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## Public school moms and dads demand answers at SF town hall meeting

By [NANCY MULLANE](#) on Thursday, Feb 25, 9:21am



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If you want to see democracy in action, get a take-out dinner and show up at [Marina Middle School](#) auditorium at 6:30 tonight. In fact, it might be better to show up at 6 if you want a seat, or even room to stand in the back. More than thousand people who've reportedly already signed up to attend the meeting say they are tired of getting the same old answers about cuts to public education and they want to hear the truth from state and local politicians about the future of the city's public schools.

Organized by a small band of PTA parents from the neighborhood's [Sheridan Elementary School](#), the 6:30-8:30pm Q&A event will be moderated by Michael Krasny. Organizers say they expect the auditorium to be packed with not only parents, but a chorus of politicians. Mayor Gavin Newsom, [State Senator Leland Yee](#), SF City and County Supervisors, and a number of SF School Board Members are expected to attend, ready to respond to the crisis facing public schools.

Governor Schwarzenegger's proposed budget for 2010-11 would result in another \$2.5 billion cut to schools, equating to \$2,500 per year less for every California student. In addition, the Governor wants to renege on the July budget agreement that committed to restore more than \$11.2 billion of the \$18 billion cut from schools over the past two years.

This week, Senator Leland Yee joined California educators in calling on the Governor to protect school funding. Yee, who has consistently voted against all budget cuts to education, said Democrats should be as vigilant against cuts to education as Republicans have been against raising taxes.

"Not only do we need to stop any further cuts to education, but we need to find ways to increase funding or else our state is certain to face dire long-term consequences," said Yee. "For every dollar we invest in a student's education, the state's economy receives \$3 net return on the investment. The best way to improve our economy is to ensure we have a

well-educated workforce."  
THE MOST...

California's schools currently rank at the very bottom of all 50 states in staff-to-student ratios and nearly last in the nation in per-pupil spending. In addition, libraries, arts, music, sports, advanced placement and other essential programs have been virtually eliminated.

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While California's public schools make up 40 percent of the state budget, they have been subject to 60 percent of the cuts. As a result, schools have lost more than 20,000 teachers and administrators and more than 10,000 critical school site support staff.

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Tonight's town hall forum will take place at Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore Street (at Chestnut Street), San Francisco, CA

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