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Working together to support and improve California's public schools

Additional Revenues at May Revise: Proposition 98 Restoration and Investment in Key State Priorities

Association of California School Administrators (ACSA)
representing more than 16,000 school administrators

California Association Of School Business Officials (CASBO)
representing more than 4,000 school business officials

California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA)
representing all 58 county superintendents throughout California

California Federation of Teachers (CFT-AFL-CIO)
representing nearly 90,000 education employees

California School Boards Association (CSBA)
representing nearly 1,000 K-12 school districts and county offices of education throughout California

California School Employees Association (CSEA)
representing more than 230,000 classified school employees

California State PTA
representing more than one million parents, teachers, and students in California

California Teachers Association (CTA)
representing over 325,000 educators

Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
representing more than 50,000 school employees in California

**Legislative Consultant:
Dale Shimasaki**
916.441.3909

Based on the latest revenue estimates from the Department of Finance, the California economy continues to grow steadily, and revenues in the May Revise are projected to be well above the Governor's Budget forecast of \$12.15 billion.

The 2015-16 budget is the ideal time to make investments in California's public schools that will help restore the billions in reductions endured during the Great Recession, and to make investments in key education priorities to address equity issues, improve student achievement and enhance critical student support services.

Maintain Integrity of Proposition 98

The Coalition urges protecting the integrity of the Proposition 98 guarantee, and as such opposes any manipulations of the guarantee or any actions to reduce the guarantee below its authorized constitutional and statutory funding level. For example:

- The Coalition opposes any encroachment from non-Proposition 98 programs into the Proposition 98 side of the budget.
- The Coalition opposes the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) proposal to count \$400 million of property taxes allocated to basic aid districts towards meeting the Proposition 98 guarantee. This recommendation is inconsistent with the intent and requirements of Proposition 98, and was designed simply to reduce the amount of state General Fund support required for K-14 education.

Invest in core programs and priorities

The Coalition supports funding to address funding equity and adequacy issues in existing core programs and key state priorities before funding any new programs in Proposition 98.

Priority for Additional Ongoing Revenue

The Coalition supports directing any additional ongoing Proposition 98 revenues to the Local Control Funding Formula, to accelerate the rate of LCFF gap closure and allow local education agencies to reach their LCFF targets in the most expeditious manner possible.

Top Priority for Additional One-time Revenues

As a top priority for additional one-time revenues, the Coalition supports providing additional funds to retire the outstanding backlog in mandates, which is estimated to be \$4-5 billion. The Coalition continues to oppose combining mandate reimbursement funding with other expenditure purposes.

Additional priorities for Investment with One-time Revenues

In considering how to allocate one-time Proposition 98 revenues, the Coalition urges the Administration and the Legislature to focus on the following areas of great need (in no particular order):

- Implementation of State Standards. The Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards and English Language Development Standards are all policy priorities that have been adopted by the state to improve student achievement. It is not appropriate for local education agencies to absorb these costs within their existing LCFF allocations, and these priorities must be adequately funded to ensure their success.
- Career Technical Education. Funding should be provided for Career Technical Education to ensure that local education agencies receive funding that is adequate to sustain existing, high quality programs.
- Home-to-School Transportation. Since the early 1980s, local education agencies have been locked in at the same funding levels for home-to-school transportation, with no adjustments for changes in costs, enrollment or geographic and demographic factors. Across the state this had led to gross inequities in funding that have severely impacted many school districts throughout the state.
- Professional Development for Certificated and Classified Staff. The coalition believes that additional funding should be dedicated to the professional development needs of classified staff, teachers, and administrators – including the Common Core. There are a wide variety of functions performed on school campuses, including maintenance, accounting, transportation, food services, safety, information systems, teaching assistance and many others that require specific training, certification or licenses. Investing in professional development will ensure students are served by a well-trained and effective workforce.
- Technology Infrastructure. Additional investment in the high speed network and technology is needed not only for implementation of the common core, but also to promote greater access for both teachers and students in the classroom.

Conclusion

Should the anticipated additional revenues be realized at May Revise, 2015-16 represents a critical opportunity to invest in a public education system that endured a disproportionate share of budget cuts during the Great Recession, and for which funding since the passage of Proposition 98 has consistently grown at a slower rate than General Fund spending on the non-98 side of the state budget.

The Education Coalition urges the Administration and Legislature to seize this opportunity to improve student achievement and enhance student support services with prudent investments in the areas outlined in this paper.