Learning With Purpose
ANAHEIM UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
College and Career Ready
MICHAEL B. MATSUDA
Superintendent

June 10, 2019

Adam Day, Chair
California State University Board of Trustees
c/o Trustee Secretariat
401 Golden Shore, Suite 136
Long Beach, CA 90802

Chancellor Timothy P. White
California State University, Office of the Chancellor
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, CA 90802-4210

RE: Proposal to Change First-Year Admission Eligibility Requirements

Dear Chair Day and Chancellor White,

As a school district committed to ensuring college, career and life readiness and success for our students we write to express our strong opposition to the proposal moving forward to potentially add a fourth year of mathematics/quantitative reasoning to the admission requirements for incoming first-year students to the California State University (CSU) System.

In Anaheim Union High School District, we share the goal of the CSU to ensure more students are prepared to succeed in college. We believe that completing a fourth year of math is beneficial to students, and we as a district strongly encourage students to enroll in a fourth year of math. But, at a time when California continues to be plagued by wide racial/ethnic gaps in enrollment and success at public four-year universities, our higher education systems must ensure that policies do not unfairly create unnecessary obstacles for students on the way to earning a college degree.

Currently, students who complete the minimum requirements known as "A-G" are not guaranteed a spot within the CSU system as they are already faced with an increasingly competitive admissions environment. Adding a fourth year of mathematics/quantitative reasoning to the existing rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum will limit access to the system. Already, without the added fourth year of math, we are seeing students who are eligible turned away from a spot that they have worked hard to earn.

We believe that students should have the opportunity to be well rounded and to be able to demonstrate their academic abilities in a variety of ways. Adding a fourth year of math to the requirement means that students have fewer choices in their course planning. This requirement makes it more difficult for students who have strengths in areas other than mathematics to have success within the college admissions process. The requirement would eliminate the student who would like to focus their time and talents on the Arts, Career Technical Education, the Sciences, and Humanities.

Additionally, there has been little evidence or research presented by the CSU that a fourth year of mathematics/quantitative reasoning in high school directly leads to better outcomes for CSU students. According to the CSU Chancellor's Office staff, 75% of incoming freshmen to the CSU system have completed four years of math. The University of California, the state's most selective and elite university system, does not require a fourth year of quantitative reasoning for incoming freshmen because of the high percentage of incoming freshman who have taken a fourth year of math. What rationale is there for intensifying admissions requirements? Has the CSU analyzed the impact such a policy would have?

Furthermore, there is currently a teacher shortage in California, especially in STEM fields - and research has found that marginalized students are the least likely to have access to a fully prepared STEM teacher. What sort of assessment has the CSU done to ensure that we have the K-12 teacher workforce to accommodate such a policy change, particularly in our highest-need schools and districts?

Given the proud history, tradition and mission of the CSU to serve as an open access university, we ask you to not require a fourth-year of mathematics/quantitative reasoning. As a district, we will continue to ensure that students are equitably offered and supported to complete the current A-G curriculum including the recommended coursework of a fourth year of math.

Thank you for the consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Matsuda
Superintendent