

THE 2003 STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD ON EDUCATION
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COMMENDATIONS

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, would like to extend the following commendations:

The Student Advisory Board on Education commends the Honorable Jack O'Connell, California State Superintendent of Public Education, for his continuing commitment to the welfare of the students of California.

The Student Advisory Board on Education commends the California State Board of Education for working to implement a system of standards, accountability, and assessment that will serve as a stellar model of public education for all states.

The Student Advisory Board on Education commends Greg Geeting, Assistant Executive Director of the State Board of Education, for his continued support of youth involvement in education policy-making processes.

The Student Advisory Board on Education commends the California State Board of Education for annually setting aside a time for ample and meaningful dialogue with students about the critical questions facing decision-makers in education today.

Finally, the Student Advisory Board on Education congratulates Brent Godfrey, Student Member of the California State Board of Education, for his recent appointment and commends him for his enthusiasm for student involvement in the educational process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Now in its 40th year, the Student Advisory Board on Education is the sole institutionalized source of student input on California education policy and a unique opportunity for California students to comment on the system that serves them. In the interest of giving students a greater stake in this system, the Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, presents the following policy recommendations for consideration by the California State Board of Education and the California education policy-making community:

- Support the reallocation of teacher development resources to focus on teaching training in instructional methods.
- Adopt a goal of having all high schools in California start school at or after 8:40 A.M.
- Institute a reward program of monetary and non-monetary rewards for students who perform well in the STAR program.
- Increase the number of business-sponsored Career and Technical Education internship programs available to California students.
- Set state standards for high school cultural education curriculum that teach the beliefs, lifestyles, traditions, and history of all major cultures in California.
- Encourage school districts that currently lack student representation on their boards to add a student board member position with a preferential vote.

This Executive Summary serves as a reference sheet for the students' oral presentations and the detailed proposals that follow. The Student Advisory Board on Education thanks the State Board of Education for its time and attention as the students present their views this morning.

California State Board of Education

Issue # _____

Wednesday, November 12, 2003 AGENDA

Topic: **Teacher Quality**

Speaker: April Milner, Sonora High School

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, recommends that the State Board of Education support reallocation of teacher development resources to focus on teacher training in instructional methods.

II. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

A. Previous Student Advisory Board on Education Discussion and Action:

- While many previous proposals have addressed Teacher Quality, we are unaware of previous proposals that encourage such ongoing teacher training programs.

B. Present Pertinent Regulations and Policy:

- Education Code Section 44259, Current Law Regarding Teacher Qualifications
- Senate Bill 2042, current law that establishes a Teaching Performance Assessment

III. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

There has been a recent trend in education policy to increase teacher knowledge of content material. The recent No Child Left Behind Act is an example. For students, this is inconsequential if the information cannot be taught effectively.

- The majority of initial and ongoing training for teachers is focused on content. In SB 2042, lawmakers directed the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to make a Teaching Performance Assessment, which is aligned with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP). This assessment only requires that teachers demonstrate their competency of the state's academic content standards, but does not assess how effectively teachers can teach the material.
 - There is currently funding for teacher development programs at the district level, but these funds are primarily used to ensure teacher competency in subject matter.
 - Presently, teacher evaluations are not as effective in many cases as they could be since this process does not include student input. Student evaluation of teachers could help policy-makers to judge the effectiveness of teacher training programs in creating higher quality teachers.
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IV. FISCAL ANALYSIS

Increasing the number of programs available to teachers is more cost-effective than other methods of raising the quality of teachers because it addresses the root problem that teachers cannot effectively teach material at a relatively low cost. It is better to train teachers on how to reach their students than to hire more ineffective teachers. Teacher quality does not rely on the student-to-teacher ratio, but rather on the ability of the teacher to effectively teach standards. In addition, this proposed plan enables teachers to become more proficient without extending credentials, which would require districts to raise teachers' credential status and salary.

Although it is important to train students on subject matter, this effort is futile if the curriculum cannot be passed on to the students; thus, subject matter training is useless if teachers lack the necessary skills to communicate information.

Lastly, the cost of this plan depends on the logistics of the program developed by the Department of Education. This leaves margins for the expenditures to be modified according to the necessity and demand for the programs. Also, this program can be altered based on the availability of funds.

