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# *PVUSD PROGRESS*

**progress** *n* [ME, fr. L *progressus* advance, fr. *progressus*, pp. of *progredi* to go forth, fr. *pro-* forward + *gradi* to go – more at PRO-, GRADE] **1a:** a royal journey marked by pomp and pageant **b:** an expedition, journey, or march through a region. **2:** a forward or onward movement (as to an objective or to a goal) : ADVANCE **3:** gradual betterment; esp : the progressive development of mankind – **in progress** : going on : OCCURRING

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*Press Release*

*For Immediate Release*

*January 17, 2003*

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***THE GOVERNOR PROPOSES DRASTIC CUTS IN FUNDING FOR EDUCATION:  
PAJARO VALLEY UNIFIED INITIATES DECISIVE ACTION TO ADDRESS THE LOSS OF FUNDS***

The Governor's proposal released last Friday would reduce funding for PVUSD's current budget by over \$5 million dollars. This reduction would hit both the general fund that covers most school and district operations as well as categorical fund which are targeted for specific students and programs. The District's current budget is \$150 million dollars, but over \$120 million dollars is in personnel. State law prevents any layoff of the certificated staff during the year, and while reductions in classified staff are legal, they fill critical positions such as bus drivers, food services and aides in special education classrooms. So mass layoffs are not a feasible means of reducing the current year budget. That leaves less than \$30 million dollars in the budget to be spent on books, supplies, rent, utilities, insurance, and service contracts.

With over half the fiscal year over, the District must cut the \$5 million reduction from less than \$15 million of funds that have already been budgeted. Unfortunately this is not the worst. The Governor has proposed to not only reduce next year's budget by the same \$5 million dollars but to withhold the programmed COLA thereby reducing another \$2 million dollars. This is a total of a \$12 million dollar loss in funds that have already been committed over an 18-month period.

The District has implemented an emergency plan to essentially stop all expenditures which was presented to the Board on Wednesday night and reinforced by the District Budget Committee on Thursday night. This entails a freeze on all hiring and the elimination of substitutes except for classroom teachers. All other expenditures not already firmly committed are also frozen. The Administration is still in the process for detailing the guidelines for "unfreezing" any hiring of staff or expenditures for supplies or services.

The District Budget Committee consists of parents from all zones, principals from each grade level, representatives from the employee unions, and program administrators. This committee is charged with assisting in the development of a list of budget reductions for both the remainder of this year and for the next budget year. That list will then be prioritized and sent to the Board for action. The District expects the Legislature to act on the mid-year reductions by the end of January but does not expect the State Budget for next year to be passed until well after the legal deadline of June 15, 2003. The District is currently taking decisive action for every dollar spent now will mean that two will have to be cut next year. The District expects to have a fiscal plan for the existing budget ready by the time the Legislature acts on the mid-year cuts and the plan for next year by mid-March. This task is painful and can be devastating to many district programs and it will have an impact on students, parents, community and District staff. Unfortunately, if the Governor and the Legislature withhold \$12 million in funds that had been dedicated to the District, there will be no choice.

*Pajaro Valley Unified School District*