



April 12, 2019

The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell
Chair, Assembly Education Committee
1020 N Street, Room 159
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: AB 908 (O'Donnell) as amended on April 9, 2019 – SUPPORT

Dear Chairman O'Donnell:

On behalf of EdVoice, I write to express support for your AB 908, which clarifies that a robust item bank of actual test items is a necessary component of functioning formative assessment tools; your bill makes good on a key promise to all California teachers six years ago when the legislature enacted the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP).

Sponsors of the CAASPP promised teachers and students a new era of assessments beyond summative high-stakes testing to provide real-time, standards-aligned data to improve teaching and learning. In practice, the promise proved to be a failure by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and the California Department of Education (CDE) in requested and produced statewide assessment contract deliverables. California has failed to use its strong position as the foremost state in the SBAC consortium to ensure that deliverables for formative assessments meet the needs of California teachers.

Timely feedback and access to a useful item bank of retired and additional practice questions in teacher- and student-friendly formats make classroom teaching time and practice more productive at a personalized level and supports non-instructional professional collaboration to help individual students and student subgroups struggling with grade level material. Ignoring the key promise of CAASPP has limited the potential of the positive state role in supporting teachers and only served the bottom line of the SBAC, passive bureaucrats, and willing accomplice assessment publishers.

AB 908 explicitly specifies that a bank of test items is necessary to operationalize the usefulness of state-provided formative assessment tools. AB 908 would help teachers personalize instruction to each of their students and finally help fulfill the promise made by the legislature six years ago with CAASPP.

We appreciate your efforts on this important issue. If you have any questions regarding our support position, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Lucia". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill Lucia
President & CEO

cc: Members of the Assembly Education Committee