



Dear Mr. Cortines,

We write in regard to the State of California's proposed MOU for the second round of the federal Race To The Top ("RTTT") competition, which we received late Monday night, May 17, 2010. As you know, we are deeply committed to working collaboratively with you and the District to address authentic, positive change in the conditions for teaching and learning at our chronically low-performing schools. As UTLA demonstrated with our teacher/parent/community efforts on Public School Choice, the December, 2009 LA Pilot MOU, the Expanded School Based Management Model agreement, and our recent layoff avoidance agreement that maintains class size in grades 4-8 and saves over 2100 positions, we will continue to seek common ground with you on these most important issues.

At this time, we remain firmly committed to continuing and expanding the collaborative efforts described above. And, we look forward to working with you to address the many challenges that we must all face together, which can only be addressed when California's schools are fully and adequately funded and when mandates imposed by the federal government are also fully-funded to insure that the reforms and activities that are required are actually paid for.

We did want you to be fully aware of our biggest concerns with respect to the RTTT process:

- The State has failed to involve teacher or parent groups in the development of the MOU and the State plan. Indeed, the State is asking districts and teachers to sign the MOU without even seeing the final state plan and application. We note that the District adopted the MOU on May 18, 2010 without a public hearing and without making the final State plan available for public review and comment.
- The timelines are unreasonably rushed and unrealistic. The state MOU was not available until late on May 17, 2010. Yet, districts and stakeholders were required to sign by Friday, May 21, 2010.
- It appears that there will be enormous ongoing cost implications for the District if the one-time funding grant is accepted, which has prompted some school district leaders and teacher union leaders to proceed with great caution regarding their participation. In this time of severe underfunding of public schools we cannot support the creation of additional "unfunded mandates" until full disclosure, public vetting and appropriate collective bargaining has occurred.
- RTTT requires that states evaluate teachers by their students' test scores, which will intensify testing and test-prep activities, invite cheating, and further narrow the curriculum, as teachers will be under increased pressure to raise test scores. Public education, instead, should be about developing the critical thinking and problem solving skills essential for college, a career, and for life.

Again, we look forward to continuing a robust discussion on all of these very important issues. Please let us know if you have any questions or comments.

A.J. Duffy, UTLA President

**OFFICERS**

**A.J. DUFFY**  
President

**ANA VALENCIA**  
UTLA/NEA Vice President  
UTLA/NEA Affiliate President

**JOSH PECHTHALT**  
UTLA/AFT Vice President  
AFT Local 1021 President

**JULIE WASHINGTON**  
Elementary Vice President

**GREGG SOLKOVITS**  
Secondary Vice President

**DAVID GOLDBERG**  
Treasurer

**BETTY FORRESTER**  
Secretary