



**TOM TORLAKSON**

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

June 17, 2016

Dear County and District Superintendents and Charter School Administrators:

### **CLEAN WATER**

I encourage all California schools to consider testing water quality and replace drinking fountains and faucets when necessary.

All students should have access to clean drinking water at all times. Students need fresh water, nutritious meals, and appropriate physical activity to be ready to learn in class.

A May 5, 2016, report by the Community Water Center and the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water noted that some school districts received water from water districts and other sources that, at times, did not meet primary drinking water standards.

The California Department of Education and individual school districts do not maintain records of water suppliers to schools because state and federal law assign that responsibility to water providers. Nonetheless, school districts should know about existing resources that are available to assure water quality. The Association of California Water Agencies provides extensive information about water quality at <http://www.acwa.com/content/water-quality/water-quality>.

When your school district is upgrading or replacing drinking fountains or other water equipment, contact your local water provider to see if they offer free or reduced-price testing. Water quality reports are also available from your water provider.

The lead content in the drinking water crisis in Flint, Michigan might raise concerns here in California. California's water agencies regularly test for lead in their systems and at the tap to comply with both state and federal laws. Water agencies also actively utilize corrosion control measures to prevent any lead that might be present from leaching into tap water.

California reduced the lead content standard for drinking water plumbing from 4 to 0.25 percent in 2010 with "No Lead Law" legislation (AB 1953), effective in 2010.

All schools can work with their local water service to make sure students have access to clean water. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Torlakson".

Tom Torlakson

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