

California Legislature

May 14, 2003

Dr. Brad Phillips
Senior Director
Office of Institutional Research and Planning
Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District
El Cajon, CA 92020

Dear Dr. Phillips:

On behalf of the Assembly Higher Education Committee, the Senate Subcommittee on Higher Education, and the Joint Committee to Develop a Master Plan, we are pleased to endorse the CalPass inter-segmental data sharing project you and your colleagues at Grossmont-Cuyamaca have developed. The state Legislature is always seeking ways to encourage collaboration among educational institutions, particularly among schools and faculty at different educational levels. The CalPass project is a model for achieving this collaboration.

CalPass encourages collaboration and planning among schools by focusing faculty on student data. Using carefully developed agreements that protect privacy, school districts, colleges and universities can collect, analyze and share critical student information in order to monitor student performance and improve curriculum. The curriculum councils based on the data sharing consortia can provide teachers with insight to pivotal questions. How do students perform when they leave a school? How well prepared are they? What adjustments to curriculum are necessary to improve their preparation? When faculty and administration focus on the answers to these questions, as students move from elementary school through university, their courses will be better aligned, and students will be better prepared for success. Using modest resources, CalPass directs attention to student data for the best possible reason: to improve student achievement.

We also understand that you have carefully developed software and procedures, such as password protection and encrypted social security numbers, protecting the confidentiality and security of individual students. By removing the potential to identify individuals and closely complying with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines, you have addressed an important concern that all institutions face when they collaborate and share student information.



Dr. Brad Phillips
May 14, 2003
Page 2


In short, CalPass is exactly the kind of program in which every school should participate in order to provide students the greatest opportunity to succeed. We congratulate you on

the success you have already achieved with the CalPass program, and thank you on behalf of the students you have helped. We strongly encourage elementary and secondary schools, community colleges, and universities across the state to participate in the CalPass program.

Sincerely,



CAROL LIU
Assemblymember, 44th District
Chair
Assembly Higher Education Committee



DEEDE ALPERT
Senator, 39th District
Chair
Joint Committee to Develop a Master Plan



JACK SCOTT
Senator, 21st District
Chair
Senate Education Subcommittee on Higher Education
Senate Budget Subcommittee on Education

CJL:kn