V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**A. CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- The State Board of Education should support legislative action to redirect funds for teaching training programs, specifically those focused on teaching methods.
- A solid framework for teacher development should be created.
- The CTC should allow at least a portion of the 150-hour credit and service requirement for credential attainment and renewal to include this type of professional development.
- The Department of Education should establish an incentive for districts to provide such training based on the number of teachers in attendance.
- The State Board of Education should establish a policy to mandate districts to create a medium for the students of California to evaluate their teachers. These evaluation results can be used to assess the improvement of overall teacher abilities so that progress of teaching method implementation can be measured.

B. FIELD INVOLVEMENT

In order to successfully modify teacher development to include teaching method training in the required 150 hours of credential attainment and renewal, the districts throughout California must encourage and enforce the reallocation of funds to make these programs more available. The Department of Education will help create the programs so that all of California will be following the same criteria. This training will not only improve teaching techniques, but will also assist teachers in fulfilling the already required hours of professional development for their credential. Lastly, to show improvement as a result of the program, students should evaluate teachers after they have adapted new teaching practices to provide feedback on the success of such

programs. Student evaluation is necessary because only students can be the true judges of how effectively teachers can teach.

C. ALTERNATIVES

- Reduction of the number of emergency credentialed teachers who are currently in the classrooms would decrease the number of ineffective teachers. This could be done by reducing the maximum times that an emergency credential can be issued from five times to two. Also, teachers who currently have emergency credentials should immediately take action to obtain their full credential.
- More feedback will also help create higher quality teachers. Students, who are supposed to be receiving information, are the best source to utilize for these evaluations. With these evaluations, teachers can be tested for their knowledge in the standard content and especially in their ability to teach in the classroom. Teachers can be further evaluated through standardized tests (such as the California Basic Educational Skills Test), which would annually demonstrate the teacher's commitment to the curriculum. Forums with students and teachers can be developed so that students have a medium through which to express their concerns, and teachers have a medium to exchange their own ideas with each other.

D. RATIONALE

Our proposal will transform the efficiency of the learning experience of students. A teacher may have a Professional Teaching Credential, but if the subject matter cannot be transferred from the mind of the teacher to those of the students, the credentialed teacher is not a quality teacher. The objective of a teacher is not fulfilled until his/her students can comprehend and understand the information being taught. These programs are vital to increasing the quality of teachers because they will give teachers the skills they need to be effective communicators and educators.

California State Board of Education

Issue # _____

Wednesday, November 12, 2003 AGENDA

Topic: **High School Starting Time**

Speaker: Rishi Talwar, Ayala High School

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, recommends that the State Board of Education adopt a goal of having all high schools in California start school at 8:40 A.M.

II. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

A. Previous Student Advisory Board on Education Discussion and Action:

- No previous action known.

B. Present Pertinent Regulations and Policy:

- No pertinent regulations or policies known.

III. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

Currently, California high schools begin at a time not in accordance with the average adolescent's biological sleep cycle. The healthy sleep cycle of a regular teenager lasts longer than that of an adult or small child, requiring eight-and-a-half to nine-and-a-quarter hours a night. Because of their natural biological pattern, adolescents find it difficult to sleep before eleven o'clock at night. In order to get an adequate amount of sleep, a healthy high school student should rise between seven thirty and eight fifteen in the morning. However, the majority of high school students are required to attend school earlier than or between these times. Under the current circumstances students are awoken during the most crucial part of their sleep cycle. This has been proven to adversely affect students' ability to learn and to prevent them from performing at their full potential.

IV. FISCAL ANALYSIS

Minimal costs would be incurred at the state level. Instead, costs would be incurred at the district level. These expenses should be negligible due to the many opportunities for the district to benefit from the implementation of this program. Districts will sustain costs in the following ways:

- If the high school starting time is changed to a later time in the morning, elementary and middle schools will change their starting times as well. This will result in costs of providing extra supervision for elementary school students in the morning and/or afternoon.
- There could also potentially be additional cost for paying teachers, supervisors, and school bus drivers, especially with potential changes in the transportation system.

However, some benefits to districts outweigh these costs.

- If school is started at a later time, students will be better rested and therefore more alert and ready to learn.
- Each school will also receive more federal funding under the No Child Left Behind Act, due to raised API scores.
- Attendance in schools will increase because of healthier students who are ready to learn. Districts will receive more money due to increased Average Daily Attendance.

