

Response to California's Budget Crisis:

What you can do to help

There are two parts to the impact on MBUSD from California's budget crisis — mid-year cuts for 2008-09 and cuts for 2009-10. This crisis is unprecedented: All CA public school districts receive the bulk of their funding from the State. California's budget crisis has a direct impact on school district funding. The impact is expected to be severe.

What you can do to help:

Stay informed. The situation is changing constantly at the state, We will continue to update the website and please feel free to ask questions. Next, attend one of the MBUSD Budget Watch 2009-2010 Parent and Community Outreach Meetings. Meetings are **scheduled** at each school site. You are welcome to attend any of these meetings. Superintendent Bev Rohrer, Assistant Superintendent Steve Romines, and School Board members will be explaining the latest budget information. It will give you a chance to ask questions and share your input. Lastly, be sure you pay close attention to all future district communication.

Join our advocacy efforts. The PTAs have been working hard to inform our legislature about the daunting challenge faced by school districts like MBUSD. We have already begun work on a number of avenues to help reduce the impact of California's budget crisis on our school district. We have much more to do.

Some efforts in work or already accomplished include:

* Phone campaign encouraging CA Assembly members to 1) cross party lines and agree on a budget and 2) enact flexibility ASAP to help school districts succeed with reduced funding. (Accomplished week of January 26-30)

* Email campaign encouraging CA Senate and Assembly members to 1) enact flexibility (suspend state mandates and remove restrictions so categorical funds can be used for unrestricted expenses), 2) enact this flexibility by March 1, 2009 to allow school districts this tool to create their 2009-10 budget, and 3) do not withhold any allocations (i.e., don't use school district funding as float for CA). This campaign was in coordination with the 11 other school districts in the South Bay. (Accomplished February 3-5)

* Capital Convoy, an advocacy effort of the Manhattan Beach Council of PTAs where thirty-five individuals from MB will go to Sacramento to meet with numerous legislators, staff and other key individuals. We are a group of parents, students, teachers, staff, administrators, PTA members and MBEF members. (Will occur March 3-4)

Right now, we are putting teams together. **We need YOUR help!** Please volunteer (email ediebabbe@aol.com) for one or more of the following positions:

* Quarterbacks – organize advocacy efforts

* Ferrets – research data from other school districts and issues at the State and Federal level

* Dolphins – encourage our City to support MBUSD

* Bears – work on advocacy at the State level, emails, phone calls, whatever

* Eagles – work on advocacy at the Federal level, emails, phone calls, whatever

* The Front Line – work on communication with our parents, teachers, staff and community

We need your thoughts, ideas, constructive attitude and willingness to help with ideas for the 2009-10 decisions. Please send ideas to budgetwatch@mbusd.org. During this process of redefining education at MBUSD, we need to be especially understanding and appreciative of our teachers, staff, principals and administrators. These are extremely stressful times and they will be dealing with large decisions and challenges.