director
STAFF MEMBERS

Director
Justin Ingram - Bellarmine College Preparatory High School, San Jose

Assistant Director
Jennifer Yi - Troy High School, Fullerton

Advisor
Raffi Margossian - University of California, Berkeley

Administrative Team
Paige Amormino - Cardinal Newman High School, Santa Rosa

Facilitators
Hiro Bower - University of California, Santa Barbara
Hector Delgado - University of California, Los Angeles
Samantha Hunt - Dominican University, San Rafael
Isha Patel - University of California, Berkeley
Heather Vaughan - University of California, Los Angeles

Research Team Lead
Shawn Ahdout - Beverly Hills High School, Beverly Hills

Research Team
Matthew Lee - University High School, Irvine
Emily Sim - Troy High School, Fullerton
Simon Zhou - Canyon High School, Anaheim
The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education  
Presented to the Senate Education Committee  
Wednesday, February 25, 2015, Item #1

Topic: District Student Board Members  
Presenters: Jennifer Kaplan, Tesoro High School, Las Flores; Ethan Kwan, Canyon High School, Anaheim; Sandra Luo, Troy High School, Fullerton; Kyle Mehrian, Beverly Hills High School, Beverly Hills  
Facilitator: Hiro Bower, University of California, Santa Barbara  
Group Members: Gavin Harrell, Central Valley High School, Shasta Lake; Brigette Hernandez Excelsior Charter School, Victorville; Deborah Lee, Beverly Hills High School, Beverly Hills; James Qian, Yorba Linda High School, Yorba Linda; Jane Xu, Albany High School, Albany

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:

1. Amend education code 35012 to require a formal elimination process for the position of the Student Board Member by the district education board in the case of a desired removal of the position.

2. Amend education code 35012 to require a 60-day response limit after an appropriate student petition for the addition of a Student Board Member position is received.

III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE

Regarding the implementation of a proper, valid elimination process for the position of Student Board Member on district boards:

- Students deserve meaningful involvement in the decision-making process as the primary stakeholders in their education system.
- The implementation of a valid elimination process provides transparency regarding how and why the position was removed.
- In the fall of 2013, the Student Board Member position was eliminated from the Beverly Hills Unified School District board of education without any public record or official vote. The student board member position was nonexistent for one semester. Through the efforts of one student, the board members eventually reinstated the position, but the elimination of the position still remains a threat.

Regarding the requirement of district school boards to appoint at student board member within 60 days after a student petition is received:
• AB 1007, which requested that district school boards appoint a student board member within 30 days after a student petition is received, was passed by both the State Senate and Assembly in 2009. Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed this bill, stating in a public letter that AB 1007 was unnecessary because he was unaware of “any school board intentionally withholding action on a student representation petition.”

• Students from the Los Angeles Unified School District petitioned their school board with over one thousand signatures to create a student board member position in the spring of 2014. However, the board had not responded to the request over three months later. This proposal would ensure that every student who is interested in serving on a school board is given the opportunity to do so within a reasonable time frame.

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IV. **KEY ISSUES**

- California Education Code 35012, the only reference to the district Student Board Member position, explicitly states the process of establishing the position but lacks the explanation of a formal removal process. The district school boards have the ability to remove the Student Board Member position without basis nor the consent of the board’s constituents.
- Since there is not a specified period in which the board must respond to students’ petition regarding the Student Board Member position, the board has the capability of delaying the establishment of a Student Board Member and possibly ignoring the petition altogether.
- Ultimately, student voice is being disenfranchised by the district school board because there is no accountability for the petitions that are filed as well as protection for the preexisting Student Board Member positions.

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V. **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

No costs will be incurred by this bill.

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VI. **PREVIOUS ACTION**

*Current legislative action*

- AB 1007 – Require that district school boards respond to a student petition for a Student Board Member within 30 days.

*Student/CASC action*

- SABLE 2004 – Amend Section 35012 (d) of the California Education Code to ensure that every school board has a student board member with preferential voting rights.
- SABLE 2010 – Require that district school boards respond to a student petition for a student board member position that becomes open within the term of the position within 30 days. Publicize any openings to the student board member position that becomes open within the term of the position within 30 days.
• SABLE 2014 – Amend 25012 to remove the requirement that students obtain evidence that 10 percent of the district’s students support a student board member. Any high school student should be able to create a Student Board Member position by simply submitting a formal request.

