January 6, 2017

Michael Kirst, President
California State Board of Education
1430 N Street, Suite 5111
Sacramento, CA 95814

Response to California State Board of Education Agenda Item #2: Developing an Integrated Local, State, and Federal Accountability and Continuous Improvement System

Dear President Kirst and members of the California State Board of Education:

We are pleased that the state's new accountability tool will improve over time and that it purposely leaves room to improve and add additional accountability measures in the future. As collaboration in the CORE Districts continues, we have data, research, and learnings to share.

We strongly believe that the state has much to gain with the CORE Districts serving as a research pilot in the new accountability system. We remain committed to the improvement and accountability model that we have in place. It is deeply rooted in our systems. We strongly believe it can help inform the board's ongoing work.

The CORE Districts' data system accounts for the state's identified measures of school improvement, plus it includes more finely-tuned data about student achievement growth, high school readiness, social emotional learning, and school culture/climate. These locally-driven measures are drawing attention across the nation because of how they interact with more traditional academic indicators and how they influence which schools are identified for support and improvement. As California policymakers continue to explore these measures for accountability purposes, our research pilot can inform the state's evolving system.

The data we have across state and local measures is providing a roadmap for school- and system-wide improvement. It is reassuring and motivating to educators working hard to change trajectories for the large number of traditionally underserved students in California's public schools. Through our CORE-PACE research partnership we continue to learn and share how our innovative accountability system is improving district and school decisions as well as student outcomes locally.

The CORE Districts have experience that can help the state as it introduces its new school accountability tool later this year. We look forward to ensuring the board's support for our proposed research pilot.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Hanson
President of the CORE Districts and Superintendent of Fresno Unified School District

Cc:
Members of the California State Board of Education
Karen Stapf Walters, Executive Director, California State Board of Education
David Sapp, Deputy Policy Director, California State Board of Education
Tom Torlakson, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Glen Price, Chief Deputy, California Department of Education
Keric Ashley, Deputy Superintendent, California Department of Education
Brent Malicote, Division Director, California Department of Education