



**ASSOCIATION OF
CALIFORNIA SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATORS**

**ACSA BUSINESS
SERVICES COUNCIL**

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Legislative Advocate, ACSA

March 7, 2011

Senator Mark Leno, Chair of Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 4203
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: State Budget

Dear Senator Leno,

The Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Business Services Council is a segment of ACSA members that represent school business and finance officers from school districts throughout California. These members oversee school budgets and ensure that district budgets maintain solvency. ACSA continues to be a primary stakeholder in the annual pre-K through adult education budget process and provides analysis, input, and advocacy on behalf of its members to the executive, legislative and regulative branches of state government.

ACSA supports the governor's plan to prioritize public education. As ACSA's Business Services Council, we are writing to express our support for Governor Brown's Budget Proposal. In the past two years, the state budget has cut education funding by \$18 billion. School leaders have been forced to decimate programs and services to students in an effort to balance their budgets. Public education which amounts to almost 40 percent of the state budget has absorbed over 60 percent of the cuts, a disproportionate amount. We appreciate the governor acknowledging this fact and prioritizing public education in his January Budget Proposal.

Further decimation to education programs and services may be avoided if the Legislature extends the temporary tax revenues adopted as part of the 2009 Budget Act. The Legislature must put before the voters a ballot measure that extends the tax revenues. It is imperative to extend the tax revenue package to ensure that there are no additional reductions to school budgets and education services. A failure to extend the existing tax revenues will result in public education facing additional cuts of \$2 billion or \$350 per student, or worse.

Other issues that ACSA business officers support are the following:

Redevelopment Agency Proposal: The governor proposes to eliminate redevelopment agencies. While this is one of the many tough decisions facing state policy makers, it should be clear that any reform to redevelopment agencies should ensure that the financial commitments for schools are honored. We agree with the governor's proposal that the funding derived from the elimination of redevelopment agencies should be an augmentation to school budgets and not offset by state funding. Further, we would oppose any proposal that eliminates or defers a school district's share of local property taxes.

Categorical Funding Flexibility: We support the governor's proposal to extend categorical flexibility for two additional years. With the cuts to education funding, this is a valuable tool to keep districts solvent and maintain services to the state's students. Flexibility is imperative to ensure that districts have the ability to mitigate current cuts and maintain district solvency. In addition, even though categorical flexibility has provided districts with tools to keep their districts solvent, it is important that the state look at the next iteration of categorical reform and flexibility. ACSA believes that the state needs to take the time to review categorical programs and funding, and determine if the current method is the best avenue to meet the needs of students.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues and we look forward to working with the Legislature as the budget moves forward. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Legislative Advocate, Adonai Mack at (916) 444-3216 or amack@acsa.org

Thank you,

John F. Von Flue
Council President

William C. Young
Council President Elect