VII. REFERENCES

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education
Presented to the Senate Education Committee
Wednesday, February 25, 2015, Item #2

I. PRIORITY

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, proposes the solidification of student input within the creation of a High School Exit Exam that reflects Common Core standards as a priority.

II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education recommends the definition of stakeholders, as defined in SB No. 172, Section 1, be expanded to include students.

III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE

The creation of the CAHSEE was intended to adhere to changing education standards in 1999. The exam, first imposed upon the class of 2006, tests students’ skills solely in mathematics up to Algebra I and reading and writing up to the tenth grade, thus not accurately reflecting the course level of the average test taker. Since its first application nine years ago, there have been no changes or updates to the test material. However, in March 2012, the State Board of Education began the implementation of a transitional stage in order to align school curriculum with Common Core standards. The CAHSEE does not accurately reflect these standards, which are supposedly being taught in classrooms. Rather, its questions are worded in a manner that requires students to draw out specific knowledge that students may lack if not taught. Tests that align with Common Core standards allow for a student to exercise their critical thinking skills as well as demonstrating knowledge of concepts taught in the classroom. Because of the discrepancy between student knowledge and test content, student input is critical in the development of a new High School Exit Exam test to ensure that it is not only accurately representing knowledge taught as according to state standards, but student ability and creativity, skills needed after graduation. The CAHSEE’s effectiveness as an exit exam is hindered by its irrelevance post-graduation. By ensuring student voice within the creation process for a new High School Exit Exam, the issue of irrelevance will be eliminated, as students experience the test and its effects firsthand.
IV. **KEY ISSUES**

- The CAHSEE does not accurately reflect the Common Core standards and graduation readiness.
- The CAHSEE asks questions that promote the memorization of existing facts rather than asking students open-ended questions requiring the development of creative ideas and the utilization of critical thinking.
- The CAHSEE was created without student input.

V. **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

This recommendation will only require travel expenses and accommodations for the student representative(s) on the advisory panel, which will vary depending on the location of the representative(s) chosen.

VI. **PREVIOUS ACTION**

*Current Legislative Action*
- SB 172 — Liu’s Suspension of the High School Exit Exam

*Previous Student Advisory Board on Education Recommendations*
- “Standardized Testing Accountability and Content” (SABE 2011) Reformating the California Standardized Test (CST)
- “Standardized Assessments” (SABE 2014) Establishes a standardized test that assesses the California State Standards and reflects common core curriculum.

*Relevant Education Code*
- Part 33: Instructional Materials and Testing; Chapter 9: High School Exit Examination; Sections 60850-60859
The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education  
Presented to the Senate Education Committee  
Wednesday, February 25, 2015, Item #3

Topic: Common Core & Next Generation Science Standards  
Presenters: Rachel Alaynick, High Tech High School, Van Nuys; Evie Klaassen, Windsor High School, Windsor; Jacqueline Rank, Foothill High School, Palo Cedro  
Facilitator: Samanta Hunt, Dominican University, San Rafael  
Group Members: Ana Alvarado, MetWest High School, Oakland; Sunshine Cho, South Pasadena High School, South Pasadena; Emmett Jang, South Pasadena High School, South Pasadena; Andrew Kim, Los Alamitos High School, Los Alamitos; Ryan Lee, Harvard-Westlake High School, Studio City; Robert Margossian, Cleveland High School, Roseda; Taylor Wang, Newbury Park High School, Newbury Park

I. PRIORITY

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, establishes improving relationships between students and schools districts in regards to the new Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards as a priority.

II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature
1. Support the Common Core and Next Generation Science Standard Implementation Fund Act, authored by Assembly Member Susan Bonilla and sponsored by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA)  
2. Add student feedback questions to the end of the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium tests. Individual school districts will use the responses to evaluate the effectiveness of CCSS and NGSS teaching practices.

III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE

- Assembly Member Susan Bonilla’s bill delegates $1.1 billion for the reimbursement of all schools and districts for funds spent implementing Common Core and an additional $900 million for further development and integration of Common Core. We as students support further funding for CCSS to provide more aid to districts and teachers during this transition period.

