

DOCKETED

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CalSHAPE Program

On behalf of the Upland Unified School District, we wish to bring to your attention a matter of significant concern. Assistant Superintendent Jennifer De Anda has penned a letter addressing the potential sunseting of California Schools Healthy Air, Plumbing, and Efficiency (CalSHAPE). Kindly review the attached correspondence for details.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

Lynn J. Carmen Day, Ed.D. - Superintendent

Chief Academic Officer

Shinay Bowman, Ed.D. - Instructional Services

Assistant Superintendents

Ji Kim Wang, Ed.D. (Interim) - Human Resources

Jen De Anda Ed.D. - Business Services

Pamela Salgado - Student Services



UPLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

July 17, 2024

California Energy Commission 1516 Ninth Street Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Urgent Appeal for Continuation of the California Schools Healthy Air, Plumbing, and Efficiency (CalSHAPE) Program

Dear Commissioners and Staff,

On behalf of Upland Unified School District, I am writing to express our grave concern regarding the potential sunset of the California Schools Healthy Air, Plumbing, and Efficiency (CalSHAPE) Program and to urgently appeal for its continuation. We understand that the application deadline has been moved from July 31 to July 1, and there are discussions about permanently ending the program. We strongly urge the California Energy Commission (CEC) to reconsider this decision and to continue this crucial initiative.

The CalSHAPE Program has been a lifeline for school districts across California, offering substantial benefits that extend far beyond mere facility improvements. The program's potential termination poses significant risks to our students, schools, and communities:

1. **Student Health and Academic Performance:** Improved indoor air quality leads to better cognitive function, increased attendance, and enhanced academic performance. Studies have shown that CalSHAPE improvements have contributed to higher test scores and reduced absenteeism. Terminating the program could lead to deteriorating air quality in schools, potentially reversing these gains and negatively impacting student health and learning outcomes.
2. **Teacher Health and Retention:** The program has significantly improved working conditions for educators, leading to better health outcomes and increased job satisfaction. This has directly contributed to higher teacher retention rates, ensuring continuity and quality in education. Losing these benefits could lead to increased teacher turnover and reduced educational quality.
3. **Workforce Development:** CalSHAPE has created numerous jobs in energy efficiency, construction, and related fields. It has provided valuable training and experience for workers in the green energy sector, contributing to California's clean energy workforce development. Ending the program would result in job losses and hinder the growth of this crucial sector.
4. **Critical Infrastructure Needs:** Many school buildings are aging and in dire need of upgrades. CalSHAPE has been instrumental in updating critical infrastructure, including HVAC systems, plumbing, and lighting. Without CalSHAPE, districts will be forced to defer these vital improvements, leading to more costly repairs in the future and potentially unsafe learning environments.
5. **Environmental Sustainability:** The program has significantly reduced natural gas emissions and lowered the carbon footprint of schools across the state. By promoting energy-efficient upgrades, CalSHAPE has

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drastically reduced energy consumption in participating schools. Ending CalSHAPE would be a major setback to California's climate goals and sustainability efforts in the education sector.

6. **Financial Impact:** While ending the program might offer immediate budget relief, the long-term costs to our schools far outweigh any short-term savings. Energy-efficient upgrades result in substantial long-term savings on utility bills, which will be lost if the program ends. These savings allow districts to allocate more resources to educational programs, directly benefiting students.
7. **Equity and Social Justice:** The program has been particularly crucial for underserved communities, helping to bridge the gap in facilities quality across diverse socioeconomic areas. Terminating CalSHAPE could exacerbate existing inequalities in school infrastructure and educational outcomes, disproportionately affecting students in low-income areas.
8. **Pandemic Preparedness:** In light of recent global health challenges, maintaining and improving air quality in schools is more critical than ever for ensuring safe learning environments. CalSHAPE has been vital in upgrading ventilation systems to meet new health standards, supporting safe, in-person learning environments.
9. **Economic Stimulus:** CalSHAPE projects provide jobs and stimulate local economies. The program supports various industries, from construction to energy efficiency technologies. Ending the program could have negative economic ripple effects in communities across California.
10. **Return on Investment:** Studies have shown that every dollar invested in school infrastructure can generate \$2-\$4 in economic benefits. CalSHAPE represents a smart, forward-thinking investment in California's future, with benefits extending far beyond immediate facility improvements.

The risks and consequences of ending the CalSHAPE Program are severe and far-reaching. Districts will struggle to maintain healthy learning environments, students and teachers may face increased health risks and decreased performance, and California's progress towards its climate goals will be significantly hampered. Furthermore, the financial burden on already-strained district budgets will increase, potentially leading to cuts in other crucial areas of education.

We strongly urge the CEC to:

1. Extend the current July 1 deadline to allow districts more time to prepare their applications.
2. Continue the CalSHAPE Program beyond this current phase, recognizing its vital role in maintaining and improving our educational infrastructure, supporting our workforce, and contributing to our state's environmental goals.
3. If budget constraints are a concern, consider scaling the program rather than eliminating it entirely.

Upland Unified School District remains committed to providing the best possible learning and working environment for our students and staff, and the CalSHAPE Program is instrumental in achieving this goal. We appreciate your

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thoughtful consideration of this critical matter and stand ready to provide any additional information that may be helpful in your deliberations.

Thank you for your dedication to California's schools, students, and environmental future. We look forward to your positive response to continue this essential program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jen De Anda', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jennifer De Anda

Assistant Superintendent Business Services