

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

Friday Memo
February 28, 2020

Upcoming Events – Matthew Duffy

March 3: California Primary Election Day
March 3: Agenda Setting, Superintendent's Office, 4:30 PM
March 5: All District Music Festival, Richmond Auditorium, 5:00 PM
March 6: You Make A Difference Awards, DeJean, 7:00 PM
March 11: Board of Education Meeting, DeJean, 6:30 PM
March 18: Board of Education Meeting, DeJean, 6:30 PM
March 19: Early Learning Family STEM Night, Peres
March 19: Middle School Open House, times vary by site
March 20: Minimum Day, Middle Schools Only
March 24: Agenda Setting, Superintendent's Office, 4:30 PM
March 23: Governance Committee, Alvarado, 5:30 PM
March 24: AASAT Meeting, DeJean, 6:00 PM
March 25: Joint Board/CBOC Meeting, FOC, 6:00 PM
March 26: Early Learning Family STEM Night, West County Mandarin
March 26: High School Open House, times vary by site
March 27: Minimum Day, High Schools Only
March 27: End of 3rd Quarter

WCCUSD Food Services celebrates National School Breakfast Week March 2-6, 2020 – Tony Wold

Busy weekday mornings make it a challenge for families to find time for a healthy breakfast. However, US Department of Agriculture data show that more students are starting their day with a nutritious breakfast in their school cafeterias. To encourage more families to take advantage of the healthy choices available with school breakfast, West Contra Costa USD schools are recognizing National School Breakfast Week, which is March 2-6, 2020.

WCCUSD Students are encouraged to participate in an “Out of This World” experience next week with special breakfast menus, cafeteria events, and more.

Please join us, breakfasts are no charge to eligible students, \$1.75 for non-eligible students at elementary schools and \$2.50 at all secondary schools, adults can purchase a breakfast for \$2.50 at elementary schools and \$2.75 at all middle and high schools.

“National School Breakfast Week helps us educate parents and students about all the healthy and appealing choices we offer”. WCCUSD serves over 8,000 breakfasts daily through the federally funded School Breakfast Program. Our school nutrition professionals in West Contra Costa prepare breakfast and lunches every day that meet federal nutrition standards – limiting fat, calories and

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Office of the Superintendent

National School Breakfast Week was launched in 1989 to raise awareness of the availability of the School Breakfast Program, a federally assisted meal program operating in public and non-profit private schools and residential child care institutions since 1975.

For more information on WCCUSD meal programs go to www.wccusd.net - Food services department or call WCCUSD Food Services at 510-307-4580.



WCCUSD Food Services first Annual Voice Your choice event March 19, 2020 – Tony Wold
WCCUSD Food Services will be holding its first annual Voice Your Choice event on March 19, 2020 at Richmond High School from 10-2pm. This event will allow district K-12 students the opportunity to sample a variety of healthy menu items and give their valuable feedback. The most popular items from this event will be offered on our 2020/21 cafeteria menus.

Food Services thanks Richmond High for hosting the event in their gym and offering the support of their students as volunteers to ensure a successful event.

Students from Richmond High, Helms, Downer and Ford have been invited as taste testers to represent the district’s K-12 student population.

Students will taste test menu items such as burritos, pizzas, pastas, breads, sauces and more chosen from our most popular items from our breakfast, lunch, supper and snack menus. Twenty eight companies have been invited to take part in this event due to the healthy meal options they offer. Our student taste testers will vote on each of the 42 different tasting items giving Food Services insight into their likes and dislikes.

The hope of this event is to educate students, and adults on our district’s meal programs and give a voice to our students. Positive feedback from classmates and adults can encourage reluctant students to try new foods. One bite can lead to a healthy eating habit for a lifetime.

For more information on WCCUSD meal programs go to www.wccusd.net - Food services department or call WCCUSD Food Services at 510-307-4580

Recycling at our District Sites – Luis Freese

At the February 26, 2020 Board of Education meeting, Student Trustee Dawit Vasquez-Suomala expressed his support for the District’s recycling efforts at El Cerrito High School. Dawit’s leadership and advocacy lead to inquiry about our District-wide Recycling Program.

