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California School Boards Association Condemns AB 1381 and Vows to Take Action On Behalf of California's Students

WEST SACRAMENTO – The executive director of the California School Boards Association, Scott P. Plotkin, and CSBA President, Luan B. Rivera, issued the following joint statement regarding the signing of AB 1381(Núñez) by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger:

“That this bill could be signed today is a clear demonstration that sound educational policy and improved student achievement have taken a back seat to calculated and obvious politics. Not only is the bill unconstitutional, but if enacted would place in jeopardy the real and documented progress that LAUSD has achieved under the current locally-elected governing board.

AB 1381 is horrible public policy and will do a gross disservice to the students of LAUSD. That this bill could move even one step forward in the legislative process without serious consultation from LAUSD, which consistently found itself on the outside looking in, is clear evidence that this effort was all about political power and not about students.

While LAUSD is the focus of this particular legislation, it is important for local school boards and districts to realize that this could easily happen in other parts of the state. We have already witnessed a failed attempt by Fresno's mayor to insert language into AB 1381, which would have given him control of the Fresno City School District.

The bottom line is that many state legislators abdicated their responsibility as guardians of the public trust with their vote to support AB 1381. Upholding California's constitutionally mandated governance codes for our schools clearly did not make the list of priorities discussed during the backroom wheeling and dealing that characterized the debate on this bill.

CSBA and school governance leaders will not sit idly back and allow state policymakers, operating under the cloak of reform and genuine care, to kick California's students to the curb, all in the name of politics. Later this week, CSBA will take legal action against this legislation and in support of the current governance structures of California's school boards and districts. At stake in this effort is a fundamental tenet of our democracy – the concept of local governance of our public school system.”

To schedule an interview with the CSBA's executive director, Scott P. Plotkin, please contact Ioannis Kazanis at 916-669-3244.

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