



March 23, 2023

Senator Shannon Grove
1021 O Street, Suite 7150
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

SUBJECT – SENATE BILL 292 SUPPORT & SPONSORSHIP

We write proudly as sponsors of Senate Bill 292 which would create education savings accounts (ESA) for any child who desires to seek an education outside of a public school using general fund dollars that would have otherwise been allocated to their education if they were otherwise attending their neighborhood schools.

Public education in the United States is failing our children and not preparing them to be civically minded adults in the 21st-century economy. This problem is even more pronounced in California where the National Assessment of Educational Progress consistently ranks our state's students in the bottom tiers of academic achievement and lower than the national average for most grade levels. Parents need more options.

The Governor's Proposed January Budget Summary for 2023-24 shows "K-12 per-pupil funding totals \$17,519 Proposition 98 General Fund—its highest level ever—and \$23,723 per pupil when accounting for all funding sources." Yet, these funds are segregated from non-government schools that are public facing forcing parents to pay for private schools and other education needs on their own. Recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings removed any roadblocks states faced in the past giving them more flexibility in creating ESAs. As such, states like West Virginia, Arizona, Utah, Iowa, Arkansas and others have fully embraced ESAs.

Parents are responsible for their children and should have the tools and resources necessary to provide the best education opportunities for their kids regardless of their zip code. That is why California Policy Center fully supports SB 292 and looks forward to making ESAs a reality for all kids in the state.

Sincerely,

Lance Christensen
Vice President of Education Policy & Government Affairs