



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

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Contact: Kimberly Claytor, 949-510-1988

Orange County educators outline impact of state budget cuts, call for fair revenue solution at press conference

A coalition of Orange County educators from K-12 through the University of California cosponsored a noon news conference at the Adult Education Center in Costa Mesa on Tuesday, November 17, to detail the impact of state cuts in education funding on their ability to deliver a quality education, and to propose a sensible alternative.

Noting the location of the press conference at the school district Adult Center, Kimberly Claytor, president of the Newport Mesa Federation of Teachers, told reporters that “In Newport Mesa, our programs for older adults are completely gone, and the number of classes for adults with disabilities has been cut in half. California’s budget crisis is unfairly being played out in our schools and other public agencies that serve real people. These drastic cuts are having a devastating impact and would not be necessary if we simply returned our tax rates on big corporations and the rich to what they used to be.”

Dean Mancina, president of the Coast Federation of Educators, unveiled a resolution calling for the Coast Community College Board of Trustees to endorse simple majority vote in the State Legislature to enable legislators to properly fund education and other necessary social services.

“California is the only state that requires a super-majority of the Legislature to pass a state budget *and* new revenues,” said Mancina. “As a result, schools and colleges in Orange County, and throughout our state, are being hammered with terrible cutbacks and layoffs that harm students’ education. It’s time to change this broken, undemocratic system of school finance.” Mancina noted that in the Coast Community College District, this coming year’s cuts of more than \$10 million are double last year’s, and mean services to disabled and other disadvantaged students are likely to be further reduced.

Janelle Cranch, Political Action Chair of the California School Employees Association and a CSEA member from the Irvine Unified School District, said that, “In Orange County 910 classified employees have lost their jobs. They have no spendable income. That impacts the economy. They no longer receive health care, so they go to the emergency room. Many of our members now essentially work for health care; they turn

their checks back to the District to cover their premiums. If we expect California to get out of this hole, we can only do it by funding education.”

Peg Hesketh, lecturer in English, and a member of the University Council AFT, described the impact of cuts at UC Irvine. “We have fewer lecturers in my department and across the university. We have to do more with less. We’re taking on more classes, and that translates into less time for students. Lecturers carry much of the lower division teaching load. I started receiving emails from students in July saying that they had already been locked out of their freshman comp classes. That’s never happened that early. Students can’t get their classes, and they will take longer to graduate.”

Vicki Soderberg, president of the Capistrano Unified Education Association, told reporters, “The students in Capistrano Unified School District are reeling from the cuts in education funding: small class sizes have been eliminated in the primary grades; larger class sizes prevail in the secondary classrooms; simple supplies such as colored pencils, pens, glue sticks, paints are now provided by the teacher, not the school district. In addition Capistrano has cut back on district nursing staff, not a good thing in this year of HINI virus. Field trips are not longer available and after school intervention classes have been cut.”

For more information, contact Kimberly Claytor, 949-510-1988.

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