

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

California School Boards Association

August 5, 1999

FYI
mtg planned
for 9/13 1:30pm

Cathy
see p 2

Mr. Bruce Reed
Assistant to the President and
Director of Domestic Policy
The White House
Washington D.C. 20502

SDUC -

Special Ed

Dear Bruce:

There are a couple of federal education issues we have been working on that I thought should come to your attention. First, CSBA aggressively opposed H.R. 1995 given the adverse impact it will have on the President's goals for class size reduction. While we were not successful in preventing the passage of the bill in late July, we did turn a number of California's moderate democrats around who would have otherwise voted for it. We appreciate the President's strong caution to congress on this bill and hope he will veto any measure that threatens the prospect of further class size reduction.

The second issue I wanted to raise with you concerns special education funding. Among the variety of federal issues that concern local school districts, almost none are as relevant to them as special education funding. No matter how much time we spend on this issue, districts want to know what we have done lately. As you know, republicans have done a good job of advising school districts about their strong support for significantly increased funding for special education programs. Unfortunately, districts are not as aware as they should be that congressional republicans would only provide such funding at the expense of many of the President's most important education initiatives.

We are actively informing local education leaders in our state that our best shot at increasing federal investment in special education is to continuing working with the Clinton administration. We have suggested that by maintaining support for the President's initiatives, local school districts will have better credibility in urging the administration to give special education programs higher priority in the fall negotiations over the budget and for the new budget proposal that will be submitted next year. Abandoning our strong commitment to programs like class-size reduction and the school construction initiative is not going to result in increased special education funding.

As a result of our advice, leaders among California's school district superintendents have requested that CSBA arrange for meetings in September with administration officials and congressional leaders to discuss special education funding. We will be brining superintendents, board

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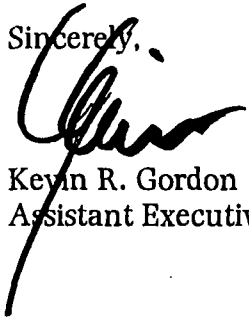
Page Two

members and special education program directors back to Washington D.C. on **September 13th through the 15th** to discuss this issue. I have been in touch with Laura Efurd in the White House Office of Public Liaison to request a **meeting with you and Barbara Chow**. I realize that your schedule is subject to the activities of the President, but if your calendar permits, I would be grateful for your personal participation.

I also wanted to thank you again for the time and consideration you gave me during your search for a replacement for Mike Cohen in the Office of Domestic Policy. I am sorry that my family and I were unable to be more accommodating with the process but it looks like things worked out well for you. Everything I have heard about Andrew Rotherham is very impressive. We are excited about working with him over the next several months.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I hope we will be able to meet in September.

Sincerely,


Kevin R. Gordon
Assistant Executive Director

9/13
130
OK
I guess!