- The California State Legislature has shown support for student feedback on curriculum and teaching methods through previous legislative action (SB 1422). The Student Advisory Board believes that student feedback on CCSS and NGSS will be valuable for districts in adopting teaching methods.
• Districts and teachers can utilize the feedback to implement new practices, which grants them independence in evaluating student feedback to improve CCSS and NGSS teaching methods.
• The California High School Exit Exam is an example of gathering student feedback on a large scale. The test allows students to respond to questions that assess their preparation for the exam.

IV. **KEY ISSUES**

• A standard method of gauging the effectiveness of CCSS and NGSS teaching practices from student perspectives does not currently exist for school districts.
• There is insufficient funding for CCSS/NGSS implementation across the state

VI. **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

• Collecting feedback will cost money only in the creation and the distribution of the system. Since the format of the system will be consistent across the state of California, there will only be an initial cost of creating the system.

• The support of the bill will not require any additional funding, aside from the money already allocated by Assembly Member Susan Bonilla’s bill.

VII. **PREVIOUS ACTION**

• Previously, $1.25 billion were allotted towards Common Core State Standards. The funding has supported professional development, instructional materials, technology, and test administration.
The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education
Presented to the Senate Education Committee
Wednesday, February 25, 2015, Item #4

II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature:
1. Require the Instructional Quality Commission, along with the Department of Education, to develop a computer proficiency curriculum, which schools will be advised to adopt. The Instructional Quality Commission would establish a Computer Proficiency Advisory Committee in order to assist with the formation of standards for this curriculum.
2. Implement teacher training programs for current teachers in the California public school system that align with the computer proficiency curriculum introduced by the Instructional Quality Commission.

III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE

- With the ever-growing presence of technology in various fields of study, the California public school system should adopt standards for computer proficiency. Currently, many districts do not have any related requirements for graduation, while others have implemented computer proficiency curriculum. For example, La Canada Unified School District (LAUSD), recognized as one of the top-scoring school districts, enforces the integration of computer and peripherals.
- The top 15 public schools in the U.S. have advanced technological learning standards. The implementation of computer proficiency curriculum in more districts would help to narrow the achievement gap in California public schools. Because computer proficiency is necessary in preparing students for their future careers, students who are not provided the adequate skills from grade school may be at a disadvantage compared to the rest.
• This bill would aid the effective implementation of AB 1539, a bill introduced in 2014 that directs attention towards computer programming. For students to learn more advanced topics in computer science, they must first be knowledgeable in basic computer usage.

• Furthermore, teachers must be expected to know the curriculum to deliver these skills to their students. Because the California Basic Educational Skills Test, a teacher accreditation exam, does not adequately test the skills required to competently teach computer proficiency, teacher training programs are necessary to ensure that teachers have the background to implement the curriculum. This will ensure that students can learn the foundations of computer usage at an early age and carry these skills with them for future professional endeavors.

IV. KEY ISSUES

• Despite the fact that students are exposed to forms of technology such as phones and tablets, many students today do not have the computer proficiency necessary for their future careers.

• The California Public School system does not currently require or mandate computer proficiency curriculum from K-12.

• Not all K-12 teachers possess the technological skills to teach computer proficiency curriculum in public schools.

VII. FISCAL ANALYSIS

We recognize that the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is allocating money for technology infrastructure and will provide resources needed to teach and implement the computer proficiency curriculum. There will be a cost incurred for the implementation of teacher training programs, covered by a one-time funding.

VIII. PREVIOUS ACTION

At Student Advisory Board on Education (SABE) 2014, students presented a similar proposal regarding implementation of computer proficiency curriculum.
The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education
Presented to the Senate Education Committee
Wednesday, February 25, 2015, Item #5

Topic: Academic Performance Index
Presenters: Michael Moon, Diamond Bar High School, Diamond Bar; Olivia Nouriani, South Pasadena High School, South Pasadena; Elitza Todorova, San Marcos High School, San Diego
Facilitator: Heather Vaughan, University of California Los Angeles
Group Members: Emma Boggs, Oakdale High School, Oakdale; Tia Goldberg, Cardinal Newman High School, Santa Rosa; Ji Woo Kim, Cerritos High School, Cerritos; Michelle Min, Sage Hills School, Newport Coast; Alexis Sanchez, Excelsior Charter School, Victorville; Sinduja Vaidhyanathan, Mira Loma High School, Folsom; Vivian Yang, Mira Loma High School, Folsom

I. PRIORITY

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, establishes holistic evaluation of schools as a priority.