Currently, all District sites have weekly recycling services with an emphasis on classroom and office waste and cafeteria cardboard.

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

The District also partners with Richmond Sanitary and Recyclemore to provide recycling and waste separation education for students and staff. Interested site leaders can request classroom presentations, school assemblies, and field trips. These opportunities will continue to be promoted at the beginning of each school year.

We believe the greatest champions of the District Recycling Program are the students, custodians, and staff that participate daily!

If you would like additional information, please reach out to Julio Arroyo 510-231-1109, Julio.Arroyo@wccusd.net.

Media Stories of Interest - Marcus Walton

The following news articles may be of interest. Copies of the articles are attached.

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Bay-Area-education-officials-start-prepping-for-15087324.php> - Bay Area education officials start prepping for coronavirus, including school closures

<https://edsources.org/2020/west-contra-costa-unified-school-board-votes-to-lay-off-up-to-300-workers-in-june/624310> - West Contra Costa Unified school board votes to lay off up to 300 workers in June

<https://californiaglobe.com/legislature/senator-laUSD-budget-crisis-could-take-down-state-budget/> - Senator: LAUSD Budget Crisis Could Take Down State Budget

<https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/education/san-diego-unifieds-budget-woes-widen-to-include-potential-layoffs/> - San Diego Unified's Budget Woes Widen to Include Potential Layoffs

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/education/article/SF-schools-scramble-to-pay-the-bills-amid-an-14978849.php> - SF schools scramble to pay the bills amid an unexpected shortfall

<https://www.econotimes.com/Michelle-Obama-Northern-California-elementary-school-honors-former-FLOTUS-by-doing-this-1575608> - Michelle Obama: Northern California elementary school honors former FLOTUS by doing this

<https://postnewsgroup.com/2020/02/20/paul-anthony-daniels-81/> - Paul Anthony Daniels, 81

