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September 26, 2022

California Department of Education
Superintendent Tony Thurmond
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

Dear Superintendent Thurmond,

In the wake of California's longest-in-the-nation school shutdown, we have seen alarming evidence of student learning loss. We have also witnessed a host of other problems: staffing shortages, higher rates of absenteeism, mental health challenges, increases in violence, and much more. These are matters of the highest urgency that threaten the futures of many young people in our state.

Yet your office is not recognizing this urgency at all. After defying the consensus of education and child health experts by supporting Governor Newsom's school shutdowns, you are now denying the public's right to see the results of this policy. EdSource reports the Department of Education is withholding the release of the results of the Smarter Balanced tests, which measure student progress in English, math, and science.

This delay is putting students at risk of further setbacks. For example, a delayed release means that the public will learn about the results for third graders only once they are well into fourth grade. It is our responsibility as state representatives to give school districts the data and tools they need to respond to deficits in academic readiness, yet your decision is leaving them ill-equipped to help their students succeed.

It has not gone unnoticed that your decision to delay the release of test scores means the fallout will be delayed until after the election. It is sadly another example of our elected officials putting politics over the health, education, and welfare of California students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Kiley".

KEVIN KILEY
Assemblyman, 6th District