



California Federation of Teachers  
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**Thursday, January 10, 2008**

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**Educators Unveil 2008 Agenda:  
Protect School Funding; Preserve Access to Higher Education;  
New Progressive Taxes; Health Care for All**

SACRAMENTO - The California Federation of Teachers (CFT) today unveiled its 2008 Education Agenda. Educators said one priority will be to protect school funding in the face of proposed cuts. "Key education challenges face Governor Schwarzenegger and the Legislature in 2008," said CFT President Marty Hittelman. "What was billed as the Year of Education is shaping up as the Year of Cutting Education. Cuts in education funding, especially midyear cuts to budgets that are already allocated for the year, propel our state backward, away from improved educational outcomes. The education budget must be protected, but just preserving the current inadequate funding is not progress." Educators will pursue new progressive taxes to fund education programs, promote Prop. 92 to preserve access to community colleges, and work for quality affordable health care for all students, teachers and school employees.

Hittelman questioned the governor's proposed "reforms." "The governor is proposing questionable school reforms while slashing funding. This is not reform, but it is destructive of quality education. We won't allow school kids to be penalized so SUV drivers and yacht owners can get tax breaks. That's not progress; it's the same old politics where kids, who can't vote or contribute to political campaigns, take the hits."

Some education reforms the governor proposes – such as "merit pay" – have been proven ineffective and counterproductive. CFT backs research-based school reforms that improve student achievement. School reform must also include support for new and struggling teachers and working conditions that keep educators in the schools. Preparing and retaining the 100,000 teachers needed to replace the cohort retiring in the next decade is urgent. Cutting school funding will ultimately undercut this effort and harm our schools.

The educators released a list of progressive tax increases that could fund education and other key programs. “The governor and Republican legislators’ position that there should be no new taxes is not tenable in a time of declining state revenue. The people of California rely on their schools and other vital public services,” said Hittelman. “Progressive tax policies that ask the people who have benefited the most from living in California to pay their fair share is the only reasonable alternative to program cuts.”

There are numerous potential funding sources that can lift California from near the bottom of the states in providing school funding. The revenue options below would raise an estimated \$8.4 billion per year:

- Reinstating the vehicle license fee (\$4 billion per year)
- Re-assess non-residential real property (\$3 billion per year)
- Limit mortgage interest deductions to \$50,000 in interest (\$47 million per year)
- Require that large corporations file as corporations, not “S” type partnerships (\$500 to 600 million per year)
- Enact severance tax on oil produced in California (\$800 million per year)
- Close tax loophole for luxury boats and planes exchanged in Mexico (\$55 million)
- Extend sales tax to Internet purchases (\$20 million)

“The promise of access to higher education for all Californians is a rapidly fading dream,” said Hittelman. “Proposed reductions in state funding for the CSU and UC systems this year will create pressure to continue the trend of student fee increases, driving working families away from the four-year schools. This trend should be reversed, and in the meantime voters should approve Prop 92 to support access to community colleges.”

The CFT called on the governor and legislature to address the looming teacher recruitment crisis. “Tens of thousands of California teachers are preparing to retire. California needs to replace as many as 98,000 teachers over the next ten years. Teachers are retiring more quickly than California’s higher education system can prepare new teachers. Unless increases in compensation, recruitment and support are provided, California faces a massive teacher shortage,” Hittelman said.

**California Federation of Teachers  
Education Agenda 2008**

**I. Protect school funding**

- **No mid-year cuts**
- **No Proposition 98 suspension**
- **Enact new progressive revenue sources to boost achievement**

**II. Preserve access to higher education**

- **Cuts will hurt instructors, students**
- **Pass Proposition 92, the Community College Initiative**

**III. Promote policies that make quality education possible**

- **NCLB needs major revision**
- **Attract and retain sufficient numbers of highly trained teachers**
- **Safe and healthy school environments**
- **Universal, quality pre-school**
- **Increase salaries of teachers and educational workers**
- **Reduce class size**
- **Support new teachers**
- **Provide ongoing professional development**
- **Protect retirement**

**IV. Provide quality, affordable health care for all**