II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature edit the Academic Performance Index to also include the following prioritized factors:

1. Staff; this is defined as the
   a. number of staff development days,
   b. student to teacher ratio,
   c. average class size,
   d. percentage of fully credentialed teachers,
   e. availability of academic counselors and support services;

2. Curriculum; this is defined as the
   a. percentage of students completing University of California A-G requirements,
   b. number of Advanced Placement classes offered,
   c. number of elective classes offered,
   d. presence of Career Technology Education;

3. Resources; this is defined as the
   a. spending per pupil,
   b. percentage of materials in good condition,
   c. availability of textbooks in good condition,
   d. safety, cleanliness, and adequacy of school facilities;

4. Rates; this is defined as the
   a. drop out and graduation rates,
   b. suspension and expulsion rates.

III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE
• Staff and faculty factors should be weighed most heavily because teachers are the fulcrums of schools. In Malcolm Gladwell's *David and Goliath*, Gladwell reports that medium sized classes are more productive than larger classes. After analyzing surveys, he argued that the class size that fosters the best student learning is between 18 to 21 students. Furthermore, studies discussed in Amanda Ripley’s novel *The Smartest Kids in the World* have shown that some countries, which spend less money on education per student than the United States, have more successful education systems because they stress the importance and quality of their teachers. Textbooks do not define student success or motivation to learn, and therefore do not define the success of a school. Because teachers motivate just as much as teach their students, a school’s academic success depends mostly on the quality of their teachers.

• Curriculum is the next most important factor in determining the success of a school, as schools must prepare their students for college and the workforce. With a wide range of Advanced Placement classes, elective courses, and career technology classes, students can challenge themselves and focus on fields that interest them. They can get a head start on areas of future study and skills for their future careers. Therefore, this factor will assess how well a school prepares students for their future by measuring the number of academic opportunities they have. It will also evaluate the number of students who complete the University of California’s A-G requirements, a reflection of the students who take advantage of these opportunities. It is, however, less crucial than the factor of faculty and staff because great classes without qualified teachers are useless.

• Rates of graduation, suspension, and expulsion should be the third most important factor in a school’s API score. Suspension and expulsion are ineffective methods of discipline, according to research from Duke University. It does not make sense to punish students by taking away their opportunity to learn. Suspension and expulsion give administrators the option to overlook the root problem of student misbehavior, rather than address them directly. Additionally, graduation and drop out rates, though significant indicators of educational excellence, are only one of many factors that should contribute to a school’s API score. These rates should be a tertiary factor because they are an indirect representation of school quality, in contrast with the direct correlation between a school’s quality and the effectiveness of its staff and faculty.

• The fourth and final factor in determining an API score should be the resources and facilities of a school. Although a school's facilities and materials are important, they are not mandatory for its success. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (1991) stated that the quality of materials and facilities affects the students' level of involvement and the interaction between individuals. Although resources and facilities affect the atmosphere of a school, this atmosphere may also be influenced by external factors out of a school’s control. This category should not carry as much weight as the previous three, but should still be considered.

IV. KEYS ISSUES

• The API score is not a holistic evaluation of school quality.
• A school’s standardized test scores, the majority factor of a school’s API score, do not accurately reflect its high performance.

VIII. **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

Because new factors are recommended to be assessed through pre-existing SARC data and LCAP data, there will be minimal to no additional costs for data collection. The Department of Education will incur other minimal costs in wages for time spent writing a program that evaluates and synthesizes data from schools.

