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STATE PTA SAYS “FLUNK THE BUDGET” EFFORTS MUST CONTINUE

SACRAMENTO, CA- The California State PTA, representing nearly one-million volunteer members across the state, announced it will intensify efforts calling for a state budget solution that does not jeopardize children or California’s future. The announcement comes in response to the release of the May Revision to the state budget on Wednesday by Governor Schwarzenegger.

“We truly appreciate the Governor’s desire to try to mitigate some cuts to schools, and his desire to think about long-term fixes, but the fact is our children need more resources right now in order to have the best chance at success in school and in life,” said Pam Brady, California State PTA President. “As the state’s largest volunteer children’s advocacy organization, PTA has a responsibility to speak up for the safety and welfare of all children, and to advocate for a quality public education for each child. This budget still does not meet the needs of our children or our state; therefore, we will continue to raise our voices in strong opposition to the proposed cuts.”

Initial analysis of the May Revision show that as much as \$4 billion in cuts to education continue to be proposed, as well as severe cuts to children’s health and other support services. The PTA’s Board of Directors is scheduled to meet with the Governor next week to discuss its concerns about the cuts affecting children.

“These cuts would be devastating to the health, safety and education of our children and our future workforce,” Brady said. “In addition to the education cuts, a huge concern for us is the proposed hit on health and support services for children. We know for a fact that healthy children are more likely to attend school and be ready to learn – and that helps us raise achievement for all students. A responsible budget doesn’t make people choose between the health of children and their education – both are essential.”

PTA acknowledges that the latest proposal meets minimum education funding requirements. “But, more importantly,” Brady noted, “the proposal still makes drastic cuts to many vital programs that help student achievement, like class size reduction, instructional materials and career technical education programs. The conversation that needs to occur at the Capitol and across the state is, how do we get a balanced budget solution that does not jeopardize our children’s future or our future workforce? We need our legislators to ask: how can we make sure we’re investing properly in our future, not what can we afford to cut right now?”

Since January, California State PTA and parents throughout the state have voiced strong opposition to the damaging cuts to education and children's services proposed in the state budget. Brady said that effort will continue.

Today in Los Angeles, PTA and other parent groups will hold a rally downtown calling for a greater investment in education. PTA's across the state will continue holding similar rallies, as well as contacting their legislators and the Governor, and delivering thousands of letters and postcards. "The response from parents since January has been overwhelming," Brady said. "Parents and the public are ready to fight for what is right for our state's future."

The California State PTA is a branch of the 110-year old National PTA, with over a million members statewide. The PTA is the nation's oldest, largest and highest-profile volunteer organization working on behalf of public schools, children and families, with the motto "Every child, one voice." PTA volunteers work in their schools and communities to improve the education, health and welfare of all California children and youth. The PTA also advocates at national, state and local levels for education and family issues. The PTA is non-profit, nonpartisan, non-sectarian and non-commercial. For more information, go to www.capta.org

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