V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION

In order to implement our goal, the following steps must be taken:

- The State Board of Education should send out information about sleep deprivation to all school districts in California.
- The State Board should recommend to all districts that school begin at 8:40 A.M. or later.
- The State Board should establish pilot programs in some school districts to study the effects of starting school at a later time, comparing these school districts that continue to begin school at the same hour to understand the full effects of this policy.
- The pilot programs must be closely observed, with test scores, attendance, student opinion, and teacher opinion carefully documented, analyzed, and then compared to non-pilot districts that maintain earlier start times.
- Pilot programs should be carried out over three years, after which each district in the state will be sent the results of these pilot programs so that they may determine on an individual basis whether or not starting school at a later time would have a positive effect upon their schools. Each individual district will maintain the ability to decide which time is best for their students to begin classes.
- Schools will also be sent the results of similar studies conducted in other states, such as Minnesota.

B. FIELD INVOLVEMENT

- We must have support from teachers and the CTA in order to make sure that they are in agreement with our proposal.
- The team of people who wrote this proposal must be in constant contact with the State Board of Education so that all parties can remain involved with this proposal and follow through on any decisions.

C. RATIONALE

Students in California are unable to reach their full academic potential due to the sleep deprivation induced by the current school schedule. High schools in California currently begin on average between 7:00 A.M. and 8:00 A.M. Studies show that

having to wake up before this time period causes adverse effects among teenagers; their situation is comparable to adults arising between 3:00 A.M. and 4:00 A.M. The current schedule not only denies students enough sleep but also interrupts their natural sleep cycle. This is actually more harmful than the lack of the sleep itself. This situation leads to students falling asleep in class and not being alert and attentive in school. It is physically and mentally unhealthy, and ultimately has a negative impact for many students.

In the Minneapolis School Districts, a student argued that the implementation of this program increased attendance, decreased depression and decrease daytime sleepiness of students. Attitudes towards test preparation and homework became more relaxed. The need for peer counseling also decreased. In the Minneapolis study, the students were only getting 45 minutes more sleep than in another districts, but this additional time was during a critical time of the sleep cycle. It is in the middle of this critical stage that most students of California must wake up for school. On average, students in Minneapolis earned higher grades and standardized test scores than the other districts, and 57% of teachers reported their students being more alert. Fifty-one percent of teachers also said that they saw fewer students falling asleep during class as well as a marked decrease in disciplinary problems. Teachers also gave information on the impact on their personal lives; fifty-one percent said that the impact of starting school later in the day was positive. When the teachers were asked when the ideal start time was, only 3% said they wanted to go back to the original starting time. This study was endorsed by the American Medical Association, which still maintains that the findings that students are predisposed to fall asleep around 11:00 P.M. and that adolescents require eight-and-a-half to nine-and-a-quarter hours of sleep are accurate and valid.

Under our current system school schedules seem to be designed around logistical problems rather than the students' best interest. Starting school later in the morning will clearly have many positive effects on students and should be encouraged in districts.

California State Board of Education

Issue # _____

Wednesday, November 12, 2003 AGENDA

Topic: **Standardized Testing Rewards**

Speaker: Amanda Rose, Orestimba High School

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, recommends that the State Board of Education institute a reward program with both monetary and non-monetary awards for students who perform well on their STAR testing.

II. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

A. Previous Student Advisory Board on Education Discussion and Action:

This is the first time that the Student Advisory Board on Education has addressed this specific issue.

B. Present Pertinent Regulations and Policy:

- Education Code 60640, Standardized Testing and Reporting Program

III. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

The purpose of standardized testing is to accurately measure the quality of education and student learning in California. This goal is optimized when students perform to their best ability on the standardized tests. As it stands today, there are some significant problems preventing this from happening:

- Students are not provided with sufficient motivation to perform to their full potential on the standardized tests.
- Teachers and students are not aware of the reasons for or the impact of standardized tests.
- There is a lack of funding for detailed feedback from students on the tests and their results to schools and districts.
- The current organization of reports makes it difficult to use the results for positive change in the quality of California's education.

IV. FISCAL ANALYSIS

The proposal will be cost-efficient because non-monetary rewards will keep costs down without sacrificing performance. The institution of a reward system will create a ripple effect that positively extends itself through different levels of education as well as the community. Although money will be spent on these rewards, regardless, it is even more important to spend money on these rewards because students will, in turn, take standardized testing more seriously and thus, their education more seriously.

