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CHICO EDUCATION COALITION DETAILS RECENT IMPACT OF LOCAL CUTS TO SCHOOLS; SUPPORTS 'JOBS BUDGET PLAN' TO RESTORE BILLIONS TO CALIFORNIA EDUCATION AND PROTECT POOR CHILDREN FROM HARMFUL CUTS

Group rejects Governor's proposal to cut billions more from schools

CHICO – The Chico Education Coalition hosted a press conference at Chico High today to bring attention to the devastating local impact of \$17 billion in statewide cuts to schools over the past two years, and to endorse the "Jobs Budget Proposal," a plan initially introduced in the Assembly that protects students from further cuts.

The Education Coalition is encouraged that the Assembly and Senate have made progress during budget negotiations, agreeing upon fundamental principles to protect schools and students, as well as to protect all children from harmful cuts.

The Governor's budget proposal, however, hurts California's students, and would further reduce revenue limit funding, the general purpose support for schools, by \$1.5 billion. This represents a cut of about \$250 for every student. The Governor also proposes cuts of \$1.4 billion to child development programs, \$28 million to county offices of education, \$550 million from the K-3 class size reduction program, and \$206 million from virtually all K-12 programs to impose a negative cost-of-living adjustment.

In contrast, the jobs budget proposal honors the commitment made less than a year ago by the Governor and the Legislature to California's students, does not suspend or manipulate the Proposition 98 constitutional funding guarantee for public education, and does not impose more cuts on schools that have already been devastated by drastic reductions over the past two years.

"California's public schools have been subjected to 60 percent of the cuts, even though education funding makes up only 40 percent of the state budget," said Chico Unified School District Superintendent **Kelly Staley**. "As a result, many school districts have been forced to make unprecedented cuts. The Education Coalition supports the jobs budget plan because it finally creates solutions to the budget shortfall instead of making our students bear the brunt of the cuts."

"As a result of statewide budget cuts, our schools and students have already suffered devastating results, including class size increases in kindergarten and first grade, the elimination of summer school, and substantial layoffs of counselors, music teachers, nurses and teachers aides," said **John Jenswold**, president of the Chico Unified Teachers Association. "It's time for our state's leaders to once again make our students a priority."

"The Governor and legislators need to take a balanced approach that includes raising the revenues necessary to invest in California's students now," said **Connie Altman**, president of the Chico High School PTSA. "With nearly 1 million PTA members throughout the state, we know just how hard parents and many others are working to help schools survive during these tough times. But we cannot make up for the non-stop budget cuts that our children have endured."

“We support the jobs budget plan because it reflects the priorities of the majority of Californians who believe that investing in our students is an invaluable investment in our communities and in California’s future,” said **Barbara Daugherty**, data systems specialist and president of Red Bluff High School Chapter 354 (CSEA). “Our students simply cannot afford more cuts and less adult supervision on school campuses.”

The Education Coalition represents more than 2.5 million teachers, parents, administrators, school board members, school employees and other education advocates in California. For more information, please visit our website at www.protectourstudents.org.

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