

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

As a parent of a student in the public schools in the Saddleback Valley Unified School District, I was both outraged and saddened to learn about the Governor's proposal to cut funding to our schools. Year after year, we are being forced to fight to ensure our children receive the quality education they need and deserve.

Whenever the state faces a budget shortage it seems politicians immediately attack our children and our schools to solve the problem. That's just not fair. Our kids had nothing to do with creating the current budget problems and funding for their education is supposed to be protected.

The Governor's proposed \$4.8 billion budget cut will severely damage the quality of education in our state. The proposal would decimate the voter-approved minimum-funding guarantee for schools. That is incredibly shortsighted and simply unacceptable.

These budget reductions would be disastrous to public schools, including Saddleback Valley Unified School District (SVUSD). Specifically, it means \$19.5 million in cuts to SVUSD. This equates to the elimination of valuable and critical student programs, such as music, International Baccalaureate, Language Arts Assistance Program, grades 1-3 class size reduction, JV level sports and the reduction of graduation requirements from 230 credits to 220. It means elimination of 240 employees, including librarians, campus supervisors, school psychologists and site level and District administrators, to name a few.

At a time when we are starting to see progress in student learning throughout California, this budget represents a giant step backward. 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.

As a parent, I understand the challenges inherent in balancing a budget, but I strongly oppose Governor's Schwarzenegger's 2008-2009 budget proposal and plans to eviscerate funding for students and schools. Our kids and our schools did not create this budget problem, and their education and future progress shouldn't be undermined because of it. My child, my student, deserves better than this.

Sincerely,

Signature

Name

Address

City

Zip Code

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