

Superintendent's Perspective

Budget Study Sessions

The Board of Trustees will conduct two budget study sessions on March 13. The first will be in the morning from 8:30-10:30 a.m. in the community room behind the district office. The second will be held in the evening from 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the Hall Middle School Library. The first purpose of these study sessions is to familiarize constituents with the Larkspur School District budget, review revenues and expenditures, and gain an understanding of the budgeting process. The second purpose is to review budget recommendations for the 2008-09 school year, and the reductions necessary in light of the Governor's proposed budget cuts. We currently anticipate up to \$280,000 in cuts in spending. Your input is crucial and we urge your participation in one of these sessions.

For those of you who would like to join a grassroots campaign against across-the-board cuts in education, there will be a rally held at the lower campus of Brookside Elementary School in the Ross Valley School District on Thursday, March 6 beginning at 12:15 p.m. Brookside is located at 116 Butterfield in San Anselmo. Local politicians and the media will be on hand and we expect a strong turnout. Please consider attending if you can, to demonstrate your support of education and the Proposition 98 minimum funding guarantee.

At the rally, we will also hear more about the Marin Education Coalition, a local group forming in Marin to design strategies to strongly oppose reductions in school funding.

The potential impact of the Governor's proposed budget cuts is becoming increasingly clear. The reduction of \$4.8 billion (\$400 million in the current school year and \$4.4 billion in 2008-2009) is equivalent to the following according to the State Education Coalition (a group composed of employee organizations, administrative organizations, the School Boards Association and PTA's):

- Reduction in funding of \$800 per student or \$24,000 per classroom or \$7.6 million for a district of 10,000 students.
- Laying off more than 107,000 teachers.

- Increasing class size by as much as 35 per cent.
- Laying off more than 137,000 bus drivers, custodians, food service workers, maintenance workers and other educational support staff.
- Eliminating all music, art and career technical education programs statewide.
- Putting California even lower than the 46th place it now occupies out of the 50 states in per student expenditures.

In short, the Governor's proposal of reductions, without considering raising additional revenue, would be catastrophic to our students. -MCOE, 2/08

While Larkspur School District is not as dramatically affected as some of our other local districts, we must join in support of adequate funding for public education statewide.

Other Upcoming Dates of Interest...

Superintendent/Board Coffee Chats (all at Il Fornaio):
March 6 – 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Facilities Master Plan Committee Meetings (all at 5:30 p.m. in the Hall Library)
March 10 and March 24

School Board Meetings (all at 6:00 p.m. in the Hall Library):
March 12 – Additional Board Meeting
March 26 – Regularly-scheduled Board Meeting

Strategic Priorities Workshop – April 30 - 8:30 a.m. in the Community Room and again at 7:00 p.m. in the Hall Library