



Working together to support and improve California's public schools



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EDUCATION COALITION LEADERS RELEASE REPORT ON IMPACT OF \$17 BILLION IN STATEWIDE CUTS TO CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Historic Cuts Result in Increased Class Sizes, Fewer Bus Routes to School and a Range of Canceled Classes and Dwindling Resources for Students

Sacramento -- As students and educators across the state make their voices heard during "American Education Week," 11/16 – 11/20, the leaders of California's Education Coalition hosted a press conference on Tuesday to report on the state of public education in California after sustaining an unprecedented \$17 billion in statewide budget cuts to public schools. Education Coalition leaders released a report chronicling the impact of the cuts from the perspective of students, teachers and administrators across California.

Below are a few excerpts from the report:

"...On the first day of school, my seat in math was in the far corner and I couldn't read the board. With the increased class sizes, it takes longer to go through a math lecture since the teacher has to answer more questions. Instead of being able to go over homework quickly and teach the lesson slowly, we spend half of class answering questions, leaving only 20 minutes for the new lesson. In my AP European history my teacher has asked for donations for supplies..."

- **Stephany Young, 15, Student, Walnut High School, Walnut, CA**

"Our math classes are packed to the brim. Our neediest students are in "Algebra A," a course for freshmen who need a two-year Algebra program. When I started teaching 10 years ago, these were the first programs targeted for 20:1. Now those classes are staffed at 34:1..."

- **Alison Signorotti, Teacher, Amador County Unified School District**

"We have eliminated 80% of our library services..."

- **Steve Mitrovich, Superintendent, San Carlos School District, Anderson, CA**

Although education only represents 40 percent of the state budget, California public schools have been subjected to 60 percent of the cuts.

"American Education Week is traditionally a time to celebrate our public schools and the success of our students. And while our students have made progress—this year unfortunately is marred by the billions of dollars cut from our public schools and the damage being done to the academic future of our kids. It's not business as usual in our classrooms anymore," said **David A. Sanchez**, president of the

MORE

325,000-member California Teachers Association. "Class sizes have increased at all grade levels, making it harder for students to get the individual attention they deserve. It's time for everyone to stand up for our public schools and make them our state's top priority."

"Parents are stepping up as never before to help out our schools. They're volunteering in classrooms, serving on committees and joining PTAs in rising numbers. But they can't make up for ongoing budget cuts," said **Jo Loss**, president of the California State PTA, which has nearly 1 million members throughout the state. "These cuts undermine all our talk about rising expectations, widening opportunity and closing the achievement gap. Arts instruction, class-size reduction and other programs that are crucial to these goals are being wiped out. It's time to find the leadership and courage to honor our promises to California's children."

"We strive to create a public school system where students can thrive in small class sizes with up-to-date textbooks and state-of-the-art technology, in schools with updated facilities," said **Charles Weis**, President of ACSA and Superintendent of Schools for Santa Clara. "But with these historic cuts to public education, our state's leaders are denying students the basic resources they need to succeed."

"State funding for community colleges has been slashed by more than 16% at the same time as fees have risen 30% and fewer courses are being offered. The CSU trustees and UC regents are raising the costs of a four year education out of the reach of working families," said **Marty Hittelman**, President of the California Federation of Teachers. "Unless our state's leaders close corporate tax loopholes, generate more revenue and stop trying to balance the budget on the backs of California's students, we will rob generations of students the quality education they deserve now and into the future."

"Time and again, voters have said that education should be protected from cuts, and that we should invest in our students and our state's future," said **Paula S. Campbell**, President of the California School Boards Association. "Our students simply cannot sustain further cuts. It's time for our leaders to focus on real priorities – and for voters to hold those accountable who don't."

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NOVEMBER 17, 2009

CHRONICLING THE CUTS:

**A REPORT BY THE EDUCATION COALITION ON HOW
\$17 BILLION IN STATEWIDE CUTS TO PUBLIC
SCHOOLS IS IMPACTING OUR STUDENTS
AND CALIFORNIA'S FUTURE**

California Students Detail the Impact of State Budget Cuts to Schools and Students...

Source: LA Youth – A newspaper for and about teens – www.LAYouth.com

“There are 45 students in my AP English class. It started out with 50 but some students saw it was too crowded so they dropped it and went to regular English...I didn’t leave because it’s AP and I really want the class...”

- **Beatriz Lopez, 17 – Gardena High School, Gardena, CA**

“My school doesn’t have the money to let teachers make enough copies to give one handout to each student. One class set of each handout is all it can afford, so students are forced to write questions from the handout onto separate paper. Some of these questions go on for a whole paragraph and it can take a half hour to write them all. I see that we’re losing a lot of learning time because we’re being forced to spend time copying down questions, rather than thinking about and writing down answers.”

