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California Association of Private School Organizations

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February 9, 2022

Mr. John Fensterwald
Editor at Large
EdSource
436 14th St., #1005
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear John,

I write on behalf of the California Association of Private School Organizations (CAPSO) to thank you, and to express the appreciation of the state’s private school community for having shone a bright and piercing journalistic spotlight on the failure of the California Department of Education to implement the federal Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) COVID-19 relief program in a timely and effective manner.

Your thoroughly researched and cogently reported article, “For months, California private schools have been waiting for 'emergency' Covid aid” (*EdSource*, October 25, 2021), furnished the public with clear and compelling evidence the California Department of Education’s sloth in delivering federally funded support and services to struggling private schools and needy students (many hailing from low-income families).

The article packed a wallop! After months of heel-dragging, State Superintendent of Public Instruction quickly assigned oversight of the program to a newly-created deputy superintendent position, with staff reporting directly to him. In an unprecedented display of outreach, Mr. Thurmond convened an online meeting at which he apologized to state private school leaders and pledged to correct the Department’s missteps. Indeed, CDE has since taken strides to simplify, streamline, and accelerate the implementation of the programs in question.

There can be no doubt that it was your article that catalyzed the aforementioned positive actions and opened what appears to be a new page in the relationship between the California Department of Education and the state’s private schools. Thank you, once again, for your outstanding journalism.

Sincerely,

Ron Reynolds, Ph.D.
Executive Director
California Association of Private School Organizations

CAPSO is an affiliate of the Council for American Private Education

15701 Sherman Way, #8030, Van Nuys, CA 91409-8030 Phone/Fax: 818-781-4680 e-mail: info@capso.org www.capso.org