LOCAL // BAY AREA & STATE

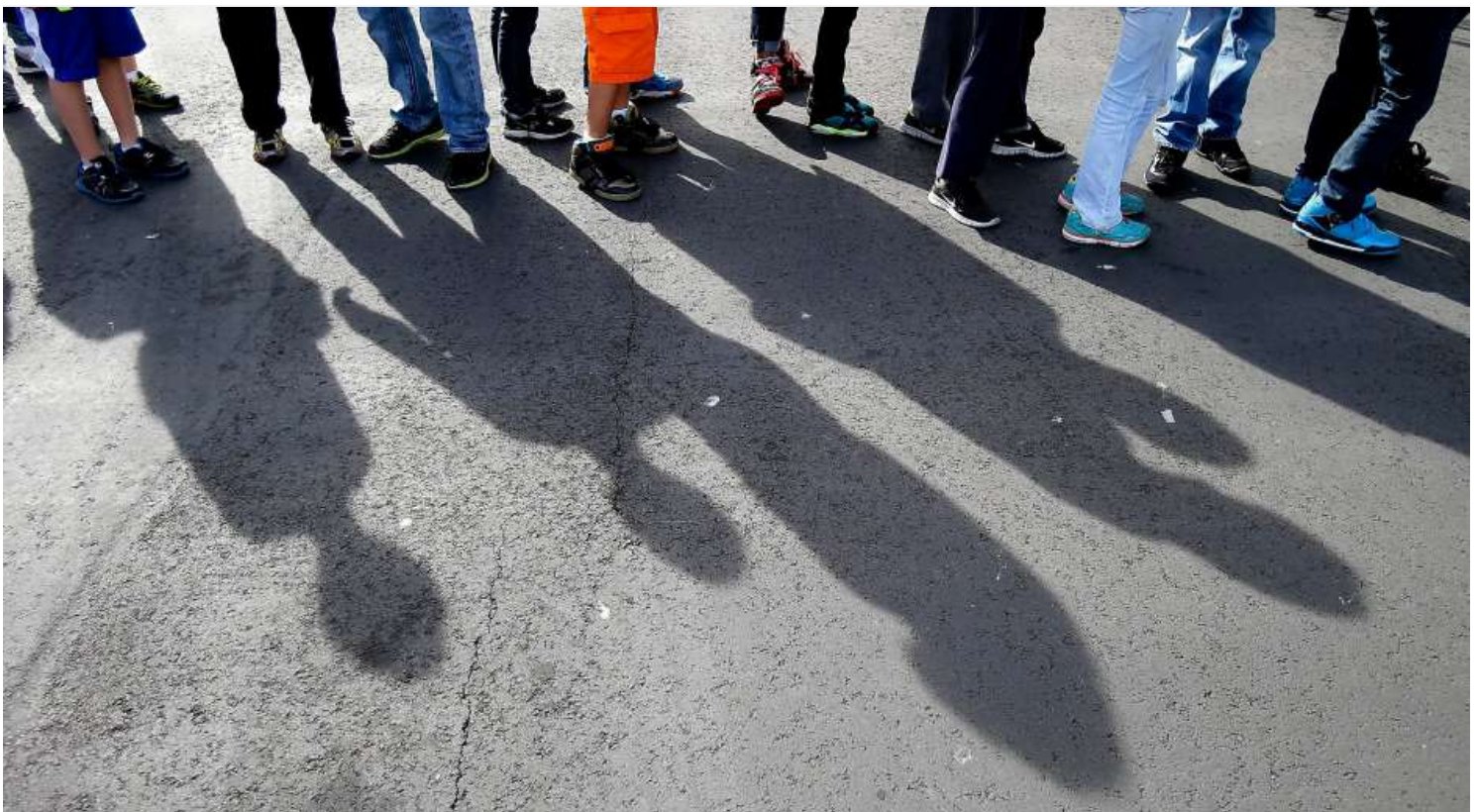
Bay Area schools prepare for coronavirus with Solano County district disinfecting in wake of new case

Jill Tucker and Erin Allday

Feb. 27, 2020 | Updated: Feb. 27, 2020 11:12 a.m.



Local Election 2020 Sporting Green Food Biz+Tech Culture Desk Datebook US & World Opinion



Middle school students lined up on the playground after the drill for a speech by Mayor Lee Thursday October 16, 2014. The great California "Shakeout" was observed at Marina Middle School in San Francisco, Calif. with an earthquake drill for students and some public officials.

Photo: Brant Ward / The Chronicle

Education officials across California are reviewing and updating emergency plans and

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With the virus spreading to countries outside China, it appears to have breached containment efforts and will almost certainly spread in the United States at some point, officials said.

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A Solano County resident tested positive for the virus, officials announced Wednesday, marking the first case in the country from an unknown source.

Local Election 2020 Sporting Green Food Biz+Tech Culture Desk Datebook US & World Opinion

...that because of the new case, staff will be disinfecting surfaces on a daily basis, a recommendation made by county and state officials, to try to prevent the spread of the virus.

“While this may be alarming and cause fear, we want to assure you that FSUSD is taking precautions to keep our school sites disinfected and clean,” officials said in a statement. “Our staff will wipe down commonly shared surfaces every day with disinfectants.”

The state is also recommending students and staff to frequently wash their hands, cover their nose and mouth when sneezing and coughing, and stay home if they are sick. Officials can also consider canceling special events, like school dances, plays or other large gatherings..



Fifth & Mission

San Francisco's Coronavi...

Warnings about a global pandemic are becoming more urgent as stocks fall and local officials — including Mayor London Breed — declare states of emergency. Health reporters Erin Allday and Catherine Ho on the latest local cases.

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“I understand this whole situation may seem overwhelming and that disruption to everyday life may be severe,” she said. “But these are things that people need to start thinking about now.”