V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Allocate state funds for a monetary scholarship program.
- Encourage the UC/CSU system to take performance on STAR testing into account in admission decisions.
- Establish a program for students who meet certain criteria of achievement on the STAR test receive a seal on their diploma.

B. FIELD INVOLVEMENT

In order to implement our proposed plan:

- It is necessary to consult with the UC Regents and the Board of CSU Directors regarding the addition of application points for STAR scholars.
- It is necessary for the state legislature to allocate funding for any monetary scholarship programs.
- It would be helpful if the Golden State Foundation were contacted regarding the former Golden State Scholar program.
- It would be helpful if other states were consulted regarding their reward systems for standardized testing, both monetary and non-monetary.
- It is necessary that school boards, administrators, and teachers inform the students about their opportunities due to the program.
- It is necessary that corporations and businesses recognize the STAR diploma seal as a mark of achievement.

C. ALTERNATIVES

- Communities could develop funds for scholarship based on standardized test scores and set standards for such scholarship programs. Fund for these scholarships may come from local business partnerships or sponsorships, or from support by non-profit organizations.
- Schools could implement programs to promote understanding of and support for testing aimed at students, parents, teachers, and community.

D. RATIONALE

Education is an important part of our lives as it cultivates human knowledge and upholds the principles for which America stands. We believe that standardized tests are the most efficient and effective way to gauge the quality of education. However, the only way that standardized tests can be effective is if the test takers exert their maximum effort. Rewards will help motivate students to work hard to accurately demonstrate their full potential through standardized tests. Thus, test scores will more accurately reflect the learning and knowledge of students in the California educational system.

On account of the current budget crisis, we support non-monetary incentives, for we feel that students should still be rewarded for achievement in education. UC and Cal State can use the STAR test results to their advantage in their admission decisions. Also, the seals will recognize students who have met and exceeded California education standards regardless of their plans after their secondary education. As this program improves the accuracy of test scores, the image of California's education will be improved.

California State Board of Education

Issue # _____

Wednesday, November 12, 2003 AGENDA

Topic: **Career and Technical Education Programs**

Speaker: Jaclyn LeDuc, Serrano High School

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, recommends that the State Board of Education increase the number of business-sponsored Career and Technical Education internship programs available to California students.

II. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

A. Previous Student Advisory Board on Education Discussion and Action:

- This is the first year that the Student Advisory Board on Education has addressed this issue.

B. Present Pertinent Regulations and Policy:

- None

III. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

Over time, Career Technical Education has garnered a negative connotation due to the heavy emphasis placed on the academic standards of students. As a result, alternative methods of learning, such as Career and Technical Education, have been abandoned, and students who excel through this form of education are denied learning opportunities that satisfy their needs. The common belief that nothing can be achieved without a college education has resulted in the neglect of these career-oriented programs.

IV. FISCAL ANALYSIS

Funding will be the responsibility of districts. Each district should create a Career and Technical Education Internship Program committee, comprised of student and business representatives along with school officials to further provide and allocate funding.

Student internships in the community will provide hands-on job training that cannot be reproduced in the classroom, and will be provided at a relatively low cost. Businesses would provide the supervision free of charge in exchange for services provided by students. More importantly, if students leave high school with skills to enable them to start and hold a job, the benefits of the program will highly outweigh the costs in the long run.

V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**A. CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- Each district should establish a Career and Technical Education Internship Program (CTEIP) committee to administer and run the program.
- The committee will be made up of one student representative, one business representative from each business involved in the CTEIP, and a variable number of school officials from each high school. The number of school officials will be proportional to the number of students currently attending that school. Each school district will determine the ratio, and therefore, the number of school representatives that are appointed to the committee. This committee will:
 - Conduct local surveys in each district in order to assess company needs as well as students' potential for contribution so as to best place students in appropriate internship programs.
 - Send an informational bulletin to students, communities, districts, and companies to encourage them to meet and to formulate curriculum and standard for Career and Technical Education internships.
 - Send an informational brochure to businesses to encourage them to sponsor internship programs.
 - Encourage school staff to be proactive and attentive to Career and Technical Education and potential students who could benefit from CTEIP.

