



October 8, 2009

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

California has begun its efforts to compete for hundreds of millions of dollars of federal “Race to the Top” funds for education. It is extremely important to our state that the Fifth Extraordinary Session of the Legislature produce results that will provide real-world success for the future of our children and our economy.

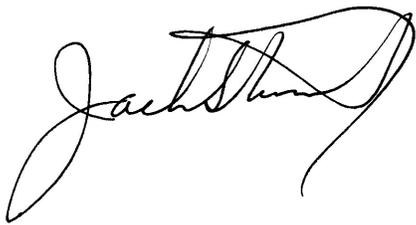
The many members of GetREAL are aware that a primary objective of “Race to the Top” (RTTT) is to encourage and reward states that are providing conditions for education innovation and reform to ensure that students are prepared for success in college and careers.

The “career” component of our response to RTTT requires serious attention by the State of California. While there are excellent examples of programs in our state that help prepare our students for careers, including traditional and rigorous career and technical education (CTE) programs, partnership academies, and Regional Occupation Programs that work together with our Community Colleges and California State Universities, it is important that you know enrollment and support for these programs at the K-12 level continues to erode at the state and local level. In fact, current education policies and conditions in California have reduced the number of enrollments in middle school and high school career education courses to an all time low in California.

We need more of these programs not less. We urge you to include in our state's response to the RTTT the real and necessary changes to our education policies to create the conditions for innovation to occur in our schools, allowing for rigorous and relevant career education programs to grow and prosper in our K-12 system. Unless policy changes occur, we will have a hard time arguing to the federal government, taxpayers and parents that we are better preparing our students for success in careers, as the number of actual career education programs continue to decline in grades 7-12.

We look forward to an honest dialogue in the Fifth Extraordinary Session as the "Race to the Top" is discussed and implemented.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Stewart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

*Jack Stewart, GetREAL Co-Chair  
President  
California Manufacturers and Technology Association*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Balgenorth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

*Bob Balgenorth, GetREAL Co-Chair  
President  
California State Building and Construction Trades Council*

cc: Senate President pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, Senate Republican Leader Dennis Hollingsworth, Speaker of the Assembly Karen Bass, Assembly Republican Leader Sam Blakeslee, Assemblymembers Julia Brownley, Brian Nestande, Tom Ammiano, Juan Arambula, Joan Buchanan, Wilmer Carter, Wesley Chesbro, Mike Eng, Ted Gaines, Martin Garrick, Isadore Hall, Dan Logue, Bonnie Lowenthal, Jeff Miller, John Perez, Jose Solorio and Tom Torlakson.