



April 5, 2018

The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell
Chair, Assembly Education Committee
1020 N Street, Room 159
Sacramento, CA 96814

Re: AB 3136 (as amended March 23, 2018)

Position: Support

Dear Assembly Member O'Donnell:

On behalf of the Davis Joint Unified School District thank you for authoring Assembly Bill (AB) 3136, which would significantly address special education funding issues in the state for its most vulnerable student population—children with disabilities. This bill will be heard by the Assembly Education Committee on April 11, 2018.

We concur with several of the joint findings contained in the 2015 California Special Education Task Force and the 2016 Public Policy Institute of California reports, which acknowledge the significant special education program fiscal challenges faced by school agencies and provide recommendations and actions to improve the system and student outcomes. Both reports include these undisputable facts:

- Special education in California is underfunded
- Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) base rates are not equitable throughout the state
- The state needs to better support local infant and preschool special education programs
- AB 3136 would implement several of these key fiscal recommendations, including addressing special education funding equity by:
- Leveling up base AB 602 funding rates to the 95th percentile
- Establishing a funding formula within AB 602 for programs serving preschoolers with disabilities
- Amending the current AB 602 formula to allow school districts the ability to calculate a declining enrollment adjustment based on individual school district average daily attendance (ADA) instead of aggregated SELPA ADA.

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Additionally, AB 3136 provides a mechanism within AB 602 that provides additional funding for students with significant high-cost disabilities.

Davis Joint Unified School District grapples with increasing mandated special education expenditures and decreasing state and federal funding. We believe the changes proposed in AB 3136 would assist every school agency, including ours, to help us meet the educational needs of our students with disabilities. Therefore, we strongly support AB 3136.

Sincerely,

John A. Bowes, Ed.D.
Superintendent

cc: Members, Assembly Education Committee
The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor of California
Nancy M. LaCasse, Associate Vice-President, School Services of CA