



February 27, 2003

Office of Institutional Research and Planning
Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District
8800 Grossmont College Dr.
El Cajon, CA 92020

Dear Dr. Phillips:

We are pleased to provide this letter of endorsement for the CalPass inter-segmental data sharing project you have developed. The Education Trust-West strongly encourages institutional collaboration and partnerships as powerful tools for promoting high academic achievement for all students at all levels- pre-kindergarten through college and for closing the achievement and opportunity gaps that separate low-income students and students of color from their more advantaged peers. The data are our most valuable tools to cut to the heart of the problems and move toward solutions.

In this era of tight budgets and increased accountability, the ability of local K-16 councils to form data sharing consortia and access CalPass services at little or no expense provides a unique and invaluable opportunity for these councils to engage in sophisticated data-driven decision making.

You are also to be commended for the close attention you have paid to issues of confidentiality and security. By dedicating your project to instructional improvement, and removing the potential to identify individuals, you have addressed the legitimate, key concerns educational institutions invariably face when they consider collaborating and sharing student information. Through techniques like password protection and encrypted social security numbers you provide K-16 councils the opportunity to share and analyze longitudinal student data while conscientiously observing FERPA guidelines.

CalPass enhances the ability of K-16 councils to use data to inform the K-16 planning process, improve articulation, improve instruction, empower faculty and improve student preparation. Hopefully the collaborative will use these data to close achievement gaps for once and all. We applaud your vision, initiative and expertise in creating the CalPass program and strongly encourage local K-16 councils to consider affiliating with CalPass.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russlynn Ali". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "A".

Russlynn Ali
Executive Director