

2021 RUSD Education Summit Panelist Questions

Introduction

- Thank you very much for joining us today for the Annual Riverside Education Legislative Summit and for your ongoing commitment to this important event. We appreciated the opportunity to hear briefly about your work and the priorities you have for this year.

Questions:

For Superintendent Thurmond

- As California's State Superintendent of Public Instruction, you have been working to guide public schools through this unprecedented crisis while also pursuing an agenda you had prior to the pandemic. What is at the top of your agenda now?
- In reviewing the key topics chosen for today's summit, we would appreciate your thoughts on these issues as part of your remarks today.

For Senator Leyva, Assembly Members Medina & Cervantes

- For this new two-year session, please share with us your top education priorities.

Base funding levels for K-12 schools

- Despite billions of one-time dollars that will go to schools, districts across the Inland Empire of every size and demographic are challenged by dramatic underfunding in ongoing budgets that the current LCFF funding targets failed to recognize. We must work to have leaders understand the cliff-effect that is going to occur when the one-time dollars run out and the importance of blocking the Governor's call to repeal the Supplemental Payment adopted just last Summer as part of the Budget Act.

Questions:

For Senator Leyva, Assembly Members Medina & Cervantes

- Please share your views about the overall fiscal position of the state and what you anticipate regarding resources for education investment next year.
- What are your thoughts about the adequacy of ongoing school funding and the potential to save the "Supplemental Payment" which boosts the Prop 98 guarantee in the future?
- Do you support extending the proposed 3.84 percent COLA to all K-12 programs rather than just the LCFF as proposed in January?

- Do you support paying off all of the K-14 funding deferrals rather than leaving a \$3.7 Billion balance as proposed by the Governor?

Special Education Funding & Backfill

- Every single K-12 school district faces daunting costs for meeting the needs of students with disabilities and these costs continue to be among the fastest-growing fiscal challenges in education. Both the State and Federal government should appropriately do more to help districts bear this burden. For the last decade, there is been virtually no meaningful new help with the costs of special education.

It is refreshing to see the efforts of the Governor and our legislators here today that have been especially focused on special education funding.

Questions:

For Senator Leyva, Assembly Members Medina & Cervantes

- Please discuss your legislation and the degree to which it will provide relief to the current costs being shouldered by school districts for meeting the needs of students with disabilities.
- Please share your views of the Governor's special education proposal and your sense of where this issue will end up between the Governor's approach and your own.

Career Technical Education

- Like many districts in the region, Riverside Unified School District provides Career Technical Education at all of our high schools and gives students hands-on technical training in numerous career paths, some that require further education and others that do not. Students, parents, and the community at large are strong advocates of CTE because it provides such a tangible link between K-12 education and the real-life world of work.

CTE is an area of K-12 education that was nearly crushed by the transition to LCFF and today the State invests less than it did a decade ago in permanent funding for these programs that are essential to the future of our students. The legislature appears poised to make important new commitments to CTE and our schools will benefit.

Questions:

For Senator Leyva, Assembly Members Medina & Cervantes

- Please comment on your views regarding the proposals to move the authority over the existing \$150 million in CTE funding that runs through Community Colleges to K-12 education.

School Facility Finance & Statewide Bonds

- As one of the fastest-growing regions in California, the Inland Empire experiences a huge demand for new construction and modernization of public schools. For too long California has not passed a statewide school facilities bond and it is essential that steps be taken to successfully secure passage of a measure in 2022.

Questions:

For Senator Leyva, Assembly Members Medina & Cervantes

- Share with us your thoughts about the prognosis for Legislative action on a K-12 school facility bond and the issues that have yet to be resolved.
- What is your position on the proposed Broadband for All bond, AB 34 by Assembly Member Muratsuchi?