



CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

**JACK O'CONNELL**  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

July 9, 2008

Carl Pinkston, Volunteer  
Parallel Black School Board  
P.O. Box 5528  
Sacramento, CA 95817

Dear Mr. Pinkston:

Thank you for contacting the California Department of Education (CDE) regarding your concerns related to the Achievement Gap in California.

To reference your letter directly, I would like to thank you for the invitation to be present at the next meeting of the Parallel Black School Board. Unfortunately, I will be unable to attend, but would like to send you my best wishes for a productive and thought-provoking session.

As you are aware, improving our schools and ensuring that the children in California receive the best education possible are my highest priorities. Therefore, truly share your concerns regarding the Achievement Gap, and I am glad you were able to attend CDE's summit last year.

You may also be interested to learn that in January I announced my strong and continued commitment to closing the achievement gap in my State of Education speech. One of the steps to closing this gap includes adding more rigor and relevance to our curriculum and making sure that strong relationships are cultivated between teachers, students and their parents. Should you wish to review my address, please visit the State of Education Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/se/yr08soe.asp>.

Moreover, you may wish to visit the Closing the Achievement Gap Web site at <http://www.closingtheachievementgap.org/cs/ctag/print/htdocs/home.htm>. This is a great resource where you can review success stories from other districts and also share your thoughts and ideas in an open forum.

I hope you find this helpful and please be assured that I will keep your thoughts in mind as I move forward with this effort.

Again, thank you for contacting the CDE.

Sincerely,



JACK O'CONNELL

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