



April 16, 2020

The Honorable Holly J. Mitchell
Chair, Special Budget and Fiscal Review
Subcommittee on COVID-19 Response
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 6 On
Budget Process, Oversight and Program Evaluation
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Oversight of COVID-19 Response Expenditures

Dear Senator Mitchell and Assemblymember Ting:

I write on behalf of San Diego Unified to submit comments regarding the State's response to the COVID-19 crisis that is impacting our local, State, and federal governments. While these are challenging times, San Diego Unified remains committed to the continuity of learning and providing meal pick-up stations for our students. We believe in saving the rest of the academic year, while continuing efforts to protect staff, students and their families.

The passage of SB 117 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review) provided essential assurances to maintain continuity of learning and meals for students along with emergency funding for the COVID-19 response. In total, San Diego Unified has received \$1.7 million under SB 117. Nonetheless, we are expecting a significant increase above and beyond the \$1.7 million to fully cover online distance learning. Even after accounting for savings in fuel and utilities, we estimate spending about \$19 million to cover items such as additional licensing and software, translation services for remote parent-teacher interactions, sanitizing school facilities, staff training and technology. This level of expenditures represents new net costs and excludes summer school for every student, which would require an additional \$52 million for San Diego Unified.

We appreciate the Legislature's oversight of COVID-19 response expenditures and also request your advocacy at the federal level to cover the full cost of these expenditures. Unlike the 2008 economic recession where we saw revenues drop, this next recession will include both a drop in revenues and unforeseen costs associated with COVID-19. We look forward to your partnership and advocacy on these matters.

Sincerely,

Enrique Ruacho
Director of Government Relations
San Diego Unified