



CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

TOM TORLAKSON

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

July 25, 2014

Rachel Quenemoen, Project Director
National Center and State Collaborative
150 Pillsbury Drive SE, 207 Pattee Hall
Minneapolis, MN 55455

Dear Ms. Quenemoen:

Subject: Request to Participate as a Full Field Test in the Spring 2015 National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) Alternate Assessment

This letter is a request of assistance and guidance on how California can participate in a full field test (100 percent of eligible students) either within the confines of the NCSC Cooperative Agreement or by identifying another process or procedure that would allow us to participate in a full field test in spring 2015. As mentioned during our phone conversation of July 22, the State Board of Education (SBE) took action at its July 2014 Board meeting and unanimously endorsed the California Department of Education's (CDE's) plan to participate in a full field test (100 percent of eligible students) in the NCSC alternate assessments. The SBE also directed CDE and SBE staff to explore other assessment options.

We understand that the NCSC will ask the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) at the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to review this request and provide its views on how the CDE's request may be legally implemented under the NCSC grant. California would be happy to provide any additional information requested by the OGC in order to conduct its review. At this time, we would only note that California took a similar approach under the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) grant to administer a full field test (100 percent of eligible students) for English-language arts and mathematics in spring 2014. We assume that the same federal laws apply to the NCSC grant that applied to the SBAC grant and, therefore, there is a legally permissible mechanism to accommodate this request. California requests that before the OGC finalizes its review, that it provides California with a courtesy copy of its draft analysis and considers in good faith any response the CDE may offer, if any. The OGC may contact Bruce Yonehiro, Deputy General Counsel, by e-mail at byonehiro@cde.ca.gov or by phone at 916-319-0860.

California is willing to be flexible and discuss different cost, payment, and implementation approaches. California is also willing to do whatever is reasonably necessary to mitigate any impacts of its full field test on other NCSC states participating in spring 2015 alternate assessments.

Rachel Quenemoen, Project Director
July 25, 2014
Page 2

We agree, as you stated on the July 22 conference call, this issue needs to be decided as soon as possible. We look forward to working with you to develop a mechanism by which California will be allowed to participate in a full field test of the NCSC alternate assessments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keric Ashley". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Keric Ashley, Interim Deputy Superintendent
District, School, and Innovation Branch

KA:by

cc: Ruth Ryder, Deputy Director, Office of Special Education Programs, Office of
Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
Bruce Yonehiro, Deputy General Counsel, Legal Division, CDE
Diane Hernandez, Director, Assessment Development and Administration
Division, CDE