



The FRONT P.A.G.E. NEWS

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Welcome back to a new year and new issues facing public education. The most pressing issue is the rush by California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to change state law to make California eligible for "Race to the Top" (RTTT) funds, a package of competitive grants authorized by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The RTTT proposed regulations require states to change their current educational system in order to even apply for the grants.

These demands are not about "minor details." Federal officials want a fundamental change to state standards and accountability systems, teacher credentialing, evaluation, compensation, and promotion, and charter schools. It is not necessary for California lawmakers to rush into reform by changing effective state laws just to meet an arbitrary deadline set by the USDOE.

California can apply for this one-time money in the second round of federal grants. Waiting until Phase 2 will give California policymakers the opportunity to vet these issues fully and come up with a package of reforms that will better meet the needs of our students. California lawmakers must delay any action on RTTT until the federal government releases its final regulations, many of which are more of the same one-size-fits-all approach of the NCLB that has failed Cali-

fornia students and schools for the last several years.

Contact your local lawmakers and urge them to delay any action on RTTT until the full ramifications of the strings attached to this one-time funding are known. You can find your local representatives by going to SBTA.org and clicking on "Contact Your Lawmaker."

Each month .85¢ of your local dues and \$1.25 of your CTA state dues are allocated to political action. These funds are used for lobbying local and state representatives regarding issues concerning children, public education, and its employees. These many issues include wages, benefits, working conditions, apportionment of education funds, rights and responsibilities of educators, retirement issues, and the needs of children. Funds are also used to support both local and state candidates who endorse efforts to protect and improve public education, as well as local and state ballot initiatives that would impact public education, its employees, and those they serve. If you choose not to have this portion of your dues go to support these activities, all you need to do is contact the SBTA office at 909-881-6755. They will provide you with the necessary forms. This request needs to be made by October 31st.