

## 2008-09: Public Education Faces Statewide Cuts

January 22, 2008

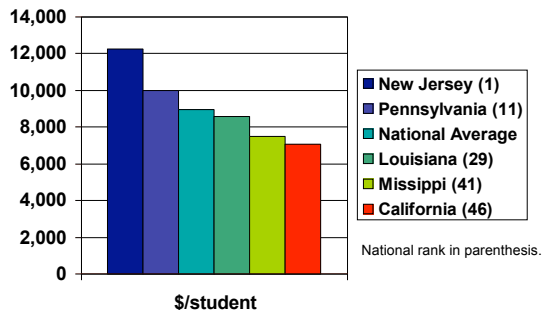
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## California School Budgets

- Most K-12 funding comes from the state
- A few districts, including Berkeley, have substantial local funding
  - BSEP (Measure A) is about \$20 million – almost one third of the General Fund
- Compared to other states, California spends much less on public education

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## California spends \$2,000 less per student than national average



Education Week gave California a grade of **D+** for school funding before the cuts were announced.  
California: \$7,081 – National Average: \$8,973

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## Now the Governor proposes slashing funding K-12 funding

- \$400,000,000 in this year 2007-08
  - should have minimal impact on Berkeley
- \$4.4 billion cut in 2008-09
  - Based on 6.3 million public school students, that's **\$700/student** -- including Berkeley

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## California Proposed Cuts

- Are equivalent to:
- Shutting down every school across the state for one month
- Laying off 107,000 teachers
- Cutting more than \$20,000 per classroom
- Eliminating all music, art, and career technical education programs statewide, plus cuts beyond that

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## Why is Governor Cutting?

- State budget has a structural deficit. That means that spending exceeds revenue each year.
- Rather than increase revenue, the Governor would rather cut spending
- Possible revenue increases
  - Restore the previous Vehicle License Fee.
    - If the VLF had not been repealed, this tax alone would have eliminated a significant share of the structural deficit.
  - Alter Prop 13 to allow property tax increases
  - Increase income taxes
  - Statewide sales tax

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## Don't Blame Prop 98!

- Prop 98 was passed by California voters in 1988 and guarantees K-14 education a certain percentage of the state budget
- Prop 98 spending has actually grown more slowly than other parts of the state budget
- From 2003-04 to 2008-09
  - General Fund Revenues increased 40.2%
  - Prop 98 spending: 30.4% increase
  - Prop 98 (proposed suspension): 21.7%
  - Source: Legislative Analyst's Office

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## What to Expect: State

- In May, the Governor releases his "May Revise" which updates his January budget proposal
- By June 30, the State is required to pass its budget, but frequently does not
- School districts really don't know what their budget is until the State budget passes

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## What to Expect: Berkeley

- The district must notice certificated staff (teachers) by March 15 if they MIGHT be asked to be reassigned
  - There should be enough resignations and retirements to avoid actual certificated layoffs.
- By June 30, the district MUST pass its budget
- 45 days after the State passes its budget, the district passes a revised budget based on final revenue numbers

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## Bottom Line

- Accept uncertainty — make ambiguity your friend.
- Do your best with the information presented to you, but be aware that until the state passes its budget, nothing is certain.
- Don't panic — get mad!
- Organize our community to press for revenue increases, not cuts.

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## Two important people to contact

- The Governor
  - You can email the governor by going to:
    - <http://gov.ca.gov/interact#email>
- Don Perata, our State Senator
- Senator Perata is President pro tempore of the State Senate, and is very influential
  - Email Don Perata by going to:
    - <http://legplcms01.lc.ca.gov/PublicLcms/ContactPopu.aspx?district=SD09>

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## What to Say

- California schools cannot afford any budget cuts.
- Our public schools are already funded well below the national average, any reduction will leave our students even further behind.
- Research shows that our schools need high quality teachers, administrators, updated facilities and textbooks. Making cuts to an already underfunded system is not going to help.
- 2008 was supposed to be the year of education reform. Be a champion of our schools and build upon the commitment to education expressed by the Legislature last year.
- That you will happily pay a tax increase rather than ruin public education in California.

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