

Dear Senator McGuire,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to ask for your support of AB 1204 which would help remedy a pressing issue that significantly affects the Ross Valley School District and the quality of education we provide to our students. As you know, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) was designed to allocate state funding based on local property tax revenues and student needs. However, in districts like ours, local property tax revenue is constrained by Prop 13, and our enrollment of multilingual learners and low-income students is relatively low, limiting supplemental and concentration funding. Together, these factors place our district perilously close to the state's base funding level. Given your deep knowledge of Marin, you can appreciate that operating a school district with the state minimum revenue makes it extremely challenging to attract and retain quality staff in a high cost of living area such as Marin County.

The Ross Valley School District faces the very real risk of financial instability. We rely heavily on our local parcel tax, which we hope to renew and increase in 2026. Dependence on this relatively soft funding source leaves the district vulnerable without a more stable, supportive state funding structure.

While the LCFF represents a significant improvement over the previous revenue limit system, its current design disadvantages districts like ours, affected by Prop 13 with an aging community and high local costs of living. For example, in the 2024–25 fiscal year, our per-pupil revenue was \$11,774 compared with the statewide average of \$14,494. According to the LCFF Summary Data report, Ross Valley ranks 959 out of 995 school districts in per-pupil funding. Last year, we lost some of our most talented teachers to neighboring districts offering higher salaries, and we were forced to reduce support staff, including librarians, counselors, and Kindergarten aides.

Despite these challenges, our district is seeing improvements in alignment with state-wide priorities. Enrollment is increasing, attendance rates are higher, and student academic outcomes, including for those with special education needs, have exceeded pre-pandemic levels. These trends run counter to broader narratives about public schools and reflect the dedication of our staff and the engagement of our families, who continue to choose Ross Valley schools for their children.

In light of these challenges, I respectfully urge your support for AB 1204, which proposes revisions to the LCFF, including a more stable inflation adjustment and the creation of regional COLA factors that more accurately reflect the economic realities of districts in high cost of living areas. Such adjustments would help ensure that all students, regardless of their district's funding base, have access to a high-quality education supported by a well-compensated and stable workforce.

Thank you for your long-standing and continued dedication to education and your consideration of this critical issue. I am more than happy to discuss this matter further and provide any additional information you may need. Our community stands ready to support you in this effort.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

[Your Role/Affiliation], Ross Valley School District