

Small School Districts' Association

# Transitional Kindergarten and Pupil Transportation Webinar

By David Walrath

# What We Will Cover

- Why 2012-13 Cuts?
  - Rebenching
  - Medi-Cal
- Why Transitional Kindergarten and Pupil Transportation?
- Budget proposal for Transitional Kindergarten and Pupil Transportation
- Small School District Options
- Recommendations
- What SSDA Will Do

# Why 2012-13 Cuts?

- Budget proposes rebenching 2011-12 Proposition 98 downward by \$373.2 million.
- Medi-Cal savings did not occur.
- Not all of redevelopment state savings will occur.
- Statutory payment of \$2.0 billion from public safety realignment for 2011-12 and 2012-13 not to be made.

# Why Transitional Kindergarten and Pupil Transportation?

- Transitional Kindergarten is a new program (however, new cuts of existing programs to families and schools is OK).
- Governor appears to believe total pupil transportation elimination was part of the trigger cut deal.

# Transitional Kindergarten

- Budget proposal is program elimination.
- Savings redirected to Governor's priorities.
- Reductions in alternatives (preschool, child care).
- No restoration even if new tax revenue occurs by improved economic conditions or by November election.

# Small School District Options – Parents and Students Denied Kindergarten Enrollment by Governor Brown

- Investigate enrolling students into Kindergarten as soon as they turn five – if no transportation cost.
- Investigate having students who are enrolled after age five continue for another year in Kindergarten.
- Establish a 100% parent funded preschool (do not need certificated employees) without transportation.

# Recommendations Assuming Governor Brown's Proposal is Adopted

- Develop the three-year AB 1200 budget assuming loss of students from Kindergarten per SB 1381 and no Transitional Kindergarten.
- Request State Board of Education Waiver from the Kindergarten enrollment age change per SB 1381.

# Recommendations Assuming Governor Brown's Proposal is Adopted

- Start the analysis of certificated employee layoffs based on loss of revenue from program elimination (Transitional Kindergarten is a program in law and eliminated by the proposal).
- Investigate a November 2012 parcel tax.

# Recommendations to Defeat Governor Brown's Proposal to Deny Young Children Access to Education

- Let parents know about the proposal.
- Start meetings with concerned parents.
- Hold community forums on how the budget would affect your district and them.
- Meet with the bargaining unit on how the proposal will affect their members.

# Recommendations to Defeat Governor Brown's Proposal to Deny Young Children Access to Education

- Blame Governor Brown and Sacramento. You, your staff, children and parents are paying the price for Sacramento's dysfunction.
- Do not accept ownership of the problem.
- Do not say: "We need to cut;" say: "Governor Brown's budget is forcing us to cut."
- When Governor Wilson proposed a similar cut, it was rejected by the Legislature after community action. The same is possible for these cuts and denial of current law access to education.
- Explain how the denial will affect real children (Miss X) and real families (Parents X and Y or single Parent X).

# Small School District Options to Respond to Governor Brown's Attack on Rural Students and Families

- Review 2011-12 district budget and transportation program based on pupil transportation trigger cut not changing.
- Inform parents that Governor Brown has proposed to eliminate pupil transportation for 2012-13 and thereafter.
- The elimination includes home-to-school, special education transportation and small school district bus replacement.
- Consider the proposal as war on rural California.

•

# Small School District Options to Respond to Governor Brown's Attack on Rural Students and Families

- Start community meetings on options
  - Independent study
    - Operated by district
    - Offered by new charter school established and operated by district
  - Create new necessary small schools if in compliance with the Education Code.
  - Severely restrict pupil transportation with new longer routes and fewer riders.
  - Increase transportation fees where possible
  - Create transportation JPAs

# Responding to Governor Brown's Attack on Rural Students and Families

- Develop AB 1200 budgets based on program elimination.
- Start the March 15 layoff process based on Governor's Budget.
- Cut teachers as well as bus drivers. Teacher cuts will help maintain more transportation.

# Responding to Governor Brown's Attack on Rural Students and Families

- Work with bargaining units for uniform message – if possible.
- Because under the budget proposal the program will not be restored even if state revenues increase, explore a parcel tax to partially reduce / backfill cut.

# Recommendations on Defeating Governor Brown's Budget Attack on Rural Students and Families

- Community Action.
- Build coalitions with bargaining units and families to fight the proposal.
- Hold community meetings on how the budget will affect staff employment, pupils and families.
- Provide the community with information on how unfair this is to your students and families compared to Beverly Hills and other rich districts.
- Invite the district office staff of your State Senator and Assembly Member to your community meetings.

# Recommendations on Defeating Governor Brown's Budget Attack on Rural Students and Families

- Ask any local media to ride the school bus from first pick-up to last drop-off and write about what longer bus trips will mean to very young children.
- Put a human face on the cuts. What happens to the family of the laid off bus driver? Not theoretical but actual effects.
- Give the media human interest stories on how Governor Brown's cuts affect real people.

# Recommendations on Defeating Governor Brown's Budget Attack on Rural Students and Families

- It is OK to be disappointed and angry and allow the parents and community to share that anger and disappointment.
- Blame Governor Brown and a dysfunctional Sacramento. It is his budget and their mess.
- Do not accept responsibility or ownership of the problem for any district budget cuts caused by Governor Brown and the dysfunctional Sacramento.

# Recommendations on Defeating Governor Brown's Budget Attack on Rural Students and Families

- Ask your community if they would vote for Governor Brown's tax increase if budget cuts are not guaranteed to be restored.
- Give your community, parents and staff the following quote from Governor Brown's budget:
  - The Budget assumes an increase of \$6.022 billion Proposition 98 Education Protection Account Fund and an offsetting decrease of \$6.022 billion Proposition 98 General Fund for School District and County Office of Education revenue limits. The Education Protection Account Fund provides additional revenues derived from the Governor's tax initiative.
- The above quote means the new tax revenue will allow the state General Fund money that should have gone to schools instead be used for other budget purposes.

•

# What SSDA is Doing and Will Do

- Lobby the Legislature and Governor on:
  - If savings are needed, make equitable cuts to all districts and not just target some districts.
  - Defer change to Kindergarten enrollment age if Transitional Kindergarten is not funded.
- Explore with SSDA Associate Member law firms if an injunction on pupil transportation elimination is possible based on California Environmental Quality Act procedures not being followed by the state.

# What SSDA is Doing and Will Do

- If unsuccessful in preventing the funding cut and elimination occurs, work with SSDA Associate Member law firms on a *Serrano* suit based on school finance denying students access to an equal education opportunity based on where students live.
- Provide information to school districts on how other districts are responding, develop materials on local tax options and work to build coalitions with state and local associations and businesses to have the Legislature reject the budget proposal and restore funding.
- Provide draft press releases, draft letters and other materials for school staff, school board and community use.

# Contact Information

David L. Walrath

Murdoch, Walrath & Holmes

1130 K Street, Suite 210

Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: 916.441.3300

Fax: 916.441.3893

[dwalrath@m-w-h.com](mailto:dwalrath@m-w-h.com)

[www.m-w-h.com](http://www.m-w-h.com)