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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **School boards stunned by governor's plan to renege on budget deal with Education Coalition**

**(Sacramento)** – In a pre-release budget briefing with members of the statewide Education Coalition, Education Secretary Richard Riordan, Director of Finance Tom Campbell and Senior Advisor Bonnie Reiss revealed today that not only will the governor renege on the promise he made to schools last year by withholding an additional \$1.4 billion owed to them but that he also plans to propose a constitutional amendment that would gut the protections ensured by Proposition 98.

“We are astonished and deeply disappointed by the governor’s decision to back out of the deal he made with the Education Coalition,” said Scott P. Plotkin, executive director of the California School Boards Association. “But we are left absolutely speechless by his proposal to suspend and amend Proposition 98 and resolve the state’s financial troubles at the direct expense of 6 million public schoolchildren.

“The fact of the matter is that voters passed Proposition 98 to protect their children from political wheeling and dealing. And though the governor would have you believe otherwise, our children are not a special interest group. They are the future of this state and this nation, and we all have an interest in making sure they have the resources they need to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

“Just this week two reports were released that revealed in no uncertain terms that California is at the bottom of the heap in terms of school funding — we now rank 43<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in terms of per-pupil spending. Clearly, now is not the time to jeopardize that funding.”

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**Legislators, budget experts and economists discuss the economic and political climate for the new year and the possible fallout from the governor’s proposed plans at the:**

### **2005 CSBA Forecast Conference**

**9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 12, at the Sacramento Convention Center**

The event is free for credentialed members of the media. For more information, or to schedule an interview, contact Matt Nichols at (916) 669-3243 or (916) 607-8449.

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California School Boards Association

# NEWSRelease

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