



The Education Trust—West

Closing the gaps in opportunity and achievement, pre-k through college.

Dear Supporters & Friends:

Today, The Education Trust—West and its partners, Alliance for a Better Community, California Latino School Boards Association, Communities for Teaching Excellence, Education Pioneers, Families In Schools, Full Circle Fund, L.A. Small Schools Center, L.A.'s Promise, National Council of La Raza, Para Los Niños, Parents for Unity, and Youth Policy Institute released ***Turning Back the Clock: The Inequitable Impact of Shortening California's School Year.***

The policy brief highlights research findings that confirm the critical importance of increased classroom time for improved student achievement, particularly for students in poverty. In fact, the brief identifies a number of schools in California that have extended the school year or school day and have seen improved student learning.

As the brief explains, over the past several years, California's policymakers have made the inequitable decision to systematically reduce the amount of instructional time that our school districts are required to provide.

For example, under AB 114 signed into law by Governor Brown earlier this year, school districts are allowed to shorten the school year by up to seven additional days if and when state revenues fall short of projections. This could potentially result in California's districts having the shortest school year in the nation. With the State Controller recently reporting lower state revenues, it appears more and more likely that these mid-year cuts will happen. Once again, our highest need students, including English learners and students from low-income families, will suffer the inequitable impact of state budget cuts.

Given that California has some of the widest achievement gaps and lowest student performance in the nation, reducing learning time in our schools should not be an option.

The clock is ticking. With each hour and with every day, we approach a time when districts around the state will once again consider cutting days off the school year. The time to act is now. If you believe, like we do, that our students deserve both the opportunity and time necessary to achieve their dreams of college and career, write to the governor and your legislator. Call on them to protect the rights of our children and prevent any cuts to California's school year.

Sincerely,

Arun Ramanathan, Ed.D.

Executive Director

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