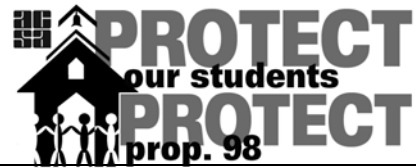


Sample Letter to the Editor #1



Dear Editor,

As a school leader, I follow the state's budget situation each year, often with great interest and sometimes with great dread.

We all knew that this year California would be facing a huge budget deficit. But nothing prepared me for Gov. Schwarzenegger's initial solution: solving the fiscal emergency strictly through budget cuts, including cutting education by a whopping \$4.8 billion.

All too often when the state faces a budget shortage it seems like politicians immediately want to attack Proposition 98, the minimum funding guarantee for education, to solve the problem. The fact is Proposition 98 exists to protect funding for students' education.

The recent 'Getting Down to Facts' studies showed that education needs more, not less, funding. Yet, many of the very same people who have ignored the improvement in test scores over the last four years, and who decry the state of education in California, now want to take an ax to education funding. It flies in the face of logic.

I appreciate the Governor's tough challenge in balancing the budget, but I strongly oppose his 2008-09 budget proposal and plans to eviscerate Proposition 98. Our students and schools did not create this budget problem, and their education and future progress shouldn't be undermined because of it.

These budget reductions would be disastrous to public schools. A \$4.8 billion cut to schools would mean laying off tens of thousands of teachers, statewide increases in class size and the further erosion of the support classified and paraprofessional staff provide to our students. This would threaten the progress that our students are beginning to make. Reading scores are up 25 percent and math scores have increased 17 percent in the last four years. This progress cannot continue with these proposed cuts to our public schools.

Locally, this would mean (laying off XXXX teachers; cutting XXXX programs; other examples) in our school district, and I am confident that our school community won't stand for it.

Sincerely,