



Governor and Legislators Create Local Crises for Public Schools

The failure of California's elected leaders in Sacramento to keep education funding a priority has left school board members across the state with no choice but to make devastating cuts to their local schools. The governor and legislators from both sides of the aisle refused to find a balanced solution to the budget crisis – one that includes both increased revenues and spending cuts. We should expect nothing less than adequate state funding to ensure our students can achieve California's high academic standards.

1. In acting on the budget, the governor noted that the February and July budgets provide \$60 billion in solutions toward closing the state's budget deficit. For education these solutions—combined with the cuts approved in September – have meant a total of \$12.5 billion in reductions to schools with an additional reduction of \$4.5 billion in deferrals that are meant to reduce the Proposition 98 guarantee.
2. The \$12.5 billion reduction includes \$7.5 billion in programmatic cuts and an additional \$5 billion for the loss of cost-of-living adjustment.
3. **Overall, these cuts equal an astounding reduction of \$2,100 per student.**
4. Public schools have endured more than their fair share of cuts to help balance the state budget. Education should not have to disproportionately bear the burden of solving this budget crisis.
5. The impact of the education cuts already implemented will have long-lasting, detrimental effects on an entire generation of students, not to mention the state's overall economy.
6. The budget problem wasn't created by students, and fixing the problem shouldn't come at the expense of their educational progress, success and future.

It is important to note that these cuts are being made to a system that is already woefully underfunded. California ranks 47th in per-pupil funding in the nation, and yet we have some of the highest education standards. California has far more students per teacher, librarian, counselor and nurse than the national average. We even have fewer school-site and district-level administrators and—contrary to popular opinion—are among the most under-administered schools in the country.

Talking Points

- The ongoing cuts have affected the following programs throughout our local schools.
 - [Insert local examples of budget cuts here]
 - [Insert local examples of budget cuts effecting staff, e.g., layoffs, pay cuts, reduced work hours, etc.]
- The cuts have resulted in a reduction in support and services for our students.
 - [Insert local examples of reduced support and services]
- While Proposition 98's minimum education funding guarantee was not suspended in the last budget revision, an accounting maneuver was utilized to make a \$1.6 billion cut from Proposition 98 in the fiscal year that ended June 30 in order to reduce the base for 2009-10.

- The approved budget also includes the ability for schools to reduce the school year to 175 days, which is authorized at the discretion of each school district. Reducing the school year provides significant challenges locally, such as the need to negotiate the provision with employee unions.
- These cuts inflict additional pain on our local and state economies. After the budget passed in February, more than 30,000 teachers and administrators in California received pink slips and more than 10,000 custodians, bus drivers and other school employees have been laid off.
- Despite these dire circumstances, schools continue to make progress in their efforts to close the achievement gap. Since 1999, the percentage of schools that meet or exceed state targets on the Academic Performance Index (API) has tripled. The problem isn't that our schools are failing -- it's that the governor and state legislators are failing our schools.