

## **CAPAA - 2016 Legislative Priorities**

Board Approval on November 21, 2015

### **Education | Closing the Opportunity Gaps**

- a) Expand early learning programs for our most vulnerable by providing more access for children eligible for the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program. Include resources to educate parents, utilizing culturally appropriate strategies such as translation and recorded messages, about the early learning system.
- b) Continue to support the recommendations made in the achievement/opportunity gap reports for Asian American and Pacific Islander students and strategies recommended by the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee.
- c) Improve the collection of disaggregated data for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the education system.
- d) Develop and expand programs to recruit, train, and hire more bilingual teachers and teachers of color. Teacher training and professional development of bilingual teachers are very critical in improving the academic success of English Language Learners (ELL).
- e) Provide wrap-around support services, including but not limited to guidance counseling, social services, mental health services, health care, financial assistance, dropout prevention and intervention, parental involvement, and mentoring.
- f) Address the unmet interpretation and translation needs of limited English proficient parents by providing adequate and certified interpreters for school meetings and ensure schools implement a Language Access Policy and Procedure.
- g) Support outreach efforts to educate communities about the new Common Core Standards and changes to high school graduation requirements.
- h) Support financial assistance, recruitment, and outreach programs to help middle and high school students, particularly those from underrepresented Pacific Islander and Southeast Asian communities, to attend college.

### **Health and Human Services**

- a) Improve health care access for Pacific Islanders from the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. These communities previously had access to Medicaid, but were excluded in 1996 despite having a unique relationship with the United States.
- b) Improve the collection of disaggregated health data for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.
- c) Support culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health programs and services that reduce cultural and language barriers and include public awareness efforts to reduce stigma and recruit bilingual/bicultural providers.
- d) Support culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies to address problem gambling.
- e) Support programs to start a marijuana education and public health program to inform school-age children and adults on the health and safety risks posed by marijuana.

- f) Fund programs that will address the disparity gaps in health care for communities of color including culturally competent and culturally appropriate service delivery and implementation of the Affordable Care Act.
- g) Support policies to decrease disparities in environmental exposure leading to poor health outcomes.
- h) Preserve affordable housing for Asian American and Pacific Islander residents.

## **Economic Development**

- a) Support implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Subcabinet on Business Diversity to increase state utilization of minority, veteran, and women-owned businesses.
- b) Support the efforts of the Office of Minority Women Business Enterprises (OMWBE) in increasing certification of minority, veteran, and women-owned businesses with OMWBE.
- c) Support policies to improve the collection of disaggregated data related to economic issues for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.
- d) Support programs and services to grow small businesses such as export assistance, financing, and removing barriers to entry.
- e) Support career resources to help Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders achieve a living wage.

## **Immigration**

- a) Protect funding for the Limited English Proficient (LEP) Pathway program that promotes economic self-sufficiency for refugees and immigrants through job training, job search, English Language Learner classes, work supports, and social services.
- b) Increase funding for Naturalization Services, particularly for translated educational materials, to help immigrants and refugees who receive public assistance become citizens, thus making them eligible for federal benefits and not reliant on state programs such as state food assistance.
- c) Protect funding for the Washington New Americans program that provides citizenship services to eligible immigrants through direct services and free legal clinics.

## **Civil Rights**

- Increase access to translated materials for voter registration and education.
- Support the Washington Voting Rights Act to ensure fair representation for all communities in local elections.
- Create a state youth commission to raise the voices of young people in the policymaking process.