B. FIELD INVOLVEMENT

Teachers would encourage CTEIP among students and maintain awareness of potential students who could benefit from this program. Teachers and supervisors would also send reports to the CTEIP committee on students' skills, performance, progress, and aptitudes in their career-tech class(es). District boards would oversee the CTEIP committee.

C. ALTERNATIVES

The Board may wish to consider the following alternatives in addition to the prior recommendations:

- Hold career fairs for younger students to spark interest in Career and Technical Education Programs.
- Balance efforts between traditional academics and Career and Technical Education programs.

D. RATIONALE

In the past 30 years, 60% of Career and Technical Education (CTE) has disappeared despite the fact that the need for skilled workers in these areas has increased. Because all students learn differently and have different educational priorities, CTE provides students who may not be college-bound or who may be interested in a specific technological field with invaluable experience and skills. We recognize that college is not an option for everyone, and without hands-on opportunities, students can be set up for failure, forced to leave high school without any practical job skills.

CTE not only prepares people to enter the work force, but prepares them for life as well. CTE allows students to experience different kinds of learning opportunities by using interactive teaching methods. Not only would students benefit from having high quality Career and Technical Education Programs, but businesses would as well. Businesses that sponsor high school internship programs (CTEIP), would be able to mold and hire qualified and well-trained workers. Companies can also gain valuable recognition by cooperating with schools and participating in positive internship programs, which could improve their reputation and name recognition. Companies who have sponsored CTE programs have already been benefited, including Hewlett-Packard and the California Contractors Alliance. Similar programs exist in Sacramento and San Francisco counties, as well as in other states. Nevertheless, career-oriented programs, created through partnerships between businesses and schools that give students hand-on experiences, are necessary to provide students with skills and knowledge necessary for a career after graduation.

California State Board Education

Issue # _____

Wednesday, November 12, 2003 AGENDA

Topic: **Cultural Education**

Speaker: Leslie Shaw, Irvine High School

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, recommends that the State Board of Education set standards for cultural education in high school curriculum that teach the beliefs, lifestyles, traditions, and history of all major cultures in California.

II. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

A. Previous Student Advisory Board on Education Discussion and Action:

- This is the first year that the Student Advisory Board on Education has addressed this issue.

B. Present Pertinent Regulations and Policy:

- There are no previous laws or policies that are known to us that specifically address mandatory cultural education.

III. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- Racial tension and self-segregation of racial groups and cultures are the result of a lack of awareness about other ethnicities.
- Stereotypes and racial prejudices indicate that there is a need for cultural education in our society.
- Student performance is improved when students feel united, equal, and in a safe environment.

IV. FISCAL ANALYSIS

Costs for new standards for cultural education would include administrative costs, the price of instructional materials, and the cost of professional development pertinent to decreasing racial tensions in the classroom.

One of the most important benefits of the proposal is the creation of a safe learning environment. Students will be better able to excel in school; therefore, statewide test scores will improve. The creation of a safe school environment will decrease the demand for security on campus and decrease disciplinary action costs. Since the learning environment will be comfortable for all students, attendance will increase as well.

V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- A revision of state curriculum standards to educate students in the history, literature, and fine arts is necessary to implement our recommendation.
- The State Board will mandate the creation of professional development program to train teachers in new approaches that foster cultural understanding.
 - Professional development will include training to manage racial tensions in the classroom by illustrating past occurrences.
 - Professional development programs will also include conflict mediation skills to ease tensions and resolve disputes in the classroom.
- Cultural education curriculum will be taught through various teaching styles including structured activities, real-life testimonials leading to open discussions, and the use of interactive technology pertaining to cultural education.
- Success under the revised standards can be measured through increased attendance, higher test scores, decrease in violence incidence rates, and overall increase in student performance.

B. FIELD INVOLVEMENT

- Local school boards will assist in implementation by supplying needed resources for the new cultural curriculum, including textbooks, teacher manuals, videos, software, and guest speakers.
- Teachers will participate in the professional development training for the new cultural standards criteria.
- Various teaching styles will be implemented by teachers to demonstrate their strengths in the field of cultural knowledge.

C. ALTERNATIVES

- Create a program for parents emphasizing tolerance, diversity, unity, and equality during the primary and secondary school years, when the parents are significant influential figures in the development of the students' character.
- At the high school level, implement a professional development course educating teachers in the management and creation of a comfortable atmosphere within the classroom, which will promote acceptance and understanding of other cultures.

