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March 13, 2008

RE: AB 490 – Foster Youth Education Rights

Dear Principal:

As educators and child welfare professionals, we share a common interest in ensuring that our most vulnerable and highest risk children and youth have every opportunity to obtain an education and excel academically. There may be no better indicator of future success than academic attainment.

AB 490 (Steinberg), which went into effect on January 1, 2004, was drafted with the express goal of closing the educational achievement gap for our state's children and youth living in out-of-home care. Accordingly, these foster youth under Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation supervision now have educational rights designed to promote educational stability and support their continued academic growth and progress.

These rights include, but are not limited to:

- Right to remain in their school of origin for the academic year following placement changes;
- Immediate enrollment at a new school while the school is awaiting transfer records and other documentation (e.g., immunization records, transcripts, etc.) normally required for enrollment;
- Transfer of records within two business days; and
- Credit for full or partial coursework.

To review AB 490 in its entirety, please see www.leginfo.ca.gov. For technical assistance, please contact your district's Foster Care Liaison, who can provide additional resources and information.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in ensuring that vulnerable children and youth are given every opportunity to realize their educational goals.

Sincerely,

David Vierra, PhD.
Superintendent