- **Lane Erickson, 16 - South High School, Torrance, CA**

“...On the first day of school, my seat in math was in the far corner and I couldn’t read the board. With the increased class sizes, it takes longer to go through a math lecture since the teacher has to answer more questions. Instead of being able to go over homework quickly and teach the lesson slowly, we spend half of class answering questions, leaving only 20 minutes for the new lesson. In my AP European history my teacher has asked for donations for supplies...”

- **Stephany Young, 15 - Walnut High School, Walnut, CA**

“...My statistics class has 39 kids. The class usually has 32 students. Even with the extra tables that the teacher brought into the class, one student had to sit on a chair with a binder on her lap as a makeshift desk. The freshmen are complaining because a lot of them didn’t get biology or the math classes they need and most likely have to wait until next year to take them. A lot of teachers are teaching double subjects. We have a new Chinese language teacher who also teaches math...”

- **Michelle Ruan, 17 - Alhambra High School, Alhambra, CA**

“...All my classes are full this year. There are 60 students in my PE class! Last year, there were about 30 students in my PE class. Also, I was denied when I wanted move from period 4 study hall to English honors. My counselor said the English class was full.”

- **Freddy Tsao, 15 - South Pasadena High School, South Pasadena, CA**

“In the magnet program, AP classes like English and art history usually have a little more than 20 people, but this year they have more than 40. People have to sit in extra chairs

without desks. My teachers are trying to convince people not to take their classes instead of encouraging them to sign up. We also have about 300 more students..."

- **Sam Landsberg, 16 - Hamilton High School, Los Angeles, CA**

"At my school, our film teacher was laid off, so there's no more film department. I was very excited to take another film class this year because I'd really enjoyed it last year. We got to make our own films, and I got to show my first movie to my classmates at our student film festival. Now the cameras, computers and other equipment are locked in the media center, unused."

- **Lia Dun, 16 - Marshall High School, Los Angeles CA**

"Classes are so overcrowded that my friends have to sit on the floor. One of my friends actually brought a chair from home to sit on. Many custodians have been fired, so the main building has been locked up before school, during nutrition and lunch. I understand why they're closing it, but students should be allowed to put books in their lockers and not have to carry heavy books for most, if not all, of their classes..."

- **Aaron Sayago, 18 - Fairfax High School, Los Angeles CA**

"This year, the honors geometry class has around 44 people. My teacher said that the school is trying to find another teacher who could teach a second honors geometry class. But right now, my class is still big. In the first day of school, my Chinese teacher announced that we may not have workbooks because of the budget cuts. So she asked each student to donate \$20 to \$30."

- **Sydney Chou, 13 - Sonora High School, La Habra, CA**

California Teachers Detail the Impact of State Budget Cuts to Schools and Students...

Source: www.StandUpForSchools.org

"Our math classes are packed to the brim. Our neediest students are in "Algebra A," a course for freshmen who need a two-year Algebra program. When I started teaching 10 years ago, these were the first programs targeted for 20:1. Now those classes are staffed at 34:1..."

- **Alison Signorotti, Amador County Unified School District**

"The budget cuts are devastating. One teacher has waited for over two months for heat in her classroom. Several of her students were sick with colds and one was hospitalized for pneumonia due to the cold classroom. The computer lab for the upper grades has been waiting for new computers for over a year now. The computers just need to be installed but there is no money to install them. Our copy machines are broken and our district has no money for toner for the ones that do work. Our principal just lost her program assistant and she doesn't have a vice-principal. Our school has over 700 students. We have been told to reduce the number of lunch time supervisors from five to three..."

- **Mary Oshima, West Contra Costa Unified School District**

"I am one of the last Woodshop teachers, and I'm glad to have a job which I enjoy. My budget for six classes that average 36 kids per class is \$100 for the entire year. I personally spend between \$500 and \$1000 per month to keep my little program running, about \$10,000 per year. I collect shop fees but only about half the kids are able to pay..."

- **Jeff Seiver, Anaheim Union School District**

"...We lost several key staff members. We have not been able to use our library this year because we do not have a librarian. We have lost our bilingual resource teachers, thus, our most needy students (i.e. newcomers, low-achieving students, English learners) are not being adequately served. Furthermore, we have lost 4 of our bilingual aides..."

