

September 10, 2007

The Honorable Gloria Romero
California State Senate
State Capitol, 313
Sacramento, CA 95814

SB 123: SUPPORT

Dear Senator Romero:

The California Association of School Psychologist (CASP) has reviewed the most recent version of SB 123 and has respectfully taken a support position on the bill. CASP is a statewide association that represents over 3,000 school psychologists working in California public, private, and charter schools. School psychologists are mental health professionals who have specialized training in both psychology and education. They use their training and skills to team with educators, parents, and other mental health professionals to ensure that every child overcomes barriers and learns in a safe, healthy and supportive environment.

SB 123 (Romero) would provide special education students who have not passed one or more portions of the CASHEE with an alternative path to a high school diploma. Specifically, in its current form, SB 123 requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to convene an advisory committee to develop a standardized evidence-based alternative assessment. Additionally, SB 123 grants one additional year for special education students to graduate as the new evidence-based system is put in place.

CASP believes that this approach is the most reasonable and well-balanced approach to a very difficult problem. We strongly supports finding an appropriate viable alternative to the California High School Exit Exam for students with disabilities and commends you for taking a proactive roll in ensuring that no child is left behind. We look forward to working with you and Superintendent O'Connell in the coming year on this critical issue. If we can be of further assistance please contact me at 916/444-1595 or our lobbyist, Jeff Frost at 447-8420.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "S. Fisher".

Suzanne Fisher
CASP Executive Director