

*The  
Education  
Coalition*

Working together to support and  
improve California's public schools

**Association of California School  
Administrators (ACSA)**

*representing more than 16,000 school  
administrators*

**California Association Of School  
Business Officials (CASBO)**

*representing more than 4,000 school finance  
and administrative managers*

**California County  
Superintendents Educational  
Services Association (CCSESA)**

*representing all 58 county superintendents  
throughout California*

**California Federation of  
Teachers (CFT-AFL-CIO)**

*representing nearly 90,000 education  
employees*

**California School Boards  
Association (CSBA)**

*representing nearly 1,000 K-12 school districts  
and county offices of education throughout  
California*

**California School Employees  
Association (CSEA)**

*representing more than 230,000 classified  
school employees*

**California State PTA**

*representing more than one million parents,  
teachers, and students in California*

**California Teachers Association  
(CTA)**

*representing over 340,000 educators*

**Service Employees International  
Union (SEIU)**

*representing more than 50,000 school  
employees in California*

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**Position Paper: 2009-10 Governor's Proposed Budget**

It is ironic that the Governor's proposed budget was released at almost the same time as the Education Week "Quality Counts" survey of public education, which gave California an "F" in school spending and ranked the state 47<sup>th</sup> in the nation in per pupil spending. The survey echoes every major report and study of the past year—all of which conclude that California's public schools are horribly underfunded.

The Education Week report concludes that California's public school students already receive nearly \$2,400 per pupil less than the national average, yet the Governor's budget proposal would CUT school funding by almost \$14 billion.

**Oppose Further Cuts to Education.** Although members of the Education Coalition are very familiar with the opinion among some state policy makers that everyone must take cuts, the reality is that even before the \$3 billion cut sustained by schools last fall, California already was near the bottom in education funding. Everything possible should be done to avoid further reductions. California suffers from a severe mismatch of expectations and resources—it has established very high academic standards, yet provides financial support that ranks near the bottom in the nation. Californians appropriately believe in helping all students meet the high standards. It is up to the Governor and the Legislature to provide the resources to make those high standards a reality.

**Reject the manipulation of Proposition 98.** California's voters approved the Proposition 98 funding guarantee to provide a minimum funding guarantee for the public schools. The Governor's budget proposal would manipulate that guarantee to the point that it is meaningless. The proposal would:

- permanently define away more than \$7 billion owed to the schools under the guarantee
- manipulate home-to-school transportation to reduce the guarantee by \$619 million
- resort to the "deferral" of funds to try to circumvent court decisions that have already rejected "loans" from schools to the state
- attempt to redefine the existing lottery revenues to schools as a Proposition 98 "increase"
- play a "shell game" with the numbers such that a \$1 billion program cut in 2009-10 is portrayed as a \$4.4 billion Proposition 98 increase.

The Education Coalition is opposed to each and every one of these proposals to manipulate Proposition 98 and circumvent the clear intent of California's voters.

**Do not lock in education funding at 50<sup>th</sup> in the nation.** With the budget cuts sustained last fall, California K-12 education likely now ranks 50<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the Quality Counts analysis of per pupil funding. Proposals to impose a "hard" cap on state spending would lock education funding in California at this abysmally inadequate level. Even the current fiscal crisis does not justify imposing a fiscal straight-jacket on efforts to restore adequate funding for California's children.

**Oppose mandate "suspension" proposal.** Faced with a recent court ruling that the state must actually pay for mandates it imposes, the Governor's budget proposes to "suspend" various mandates and then not pay for them. It does not make sense to "suspend" the science course requirement to graduate from high school. Is it reasonable to suspend criminal background checks or the open meetings act? The topic of which mandates are appropriate is a legitimate policy question. The idea of "suspending" mandates to avoid paying for them is a bad policy and a clear attempt to avoid another Constitutional requirement.