- **Betsy Vega, Santa Ana Unified School District**

"...Since the budget cuts, ALL of our team sports have been dropped. This was a great opportunity to motivate students to do well in school and be rewarded with sports competition. It was extremely successful last year for testing purposes, as well. Our school had the highest increase in test scores in the state last year with 111 points! For the sake of our student's health, well being, social skills development and many more factors, we need to find a way to put sports back into the budget. I am a strong advocate for lifelong learning – mental, physical and emotional – and without sports, we are diminishing the future of our children."

- **Mindie Gilliland, Lake Elsinore Unified School District**

“We are basically operating on a shoe-string budget. Our supply budget has never been enough, but now we have been cut 25 percent more for this year, which means we have to dig deeper into our own pockets for student needs. Our parents are very helpful but it is not enough. Our school bus system has been almost completely eliminated. We have lost most of our Technology staff. There are no new funds for updating computers or buying new ones...”

- **Lori Walker, Capistrano Unified School District**

California Superintendents Detail the Impact of State Budget Cuts to Schools and Students...

Source: Responses from a survey of California Superintendents, taken 11/6/09 – 11/11/09 by the Association of California School Administrators.

"...We have increased class size, reduced teachers, reduced support staff, eliminated programs such as Spanish, music, drama, and band. We have eliminated librarians, counselors, classroom aides, computer techs, and the GATE programs. We have reduced special ed staff and administrators. We have no funding for supplemental materials and have had to get waivers for textbook adoptions..."

- **Michele Schuetz, Auburn Union School District, Auburn, CA**

"We have eliminated 80% of our library services..."

- **Steve Mitrovich, San Carlos School District, Anderson, CA**

"Increased class size sizes by 7-10 students, reduced custodial and security staff, reduced technology staff, reduced elective offerings at middle and high schools and reduced music and athletic programs."

- **Lou Obermeyer, Valley Center-Pauma Unified School District, Valley Center, CA**

"...Loss of Categorical Program Director, reduction in counseling services, freeze on textbook purchases, larger class size at secondary level. We will need to make an additional \$2.5 million in cuts for 2010-2011.

- **Rob Gaskill, Cabrillo Unified School District, Half Moon Bay, CA**

"We have closed 2 schools, increased class size, and eliminated and/or reduced support services staff (counselors and deans)..."

- **Louis Pappas, Covina-Valley Unified School District, Covina, CA**

"...due to budget cuts, every employee in Wiseburn had to take 6 furlough days. This impacts students directly as their academic calendar has been cut to 175 days..."

- **Tom Johnstone, Wiseburn School District, Hawthorne, CA**

"We have cut instructional aides, drama classes, our professional development budget, and our technology budget."

- **Anthony Ranii, Hillsborough City School District, Hillsborough, CA**

“Closed an elementary school to save money, students are transported out of their neighborhood schools, Cuts to instructional supply funds, fieldtrips, sports...”

- **Dr. Frank W. Passarella, Lake Elsinore Unified School District, Lake Elsinore, CA**

Excerpts from California News Reports on the Impact of State Budget Cuts to Schools and Students...

The Modesto Bee

modbee.com

Modesto schools budget panel must take \$20M off \$250M budget

By Michelle Hatfield

last updated: November 15, 2009

Facing \$20 million in spending cuts next school year, the Modesto City Schools budget advisory committee is starting the difficult task of picking apart the district's \$250 million budget and suggesting trims to the board of education.

Committee members drafted a list of 70 items to trim or reduce and estimated how much that action could decrease spending. They also listed potential effects of the reductions. For example, closing an elementary school could cost \$350,000, but it's unclear how much it would cost to reopen, rent or sell the site.

San Francisco Chronicle

Higher education master plan getting ignored

Nanette Asimov, Chronicle Staff Writer - Friday, November 13, 2009

At a recent protest in Long Beach, where the CSU trustees raised yearly fees by 20 percent to \$4,026, students held an all-night vigil, reading aloud from the Master Plan.

"Accessible, affordable, high-quality and accountable" were its guiding principles for higher education. Nominal fees were to be charged only for such ancillary categories as recreation costs.

Yet next week, UC regents are expected to raise fees by 32 percent, topping \$10,000 for the first time. It would be the eighth fee increase since 2002.

California's budget crisis has led to cuts of more than \$500 million from CSU since last year, more than \$800 million from UC, and more than \$700 million from community colleges.

CSU announced recently that it must trim enrollment by 40,000 over two years, and had to cancel enrollment for next spring.

KDVR.com ABC 12

By Erin Maxson
November 12, 2009

In the last few years the Yreka-Union Elementary School District has eliminated both staff and programs.

