

Escondido Union School District  
February 28, 2008

**Need:** How can the Escondido Union School District draw public attention to the fiscal plight we are facing, needing to find \$12 million of budget solutions required by the Governor's proposed 2008-2009 state budget?

**Proposal:** Generate an ALL District-ALL employee letter to be sent to the Governor and each legislator in the State, signed by each and every employee communicating the significant impacts to students, programs, and employees in our district.

**Proposed Process:** Should the Budget Communication Committee believe this to be an important political priority for the group, each member would receive a master list of all employees at his/her site and would be responsible for asking all employees to show their support and sign the districtwide letter. Any site/department without direct representation on the Committee would arrange an alternative communication system, in order to garner all employees' support.

**DRAFT Letter:**

Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger and California State Legislators,

We the undersigned 1,898 elected officials and employees of the Escondido Union School District believe in public education. As a democracy it is the quality instructional programs within public education that provide every American citizen, every Californian, and every child in Escondido, California the opportunity to learn, acquire skills, and be a successful worker in the global economy. Private schools and charter schools notwithstanding, it is the public school system that guarantees educational access to all in our country.

Why then would the leaders of California intentionally and purposefully propose to lower the quality of teaching and learning in our California's schools, in the 17 elementary schools and the 5 middle schools in our north San Diego County community? As educators and committed individuals who support the educational process on a daily basis, we adamantly oppose the state balancing its structural deficits by cutting public education funding. Do we tell the parents of our 18,800 children that the leaders of California value their children's education far less than legislators did a decade ago, for someone else's children? Are today's children in our classrooms less important than another generation's students? Your proposed actions deliver this exact message to the very taxpayers that elected you.

As public educators, we do not agree and will not support the low priority value currently placed on public education. Do lawmakers not care, nor see the long-term negative impacts to California's economy by limiting current education funding, resulting in

California being ranked 46<sup>th</sup> in the nation in terms of dollars spent per student? With no additional education funding proposed in 2008-2009, and in fact, a proposed budget with hundreds of millions of dollars less than the current school year, California will further devalue education, dropping to 48<sup>th</sup> in the nation in per pupil spending.

The proposed Governor's budget is absolutely unacceptable to the Escondido Union School District. We cannot say to community leaders, to parents, nor to students that education will continue as usual. We cannot eliminate programs and direct services to students without unacceptable adverse effects upon students' academic performance and overall well-being.

With reduced money, Escondido Union proposes to cut every employees' work year, to eliminate assistant principals, counselors, custodians, teacher coaches, teachers at the elementary and middle schools, and to limit intervention and summer school classes for our most academically challenged students. As our elected officials, we demand that you reprioritize the needed state budget reductions to maintain our quality educational programs.

Sincerely,

All School Board Members, Administrators, Teachers, and Classified Employees in the Escondido Union School District

(Sheets would follow with employees' signatures and positions)