

Budget News for October 14, 2008

The California budget news this week reflects the same theme that we see in the national news. The Governor has sent a letter to U.S. Treasury Secretary Paulson saying that the state may need a federal loan. California is in a position that it may not be able to meet payment obligations this month. Meanwhile, state revenues are lackluster, coming in below projections made in the spring. Our legislative analyst Jeff Frost summarized our current position. The projected state budget for 2009-2010 may face between a \$15 to \$18 billion shortfall. The reasons are threefold: 1. The national credit problems drive up the price of short term loans that the state uses to pay its bills until tax dollars come in. The fear is that the state could run out of money at the end of the month. 2. The slow economy: Sales taxes for the quarter ending September 30 came in far below projections. The projections for the holiday season are also being downsized. 3. Housing foreclosures are hitting the tax roles hard, and properties are being reassessed downward.

The Governor has called a special session of the "Big Five" to strategize on immediate solutions. Don Perata commented that the state budget that was just passed probably will not last through January. For school districts this, in all probability, will mean mid-year cuts. We now think they will come sooner than previously thought.

Highlights from the Board Meeting of Tuesday, October 7, 2008

- YES co-chairs Robyn Dabora and Nancy Vernon reported on YES Goals for 2008-2009. The target goal for 2008-2009 fundraising is intended to maintain YES funded programs for 2009-2010. The YES board will continue to work with the district to help offset possible reductions in next year's budget.
- Teacher leaders from the Math Adoption Committee presented a progress report on the K-5 and 6-8 math adoption. The middle school is ready to recommend the Holt math program for adoption. It includes an Algebra program, challenge activities at every grade level and an on-line tutorial for students to access help with concepts. Tamalpais High School District also has adopted the Holt Algebra program. At the elementary level, two programs are under consideration. Teachers are piloting Every Day Math and Houghton Mifflin. The pilot teachers meet regularly to discuss pros and cons of the program. They are also working with the middle school to make sure the K-5 program articulates with the Holt adoption at 6-8. The elementary teachers will bring a recommendation to the board in the spring.
- The State Board of Education has mandated that all 8th grade students take the test for Algebra by spring 2011. Math teacher leaders on special assignment discussed the district's readiness to have all students in 8th grade take Algebra by 2010-2011. The board will have further discussions about the state mandate to give direction for the district.
- The results from the 2008 California Healthy Kids Survey were presented to the board. The survey is given every two years to 5th and 7th grade students in the state to assess health risk and resiliency of our youth. This survey is one of the measures that is being used to gage progress and growth in the Strategic Plan areas of social emotional well being, connectedness, and personalization. Results are being shared with site staff and parent groups. The district is reviewing strengths, areas of concern, and needed further analysis and next steps. Additional analysis will include multi-year comparisons of district, county, and state results. The 2008 survey results will be posted on the district's web site. *You can view the entire board packet and view all the topics the board will be addressing at <http://rvsd.csbaagendaonline.net>*

If you have any questions, please contact the Superintendent's Office. Thank you for your continued support of the District.