IX. **PREVIOUS ACTION**

• Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) is a landmark state law passed in 1999 that created a new academic accountability system for kindergarten through grade twelve public education in California. California’s comprehensive accountability system monitors the academic achievement of all the state’s public schools, including charter schools, and local education agencies that serve students in kindergarten through grade twelve. The API is a major component of the law.
• SB 219 (Steinberg) was passed in 2007 as a measure to factor in dropout rates for the API. Because there was no previous standard for dropout rates, it deterred schools from letting poorly performing students drop out to increase their API score.
• SB 1458 (Steinberg) passed in 2012 calls for measures in addition to academic assessments to be include in California’s Academic Performance Index (API). The new API requires the inclusion of graduation rates and has the potential to include factors aimed at measuring college and career readiness, thus relying less on student achievement on standardized tests. Furthermore, this bill evaluates the API standards on 60% standardized testing and 40% qualitative data.
• The 2013 -2014 Budget Act provides $2.1 billion for school districts and charter schools and $32 million for County Offices of Education (COEs) to support the first year implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), and as a part of LCFF, a three year Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) is updated annually.
The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education
Wednesday, February 25, 2015, Item #6

Topic: Student Voice on the Instructional Quality Commission
Presenters: Shawn Ahdout, Beverly Hills High School, Beverly Hills; Justin Ingram, Bellarmine College Preparatory, San Jose

I. PRIORITY
The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, proposes the addition of two student members to the Instructional Quality Commission.

II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION
The Student Advisory Board recommends that members of the legislature
3. Co-author the bill proposed by Assembly Member Ed Chau to add two students to the Instructional Quality Commission
4. Support the bill proposed by Assembly Member Chau when voting

III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE
- The student members on the California State Board of Education, and the State Boards of Education of other states, help represent student opinions to their respective Boards.
- Local district Boards of Education utilize student members to solicit student opinion on policies.
- The California State Board of Education utilizes a student member on the Child Nutrition Advisory Council
- Adding student members to the IQC will allow students to have an effect on both how and what they are taught
- Students are the main stakeholders in the education system, and deserve to have their voices heard
- Students can provide a unique perspective on issues that directly affect them

IV. KEY ISSUES
- Students have a very limited role in determining their curriculum and instructional materials
- Sometimes it is difficult for adults and educational professionals to completely understand how students are affected by curriculum and instructional materials

V. FISCAL ANALYSIS
The only costs that may be incurred as a result of the addition of student members to the Instructional Quality Commission is their transportation to and from meetings.

VI. PREVIOUS ACTION

Current legislative action
• Assembly Member Ed Chau has introduced a bill that would add two students to the Instructional Quality Commission that is sponsored both by ACSA and CASC

Student/CASC action
• At the 2014 SABE (presentation to the California State Board of Education), students proposed to add two students to the Instructional Quality Commission
ARTICLE 3. Instructional Quality Commission [33530 - 33545]

( Heading of Article 3 amended by Stats. 2012, Ch. 589, Sec. 1. )

33530.

a) There is in the state government the Instructional Quality Commission consisting of a Member of the Assembly appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, a Member of the Senate appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules, one public member appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, one public member appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules, one public member appointed by the Governor, and 13 public members appointed by the state board upon the recommendation of the Superintendent or the members of the state board.

b) So far as is practical and consistent with the duties assigned to the commission by the state board, at least 7 of the 13 public members appointed by the state board shall be persons, who because they have taught, written, or lectured on the subject matter fields specified in Section 33533, in the course of public or private employment, have become recognized authorities or experienced practitioners in those fields. The state board shall make its appointments to ensure that, at any one time, at least seven of the public members shall be current classroom teachers, or mentor teachers, or both assigned to teach kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive.

c) Notwithstanding the requirement that seven of the public members shall be current classroom teachers or mentor teachers, current members of the commission who were appointed on or before December 31, 1989, shall be allowed to complete their terms.
d) In making the remaining appointments to the commission, and in establishing the commission’s advisory task forces or committees, the state board is encouraged to consider the role of other representatives of the educational community in the development of curriculum and instructional materials, including, but not limited to, administrators, governing school board members, **two students** and parents who are reflective of the various ethnic groups and types of school districts in California.

33532.

a) Commission members (1) **Except as provided in paragraph (2), each** commission member shall serve for a four-year term and shall not be eligible to serve more than one full term. Prior service on the commission for a term of less than three years resulting from an initial appointment or an appointment for the remainder of an unexpired term shall not be counted as a full term.

b) (2) **A student member of a commission shall serve a one-year term and shall not be eligible to serve more than one full term.**

c) With respect to the appointment of 13 public members by the State Board of Education to the first commission, four shall be appointed for terms of two years, four shall be appointed for terms of three years, and five shall be appointed for a term of four years.