D. RATIONALE

Lack of diversity combined with a misunderstanding of other cultures can create racial tension, which can lead to self-segregation, violence, and a state of fear in schools. This results in low attendance rates and decreased participation, ultimately decreasing the quality of education. Decreased attendance results in a loss of money in schools. In addition, the beliefs and ideals of students can be discouraged by teachers and

fellow students, resulting in an unwillingness to learn and a loss of self-confidence. Schools can also discourage minority students by failing to adequately and accurately present their cultures and their place in history, often only acknowledging one side of the story. Such exclusion in schools can result in a loss self-confidence, which can result in student apathy and a lack of school spirit. Cultural awareness in classrooms is important so that all people feel respected and are adequately represented in California. If cultural issues are openly discussed and accurately presented in the classroom, students across California will be less distracted by conflict that occurs due to misconception and will be more able to focus on their education.

California State Board Education

Issue # _____

Wednesday, November 12, 2003 AGENDA

Topic: **Student Voice**

Speaker: Joy Natwick, Holtville High School

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, recommends that the State Board of Education encourage school districts that currently lack student representation on their boards to add a student board member position with preferential vote.

II. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

A. Previous Student Advisory Board on Education Discussion and Action:

- This is the first year that the Student Advisory Board on Education has addressed this issue.

B. Present Pertinent Regulations and Policy:

- California Education Code Section 35012(d) regarding Student Board Members

III. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

Student opinion is not valued highly by decision makers in public education. Hence, this dynamic relationship between students and their administration is limited in its effectiveness. The following problems contribute to the lack of student input in school administration:

- There exists a generation gap that creates a general misunderstanding between students and administration.
- Student opinion is generally not a top priority among administrators.
- A lack of established communication methods prevents students from sharing their opinions.
- The traditional procedures and establishments in California's education system hinder students' ability to enact reform.

V. FISCAL ANALYSIS

This recommendation is cost effective in increasing student input in administrative decisions and thus improving the California education system overall.

- There is a minimal cost for supplies, which would include the creation and mailing of recommendation letters.
- A student board member would assist in effective decision making at the district level with little cost to the State Board of Education or to the local districts.
- Currently student board members rarely hurt districts financially and generally give valuable input in the decision making process.

- The minimal cost would also include time spent discussing and developing a definition of the student board member for the recommendation letter.

V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The State Board of Education should produce and mail a letter to inform all district superintendents and board presidents of the recommendation to include a student board member with preferential voting rights at all unified and high school district levels. Included in the recommendation letter would be a definition of the starting powers of the student board member. These powers can be increased as the local boards see fit as long as they are within current established limitations as set forth by Education Code 35012.

B. FIELD INVOLVEMENT

In order for the student board member position to be more pervasive throughout California's school districts, increased support and assistance will be necessary from the following groups:

- District boards of education must follow criteria as given in the State Board of Education's recommendation letter regarding the student board member position.
- Superintendents, board presidents, and board members need to take an active role in creating the student board member position at the district level.
- Students need to express interest and seek information about the student board member opportunity. Students also need to take action toward obtaining the position.

C. ALTERNATIVES

The State Board of Education may wish to consider the following as alternatives or supplements to the main recommendation:

- We recommend the implementation of a student board member position on the county boards of education.
- We encourage school and district forums, which would be held between students and administrative bodies. The forums would be held to discuss student opinion on education issues and policies. The forums would also give the administration opportunities to inform students about standards and other current issues.
- We believe that training would be useful to develop interpersonal communication skills between students and administration.
- We recommend that student board members have motioning and second power in all districts.

D. RATIONALE

The lack of student input in California's education system is a pertinent issue because students are not adequately able to represent themselves or address their issues directly to administration. The lack of value placed upon student opinion throughout

the state is clearly demonstrated in the California School Board Association's estimate that only 50% of California district school boards with high schools have a student board member. Students are the consumers of education and should be able to voice their opinion on the system. Students want as much representation as possible in their education system, and a district student board member with a preferential vote is a strong step in the right direction towards adequate representation. Students have been subservient to administrative procedure in years past, but we believe this should not be the case in years to come. Students and administrations need to work together as mutual partners for the betterment of California's education system.