



OFFICE OF THE
SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Mary Anne H. Mays
Interim Superintendent

February 27, 2008

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0504

Subject: Opposing Governor's 2008-09 Proposed Budget

Honorable Dianne Feinstein,

As you certainly already know, Governor Schwarzenegger presented his education budget proposal for the 2008-09 school year. As an educator for more than 35 years, I am both outraged and saddened to learn about the Governor's proposal to cut funding to our schools. Year after year, we are being forced to fight to ensure our children receive the quality education they need and deserve.

The Governor's proposed reductions of \$4.8 billion would specifically mean to our District that we will need to cut \$11.8 million relative to our current spending in order to have a balanced budget for 2008-09 (this does not take into consideration the \$12 plus million we cut in 2003). To provide a balanced budget which reflects reductions of \$11.8 million, some employees will be impacted by notices of possible layoff. The layoff notices will affect all employee groups: certificated, classified, and management. Everything beyond the basic core program will unfortunately need to be "on the table" for consideration of elimination or reduction. This is not a step that any school district wishes to take, but there is very little or no choice.

At a time when we are starting to see progress in student learning throughout California and in our own district, this budget represents a giant step backward. The progress in reading and math scores cannot continue with these cuts to our public schools.

As superintendent of a 19,000 school district, I understand the challenges inherent in balancing a budget, but I strongly oppose Governor Schwarzenegger's 2008-09 budget proposal and plans to eviscerate funding for students and schools. Our children and our schools did not create this budget problem, and their education and future progress shouldn't be undermined because of it. Our schools, your schools are funded at a level that placed us 46th in state national rankings, nearly at the bottom, even before these cuts.

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Honorable Feinstein, as a Congress representative for Californians, you have the power to influence this disastrous budget proposal from significantly affecting our public schools. Please urge our local legislators and Governor to maintain Proposition 98 funds and urge the Governor to increase the percentage of State dollars committed to public education to reflect the actual need in our schools.

Concerned for Education,

Dr. Mary Anne H. Mays
Interim Superintendent