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# Assembly California Legislature



**ROBERT RIVAS**  
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, THIRTIETH DISTRICT

COMMITTEES  
AGRICULTURE  
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GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
RULES

April 20, 2020

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress  
212 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Panetta:

I would like to thank you for your leadership and bold action you have taken at the federal level during these uncertain and difficult times. School districts in the communities we represent are facing unprecedented challenges due to the closure of schools in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I am requesting your assistance in urging the U.S. Secretary of Education to develop guidance for states and local educational agencies on how to provide services to students with disabilities in a manner that is both feasible and compliant with federal law during the current school closures.

Our region's school districts are struggling to determine how to provide a range of services in a distance-learning format that meets their legal responsibilities to students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

As the U.S. Secretary of Education's March 21<sup>st</sup> fact sheet states, concerns that federal special education law presents "insurmountable barriers" to distance learning has made some school districts hesitant to provide special education services to students with disabilities, or to provide any instruction at all. All students – those with disabilities and those without disabilities - need instruction and supports at this challenging time.

Please urge the U.S. Secretary of Education to expeditiously provide detailed and practical guidance to states and local educational agencies on how to meet the needs of students with disabilities during school closures. Our students cannot afford to lose more learning time.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to working with you to address our community's needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'R' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

ROBERT RIVAS  
Assemblymember, 30<sup>th</sup> District