"In our district we made cuts two years ago that were relatively significant. We cut teaching positions, cut counselor positions, aid positions, reduced hours on a lot of our classified staff," Yreka Union Elementary Superintendent Vanston Shaw said.

"When I first started we actually had a \$1,000 budget that we could spend on our classroom. And over the years we've lost it little by little to now where we are down to \$400 that we can spend per year," 4th Grade Teacher Amy Dunlap.

"We lost our fourth through sixth grade PE program because of funding cuts again," Brown said.

THE SACRAMENTO BEE sacbee.com

Folsom Cordova considers shorter days for juniors, seniors

By Diana Lambert

Monday, Nov. 9, 2009

Folsom Cordova Unified School District is considering shaving a class period off the school day for high school juniors and seniors to help shore up a \$10.6 million **budget deficit** projected for next year.

Last month, the Natomas **Unified School District** board voted to cut five school days from the year and to shorten the school day for juniors and seniors who are not behind in credits.

Folsom Cordova Superintendent **Patrick Godwin** said shortening the school day for juniors and seniors is just one of several options the district is looking at to balance its budget.

District officials also are considering closing two schools, reducing library services, laying off counselors, increasing **class sizes** and shortening the school year.



Shasta College will cut about 10 percent of courses

By [Scott Mobley](#)

Posted November 12, 2009

Shasta College sophomores A.J. Cornejo and Michael Yingling walk across campus Wednesday.

The college offers more than 3,000 course sections each year. The proposed cuts amount to nearly 10 percent of that total.

College faculty are working with deans to identify the courses and course sections that will be cut, said Bill Cochran, vice president of academic affairs.



The state university system plans to cut 40,000 students over three years

Tuesday, November 10, 2009

By **MARK MUCKENFUSS**

The California State University system plans to cut enrollment nearly 10 percent over the next three years, Chancellor Charles B. Reed said in a news conference Tuesday morning.

The cuts will affect all campuses, including San Bernardino, which has 17,852 students. The campus plans to reduce that enrollment by 2,300.

Reed said budget reductions, a result of the state's fiscal crisis, are forcing the university system to trim enrollment from a peak last year of 450,000 by 10,000 for the 2009-2010 school year and by an additional 30,000 over the next two school years.



School libraries lacking

November 09, 2009, By Bill Silverfarb

A strong school library program is the cornerstone of a healthy school, unfortunately schools do not have the money to support strong school libraries and students are suffering from it, according to California School Library Association.

State budget cuts have forced schools to cut library hours and librarians who used to work full time in a single school are now forced to provide the services at multiple schools in half the time, said Jackie Siminitus, vice president of communications for the CSLA, an organization of library media teachers, classroom teachers and paraprofessionals committed to enriching student learning.



Superintendent sounds Lincoln Unified alarm

By Roger Phillips
Record Staff Writer
November 09, 2009 12:00 AM

Lincoln Unified Superintendent Steve Lowder said he is anticipating Lincoln being hit by unspecified midyear funding reductions in January because of a possible \$14 billion to \$15 billion shortfall in state revenues for 2009-10. And he expects perhaps \$4 million in cuts to Lincoln Unified's 2010-11 fiscal year budget. Heaped on top of reductions from earlier this year, school districts now are at a point where they are running out of places to cut, Lowder said.

Lincoln's budget in 2009-10 - \$60.6 million - is \$3 million smaller than it was in 2008-09. It will be smaller still next year.

Lincoln is the fifth-largest school district in San Joaquin County, with about 8,000 students. Officials in Stockton Unified and Lodi Unified, which respectively have 38,000 and 31,000 students, recently have said they expect to slash at least \$20 million from their budgets in 2010-11.

Santa Cruz Sentinel

School districts likely to face ax as state deficit grows

[By J.M. BROWN](#)

Posted: 11/05/2009 01:30:31 AM PST

SANTA CRUZ -- With the projected state budget deficit expected to reach \$7 billion by next summer, educators are bracing for the possibility of more cuts this academic year -- even before they even finalize spending plans for next year.

When Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger releases his fiscal plan in January, he could recommend that districts cut from their current budgets in addition to making trims in their spending plans that start in July. Any cuts next year could lead to larger class sizes and teacher layoffs.

But cuts midyear, when teachers can't be trimmed due to state laws, could mean even more drastic slashing in library services, aides and other staff. The problem right now is that districts don't know what to expect from Sacramento.

In recent years, districts have received nearly 20 percent less in state funding than they should have gotten based on state law, said Barney Finlay, the county education finance chief. Even still, trustees are planning now for how to absorb millions in losses for next year.

