



The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell
Chair, Assembly Committee on Education
1020 N Street, Room 159
Sacramento, CA 95814

March 19, 2019

RE: **AB 1505 as amended April 1, 2019**
Position: **Oppose**

Dear Assemblymember O'Donnell:

On behalf of the Charter Schools Development Center (CSDC) and our hundreds of charter school members, I write in opposition to AB 1505 as amended April 1, 2019.

First among the new provisions of this version of the bill that concern us is the language that requires "a balance of pupils receiving special education services, and a balance of English learner pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district." As you may know, there are charter schools throughout the state that focus on a specific population, the Five Keys Charter School which began in the San Francisco County Jail, is a good example. This charter is creative and innovative in the ways that it helps poor and often formerly incarcerated adults get their high school diploma and yet its demographics are not reflective of the general population of San Francisco Unified School District, it's authorizing agency.

Next, this bill limits the flexibility of charter school staffing by removing the original intent language from 1992 stating that "it is the intent of the Legislature that charter schools be given flexibility with regard to noncore, noncollege preparatory courses." AB 1505 instead restricts charter school staffing during a time of teacher shortages by requiring that each teacher hold a credential in the teacher's certificated assignment. Charter schools that offer noncore, noncollege classes like dance, job skills or even a public service-based education will now have to scale back extracurriculars or redefine course offerings.

And finally, while restating the Legislature's longstanding commitment to charter schools, this bill eliminates all rights of appeal if a charter petition is denied, unless the issue for appeal is procedural, leaving charter petitioners subject to the sole discretion of local districts. It is rare in California Education Code, or in California jurisprudence, to see a model where a member of the public has no further level of appeal.

For these and other reasons, we oppose this measure.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caitlin O'Halloran".

Caitlin O'Halloran
School Governance and Policy Specialist

c.c. Assemblymembers McCarty, Kalra and Senator Skinner, committee and caucus consultants