

March 6, 2011

The Honorable Alan Lowenthal  
Chair, Education Committee  
California State Senate  
California State Capitol, Room 2032  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Lowenthal:

Senate Bill 402 introduced by Senator Lou Correa marks a visionary turning point in California public education. In order for California, the eighth largest economy in the world, to compete in the global market and to address complex economic, political, social, environmental, and technological challenges, it is imperative that we prepare all K-12 students in our state for college, career and citizenship in the 21st century. Senate Bill 402 will enable us to achieve this goal by requiring the curriculum frameworks in *all* disciplines to describe how subject matter can be taught to intentionally build creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and communication into and across the content areas.

We heartily join the Association of California School Administrators, the California State PTA, the California Mathematics Council, the California Science Teachers Association, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and many others in supporting 21st century education for all six million of our public school children.

Current practice focused on assessment primarily of reading language arts and mathematics has narrowed the curriculum and provided limited access to a well-rounded education to a number of underperforming groups, thus creating a knowledge and skills gap. SB 402 addresses the need to meet the specific learning needs of African-American and Latino students, English Learners, particularly Long-Term English Learners, students with disabilities, and students of low-socioeconomic levels without sacrificing access to a broad educational program that strengthens academic language and literacy across the content areas.

Curriculum frameworks are the blueprints that guide the teaching of skills and subject matter prescribed by the content standards by specifying the design of instructional materials, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development programming. For this reason, SB 402 will succeed in providing students with a well-rounded curriculum that differentiates instruction, builds academic literacy for English Learners, provides learning opportunities that are rigorous and relevant, and integrates 21st century skills into all content areas as an interdisciplinary approach.

We urge you to support SB 402. For more information, please contact our partners in this effort - the co-chairs the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Coalition for California - Michelle Herczog (Herczog\_Michelle@yahoo.com) or Michael Matsuda (matsudax@yahoo.com).

Sincerely,

Greg Spielman  
President