Times-Standard

Eureka City Schools candidates talk budget cuts

Thadeus Greenon/The Times-Standard

Posted: 10/29/2009 01:24:14 AM PDT

Eureka City Schools Superintendent Gregg Haulk is very clear on the biggest challenges facing his district.

"Eureka City Schools' biggest challenge is still going to be the state budget," said Haulk, who has watched as around \$4 million in state funds were cut from his schools now approximately \$36 million operating budget. "I think (school board) candidates are going to have to be very knowledgeable about state funding and state policies."

As Humboldt County's largest school district, Eureka City Schools is made up of almost a dozen school sites -- drawing students from areas outside the city limits like Kneeland, Cutten and King Salmon -- and employing some 700 people.

pressdemocrat.com

Big crowd voices worries over Santa Rosa school cuts

By [KERRY BENEFIELD](#)

THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

October 28, 2009

An elementary school student voiced the concerns of more than 200 people appearing before the Santa Rosa Schools board Wednesday that cutting into programs would hinder rising test scores and give teachers less time to work with the students who need it the most.

Wednesday night marked the opening round of debate over the cuts that have loomed for months over Sonoma County's largest school district. The school district is debating cutting \$5.7 million from next year's budget and another \$4.7 million in the 2011-12 school year. Among the reductions being considered are closing schools, increasing class sizes in nearly every grade, eliminating librarian positions and axing art, music and computer programs at district elementary schools.

ACCENT ADVOCATE

Fighting for education

Rally protests statewide cuts to funding

By Isaac Thomas

Tuesday, October 20, 2009

SAN FRANCISCO —Students from all over San Francisco gathered at City Hall protesting budget cuts and calling on public officials to defend public education. The event was organized by a committee of San Francisco State and City College of San Francisco professors.

Not only have budget cuts forced colleges to cut sections from their schedules this semester, but professors are losing work as well and there is nothing they can do about it, she said.

Attendees included students from K-12 schools throughout San Francisco, San Francisco City College and San Francisco State.

With the CSU budget deficit falling to \$584 billion this year and fee increases rising 32 percent in 2009, up 182 percent since 2002, students are finding it harder than ever to find the funds for their education, he said.

Not only have the fee increases made it more difficult for students to afford college, but San Francisco State will also not be accepting any applications for the spring 2010 semester.

THE SACRAMENTO BEE sacbee.com

San Juan district meetings to discuss school closures

By Diana Lambert
Monday, Oct. 19, 2009

The San Juan Unified School District is holding a series of meetings to discuss a proposal to close Garfield Elementary School and Sierra Nueva High School in the next school year.

The schools may be closed because of falling enrollment and state budget cuts.

City College Students, Faculty, Staff Protest Budget Cuts

*By Riya Bhattacharjee
Thursday October 15, 2009*

The four-campus Peralta College System, which includes Berkeley City College, is facing a \$7 million budget deficit because of the state Legislature's budget compromise with the governor in August.

At least 400 classes are expected be cut from the Peralta system and programs like CalWORKS and Extended Opportunity Programs and Services, which cater to socioeconomically and academically disadvantaged students, have already been slashed by 50 percent.

Berkeley City College is facing a \$772,000 cut in student services and has already eliminated 20 classes for the fall semester, with more cuts planned for the spring.

School district holds first of four meetings about budget cuts

By Cameron Macdonald - Citizen News Editor

Published: Thursday, October 15, 2009 3:29 PM PDT

The Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD) faces a projected \$40-\$42 million budget shortfall beginning in July and spending cuts have to be made.

The state's current financial crisis is leaving a projected \$38 billion deficit over the next three years, according to the School Services of California.

Some of the school district's proposed cuts include the elimination of 206 teaching positions in grades kindergarten through third, 16 school counselor positions, 14 library technicians, eight high school vice principal positions, and cutting \$1.5 million from high school athletics.

THE SACRAMENTO BEE sacbee.com

Budget woes, school reform collide

By Diana Lambert

Thursday, Oct. 1, 2009

Last week Natomas Unified School District trustees cut \$15.2 million from the district's spending plan by shortening the school day for juniors and seniors, eliminating a graduation requirement, cutting five days from the school year, pulling buses off the road, cutting staff, canceling technology contracts and increasing class sizes, among other cuts.

The district had already cut \$31.2 million earlier this year, including \$8 million from the 2009-10 budget.

School districts throughout the state are making the same tough choices -- some are even shuttering summer-school programs and decimating school-supply budgets.