April 11, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
California State Assembly
1021 O St., Suite 4510
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Assembly Bill 897 (McCarty) – Certificated Employees: Probationary Employees: Service Credit
Oppose (As Introduced)

Dear Assembly Member McCarty,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write in respectful opposition to your Assembly Bill 897, related to certificated employee probationary periods. The measure would effectively grant permanent status to employees serving for just 45% of the school year. We recognize the intent of the bill but believe it could result in negative consequences for school districts, educators, and students.

Specifically, this bill would require probationary employees who work at least 60% of a full-time assignment and serve at least 75% of the required days or hours to be deemed as having served a complete school year. This limited time frame is not sufficient for districts to collect information and determine if the employee has the capabilities to fulfill their duties or if they could better serve in another capacity. Probationary periods also serve as an important time for new teachers to be supported and receive guidance on how to face the challenges that come with their position. Teachers may not gain the necessary preparation in the proposed abbreviate time period. As a result, they may be less equipped to fulfill their duties. Alternatively, districts could be reluctant to pass probationary employees due to the lack of data for evaluation.

Finally, expanding the rights of permanent teachers to all certificated employees will be cost prohibitive as school districts would need to put a dismissal process in place, mirrored for permanent teachers. Those proceedings can range from $10,000 to over $100,000 per case, depending on the scope. We also have concerns about the public policy impacts of beginning a process of granting tenure rights to additional positions, particularly in the non-teaching positions that this bill intends to include.

For these reasons, we respectfully oppose AB 897. Please do not hesitate to contact Dorothy Johnson, ACSA Legislative Advocate, if you have any questions regarding our position at (916) 329-3807.

(continued)
Sincerely,

Dorothy Johnson, Legislative Advocate  
Association of California School Administrators

Carlos Rojas, Assistant Superintendent, State and Local Initiatives  
Kern County Superintendent of Schools

Brianna Bruns, Director, Policy and Advocacy  
California County Superintendents

Andrea Ball, Legislative Advocate  
California Association of Suburban School Districts

Chris Reefe, Legislative Director  
California School Boards Association

Jeffrey A. Vaca, Chief Governmental Relations Officer  
Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

Elizabeth Esquivel, Assistant Executive Director, Governmental Relations  
California Association of School Business Officials

Jeff Frost, Legislative Advocate  
Central Valley Education Coalition  
Orange County Department of Education

cc: Honorable Juan Carrillo, California State Assembly  
Honorable Chair and Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
Natasha Collins, Principal Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
Joe Shinstock, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus