



California Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance

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September 5, 2010

The Honorable **Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) Los Angeles**
State Capitol Building, Sacramento 95814
Telephone: (916) 445-2841/Fax (916) 558-3160

Re: AB 2446 (Furutani) Graduation Requirements (As Amended 8/31/10)

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

The California Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (CAHPERD) is a non-profit and diverse group of more than 4,000 professional educators whose mission is the "passionate promotion of active, healthy lifestyles." Members take a strong stand for quality programs in Health, Physical Education, Recreation, Sport and Dance, and other movement-related activities vital to the citizens of California.

CAHPERD, a professional organization representing thousands of physical educators and other professionals working in recreation and dance in California, who work in pre K through University settings, opposes AB 2446 because it would weaken the graduation requirements for Visual and Performing Arts.

The process the Senate used to forward this bill was flawed. This bill was essentially a 'gut and amend' at the final hour without a printed version available to the members of the Senate. Previous versions of this bill have been rejected by the Senate.

While we support Career Technical Education (CTE) and would support a graduation requirement, we are opposed to having this occur by weakening graduation requirements for other disciplines, foreign language and Visual and Performing Arts (VPA). This weakening is likely to cause some districts to eliminate VPA programs or selections. The VPA programs have been under attack across California with the budget cuts, so enrollment has been dwindling and with this further attack, likely to cause some districts to eliminate or reduce these program offerings because of enrollment numbers. This would actually result in a reduction of student choice.

The arts open doors to self-reflection and self-expression and challenge students to be curious and committed. The arts also enhance thinking skills and set high standards of quality, success and achievement. In addition, recent studies show that the arts make a significant difference in terms of student achievement and learning across all disciplines. Students with high levels of participation in the arts outperform their peers who have little or no arts experience. High school students who take classes in the arts have higher

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math and verbal SAT scores than students who don't. Also, business futurists predict that right brain, creative development fostered by the arts will be most important in the future for success in all forms of employment.

Alternatively, students at risk of not successfully completing their high school educations cite their participation in the arts as a reason for staying in school. Students with lower socio-economic status who had sustained involvement in theatre arts were shown over time to have greater self-confidence, motivation, and empathy than did their non-arts peers according to a ten-year national study of over 25,000 high school students.

CAHPERD respectfully requests your veto of AB 2446. Should you have any questions please contact our legislative advocate, Kathryn Lynch, at (916) 443-0202.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Johannes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "K" and "J".

Keith Johannes
Legislative Chair

cc: Paul Navarro, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Governor's Office
Democratic Floor Unit, 916-319-3729
Robert Becker, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Kathryn Lynch, Legislative Advocate
California Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and
Dance