

SCHOOLS



An investment we can't afford to cut

Sample letter to legislators

Written in your own words, a personal, thoughtful and well-written letter to your elected officials is powerful and can make a difference. In your letter, educate your elected officials on the impact the governor's budget proposal will have on your schools, students and programs by sharing specific local concerns and examples. Alert them to the types of programs that would be cut if education funding is taken away.

Letters can be written by individuals or on behalf of your entire board. If you are writing on behalf of your board, print your letter on district letterhead; if you are writing an individual letter, use personal stationary if you have it. Letters should be no longer than one page and, if applicable, attach copies of news releases, newspaper articles, adopted board resolutions, etc. to augment your letter.

(Date)

The Honorable **(Full Name of Legislator)**
California State Assembly or California State Senate
State Capitol, **(Room #)**
Sacramento, CA. 95814

Dear Senator **(Last Name)** or Assembly Member **(Last Name)**:

As a school board member of the **[insert school district/ county office of education]** and concerned voter in your legislative district, I am urging you to reject all legislative proposals that call for massive and devastating cuts to our public schools. In total, the governor is proposing more than a \$4.4 billion reduction in education funding, including a suspension of Proposition 98 in the 2008-09 budget year. Not only are these proposals disastrous to schools in your legislative district and throughout the state, they are fundamentally inconsistent with the state's goal of improving student achievement.

[Insert local concerns and provide examples of how the reduction of state revenues will affect your students and programs. Examples are listed below.]

My school district/ county office of education:

- **Has suffered more than \$ (___) million in cuts in the last several years and further reductions to our funding stream will have devastating consequences in the classroom**
- **Stands to lose \$ (___) in 2008-09 due to the suspension of Proposition 98**
- **Will be forced to lay off: # of teachers, # of classified employees, etc.**
- **Will be forced to eliminate or reduce the following programs and services: _____, _____]**

While it is clear that there are extraordinary challenges in balancing the state's budget, the progress that our students have made should not be put in jeopardy. **[Insert examples of academic achievement in your local district.]** If we want this progress to continue, the state must hold our students and our schools harmless.

Our students and schools did not create this budget problem, and fixing the problem should not come at the expense of their educational progress and success. Accordingly, I respectfully urge you to vote "NO" on any budget that fails to honor the state's commitment to public education. I also urge you to consider all options to solve this crisis, including new revenue sources to balance the budget. Thank you for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to being in touch with your office soon.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]
[Title]
[Board of Education/ County Office of Education]
[Address]
[Daytime Telephone Number]
[Email Address]

Note: Please fax a copy of your letter to CSBA at 916.325.4030 or email govrel@csba.org.