

State Capitol, Room # ___
Sacramento, CA 95817

RE: Governor's proposal to Cut School's again This Year

As a tax payer in Santa Cruz County, I have great concern that our governor's recent budget proposal has included an additional \$201 cut per student based on average daily attendance. Added to cuts from the past two years in my district, Scotts Valley Unified, the total cut is \$1000 per student.

Already a low wealth district and one of the lowest funded K-12 districts in the state of California; Scotts Valley Unified School District is being further decimated. These cuts have already caused layoffs and cuts in hours of 15% our staff; in addition we have had to increase class sizes, decrease library access by 50%, cut academic and extra-curricular programs including but not limited to elementary music, counseling services, academic intervention programs, assistant principals, and administrative positions. Even before these cuts, high school and middle school athletics were fully supported through donations.

What does this mean for Scotts Valley Unified?

- With declining enrollment, Scotts Valley Unified is already forced to make cuts each year. Additional cuts will decrease teaching positions, increase class sizes and will be a detriment to necessary invention programs.
- Cutting music, art and sports programs will negatively affect students' educational program and will remove opportunities for students to connect to their schools.
- Cancelling summer school eliminates the opportunity for intervention with at-risk students, negatively affecting student achievement and graduation rates.
- A further reduction of our K-12 teaching staff will have a far reaching effect on academic achievement, not to mention the huge negative impacts on the livelihood of many wonderful educators.

What is Scotts Valley doing to increase revenue and weather this storm?

- Encouraging donations to support athletics, art and music
- Working closely with the Scotts Valley Education Foundation to bring in funding
- Educating parents on the importance of student attendance at school
- Partnering with neighboring districts, businesses and educational institutions to share resources and services
- Encouraging involvement and legislative advocacy to provide long-term fixes to school funding issues
- Investigating the possibility of facilities bonds and parcel taxes to provide needed funds.

However, this is not enough. We need your help to find alternative funding sources for our schools before California public schools go bankrupt, which, given the governor's proposed budget, will be the 2012/2013 school year. Some possible solutions could include giving districts local control of their budgets; directing vehicle license fees directly to schools; reducing the pass rate of a parcel tax to 55% majority vote; and removing the mandates schools are hog-tied with to allow us to survive the coming years.

The governor's proposal will harm children in Scotts Valley Unified. **As an elected representative, it is important for you to know that this proposal would NOT allow Scotts Valley Unified to operate as a functional educational program.** Please support Scotts Valley Unified's children and reject this recycled concept of continuously cutting California's public schools. Our future is at stake – our children must be prepared to compete in a global society and the continuous decimation of public education puts our state and our nation in a precarious competitive situation. It is mind-numbing to think the prisoners in our state system are worth nearly ten times the money our six million California public school children receive. We MUST work to find viable and quick solutions to increase AND MAINTAIN revenues for our local school district.

Sincerely,

(Your name and address)

Concerned Tax Payer of Scotts Valley Unified School District