

*From the desk of Ms. Rozalina Gutman,*



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## CALL TO THE MEMBERS OF CA STATE ASSEMBLY'S APPROPRIATION COMMITTEE TO STRONGLY OPPOSE BILL AB 2446 (by FURUTANI, 55th district)

Dear Members of the Committee on Appropriation:

Due to the devastating consequences, impacting multitude of young and eager to learn children, I (along with many of my colleagues) find it critical to inform you that the **Bill AB 2446 (as currently proposed by Mr. Furutani) may NOT be approved** under any circumstances. I believe it may be versed with multitude of errors primarily due to the lack of the capacity for the full understanding of the educational value of effective and **time-tested "cognitive technology" of Arts and Music Education.**

There is no secret that proposed replacement of the "requirement" for the completion of studies in visual and performing arts with a mere "option" **will legalize similarly "optional" funding of already greatly undermined educational opportunities** for CA public school students, diminishing already incomparably low educational standards. Thus, **without stating it openly**, proposed legislation AB 2446 irresponsibly and shamelessly aims to decree the elimination of access to already minuscule curriculum in Arts Education for hundreds thousands of children in CA public schools.

### **MISTAKEN GROUPING OF "APPLES AND ORANGES" IN THE SAME CATEGORY IS PROPOSED TO SERVE AS A LAW:**

Cognitive abilities that allow to group the subjects into the same category, based on their similarity is usually acquired in early childhood (unless an individual suffers from developmental disorder...)

Contrary, proposed Bill AB 2446 falsely aims to suggest that school subjects that **employ completely different intelligences** and have nothing in common, such as 1) studies in visual and performing arts (already a group of various distinct subjects), 2) foreign language studies and 3) career technical education – "should" belong to the same category and substitute one another. What can be more obvious than the fact that such grouping has no merit?

**ADDING ADDITIONAL COURSES WITHOUT CONSIDERATION OF ALREADY EXISTING FISCAL DEFICIT:**  
Proposed Bill AB 2446 irresponsibly aims to institute additional Career Technical Education (CTE) courses that will require **additional significant financial resources (\$880,000-\$1,500,000) that greatly lack at the moment, due to the current Budget Deficit.**

## **MISTAKEN PROJECTION OF ENROLLMENT IN CTE COURSES:**

Despite stated in the initial version figures that **show actual significantly diminished enrollment** in Career Technical Education courses (through the comparison of several past academic year's data), the Bill AB 2446 mistakenly projects that CTE enrollment would have 3-5% increase in the upcoming years.

If (?)Career Technical Education should be determined to be a good fit to qualify for the High School Diploma in General Education, **it mayNOT come at a cost of choosing over the school subjects** that are universally considered to be essential and fundamental for general education for relevant reasons.

Additionally, those of us who had the privilege to experience powerful impact of engaging with Music and the Arts practices **do not need to be convinced about their great transformational and educational power**. I trust that for many of you **it is obvious that the Arts Education provides vital balance of rounded whole-brain education (that High School Diploma ought to symbolize)**, offering unique opportunities to foster higher cognitive mental skills development and enrichment that no other educational discipline can replace.

Although, those leaders of our community who were not lucky enough to have such personal opportunities for acquiring more **advanced brain structure that affords natural engagement into the Arts and Music practice**, may not be allowed to institute educational policy that robs the next generation of learners of better developmental opportunities. Our community leaders should not disregard widely available multiple research studies, that show that engagement in Music and Arts practices during childhood is not a mere luxury, but contrary **the Arts and Music practices are vital evolutionary adaptation** that vastly contributed to **the survival and evolutionary development of human civilization**. And that is why, systematic experiential opportunities, designed in the form of Arts education curriculum, must continue to be actively present in the lives of children, in order to manifest as **their own evolutionary acquisition**.

**Research-informed curriculum policy** is the only option that will finally steer CA public schools out of the current crisis, and it must reflect plentiful data that proves that systematic engagement in Arts and Music practice has profoundly positive effect on child's brain growth and development. **(Please, refer for details to educational video "Music Instinct", produced for PBS by neuroscientist Daniel Levitin and renown musician Bobby McFerrin.)**

Advanced mental skills that only Music and the Arts education is capable to afford are the very attributes that are becoming more and more vital, in order for the future workforce to remain competitive in the fast-changing World. **That is exactly why the approval of the Bill AB 2446 is simply equal to the hidden betrayal of our country's vital national interests.**

Furthermore, the Arts and Music education is considered to be integral part of **"essential educational standards" in most of other developed countries**. Due to the stated above reasons, my description of the current landscape of music education during my advocacy-related presentation under auspices of the upcoming **29<sup>th</sup> World Conference for Int'l Society for Music Education (ISME) in Beijing** may be considered to be a joke or a funny anecdote by the prominent colleagues of mine from all over the World. **Please, help me avoiding such major embarrassment at the Int'l Forum of ISME, the oldest Int'l Music Education Organization – PLEASE, STRONGLY OPPOSE THE CURRENT VERSION OF BILL AB 2446.**

Sincerely,

*Rezalina Gutman*

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