



Irvine Unified School District

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February 24, 2010

Dear IUSD community member:

This is a letter we did not want to write. But the state's budget crisis is draining public education like never before, and the Irvine Unified School District needs your help.

Based on the latest figures from the governor's spending plan for 2010-11, our district's operational shortfall is now projected at more than \$20 million. That is a colossal deficit in a budget of approximately \$200 million. Though our Board of Education and staff vow to do all we can for students with the resources that are available, our schools are poised to look very different next fall.

Larger class sizes are under consideration, as are cuts to the arts, music, science and a popular writing program. Classrooms and school grounds may not be cleaned and maintained to the extent they are today. In addition, our employees are facing potential salary rollbacks and furloughs, the latter translating into fewer instructional days for students.

Again, it is not easy to write these words. Yet we bear a responsibility to each and every family in this school district, and the time has come to state the obvious: California, at least for the time being, is not up to the challenge of adequately funding its schools. That means it is up to individual communities to decide what kind of educational systems they want for their children.

We all know that many families move to Irvine for the school system. You may be surprised to learn that only 6 percent of Irvine parents contribute to the Irvine Public Schools Foundation, which provides valuable funding for our schools and facilitates many of our innovative programs. If we were able to raise that rate to even 50 percent, we could take control of our fate and make an impact on every single child in this district.

Of course, our Board will ultimately determine how contributions will be used, but even modest donations of a few dollars could make a tremendous difference if enough are willing to chip in.

Unfortunately, there isn't much time to act. Although our budget is due in June, California law requires us to make major decisions by mid-March. That's why IPSF recently launched a "Five Week Campaign" to raise as much money as it can for class-size support. Note that the deadline for donations has been extended to March 15. That still leaves less than three weeks.

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IUSD ... providing the highest quality educational experience we can envision.

As a school district, we are not in the business of fundraising. Our mission is to offer the highest quality educational experience we can envision – period. However, these are extraordinary times, and we want to make sure our parents and community members know exactly what is at stake. Come September, some changes may be obvious; others, perhaps less so. Either way, we would be remiss in not making this plea now while there’s still time to make a difference.

The Irvine Public Schools Foundation is the only organization with the reach and resources to impact every school – and every child – in our district. If you’ve ever considered making a donation to preserve excellence in the classroom, or even to help maintain the property values that are linked to our schools’ performance, now is the time to visit www.ipsf.net.

Remember, March 15 is less than three weeks away. And September is closer than you think.

Thank you.



Sharon Wallin
President, Board of Education
Irvine Unified School District



Gwen Gross
Superintendent of Schools
Irvine Unified School District

To make a donation, please visit the
Irvine Public Schools Foundation website at www.ipsf.net.