According to the Center for Disease Control in a 2017 advisory regarding a flu pandemic, closing schools “preemptively before flu becomes widespread in schools and communities can help slow the spread of disease in the community.” In addition, officials might close certain schools if many staff and students are sick and regular school functions cannot be maintained.

Parents also need to start considering what to do if schools are closed or classes are held remotely in their community, Messonnier added.

“I had a conversation with my family over breakfast this morning and I told my children that while I didn’t think that they were at risk right now, we as a family need to be preparing for significant disruption of our lives,” she said. “You should think about what you would do for childcare if schools or day cares close.”

Coronavirus Hits the Bay Area



LOCAL

BY ALEJANDRO SERRANO, CATHERINE HO,
ERIN ALLDAY AND LAUREN HERNÁNDEZ

**Coronavirus live updates: Gov.
Newsom says 28 cases in...**



LOCAL

BY LAUREN HERNÁNDEZ, ALEJANDRO
SERRANO AND ERIN ALLDAY

**Coronavirus: What residents
need to know**



LOCAL

BY DOMI
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Such widespread school closures are not unprecedented, with many Bay Area schools shutting down in 2018 because of air quality issues related to wildfires. Individual schools have also closed from time to time because of outbreaks of illness like the norovirus.

School districts must have emergency plans for earthquakes, fires, active shooters and other types of critical events, and in recent years, officials have added a pandemic flu plan for communicable diseases like the coronavirus.



Fifth & Mission

Our Life in Coronavirus Quarantine

Otis and Carol Menasco's Japan cruise is now "the vacation that has become a nightmare" as they're quarantined at an Air Force base near San Antonio. They can't get movies or booze, but they can make calls, and they called us.

00:00:00

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Megaphone

The pandemic influenza plan in Tulare County, for example, includes county guidance to close a school if more than 30% of students are ill.

State and county officials have been providing guidance to California school districts about how to deal with a potential outbreak.

“Although there are still zero confirmed cases in San Francisco residents, the global picture is changing rapidly, and we are working with the city to ensure we are prepared in the event that our schools are impacted,” said San Francisco schools spokeswoman Laura Dudnick. “We are planning for how we would manage in the case of an exposure at a school.”

Already, the state Department of Education has advised schools to bar travelers from mainland China from school grounds for 14 days.

In addition, they are encouraging school staff to promote preventive measures, like hand

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Parents: How to plan for an extended stay at home during a flu pandemic

Ask your employer about how business will continue during a pandemic.

Ask your employer if you can work from home during a flu pandemic.

Plan for a possible reduction or loss of income, if you are unable to work or your place of employment is closed.

Check with your employer or union about leave policies.

Check with your school district for home learning activities. Have materials, such as books, on hand.

Plan recreational activities that your children can do at home.

Source: Chula Vista Elementary School District

“The California Department of Education is monitoring the situation regarding the 2019 novel coronavirus and working closely with agency partners to determine best steps to be prepared,” said Scott Roark, spokesman for the California Department of Education.

“Any decisions to close schools as a result of the coronavirus would be made by individual county health agencies and school districts.”

In Contra Costa County, officials said they are in “constant communication” with county health officials. Three people who have tested positive for coronavirus are currently being monitored in Contra Costa hospitals; they were all U.S. passengers evacuated from a cruise ship in Japan where the virus was spreading rapidly.

But there is no evidence that the virus is circulating in the county, said Terry Koehne, spokesman for the Contra Costa County Office of Education.

“With that said, we also take seriously our responsibility to keep students and schools safe and protected,” he said “and will work on a plan with health services — on how to

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West Contra Costa Unified school board votes to lay off up to 300 workers in June

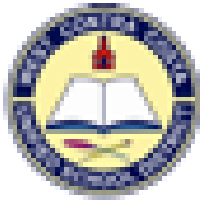
Cuts include about 230 teachers who are being asked to accept larger class sizes to save jobs

FEBRUARY 27, 2020 | THERESA HARRINGTON

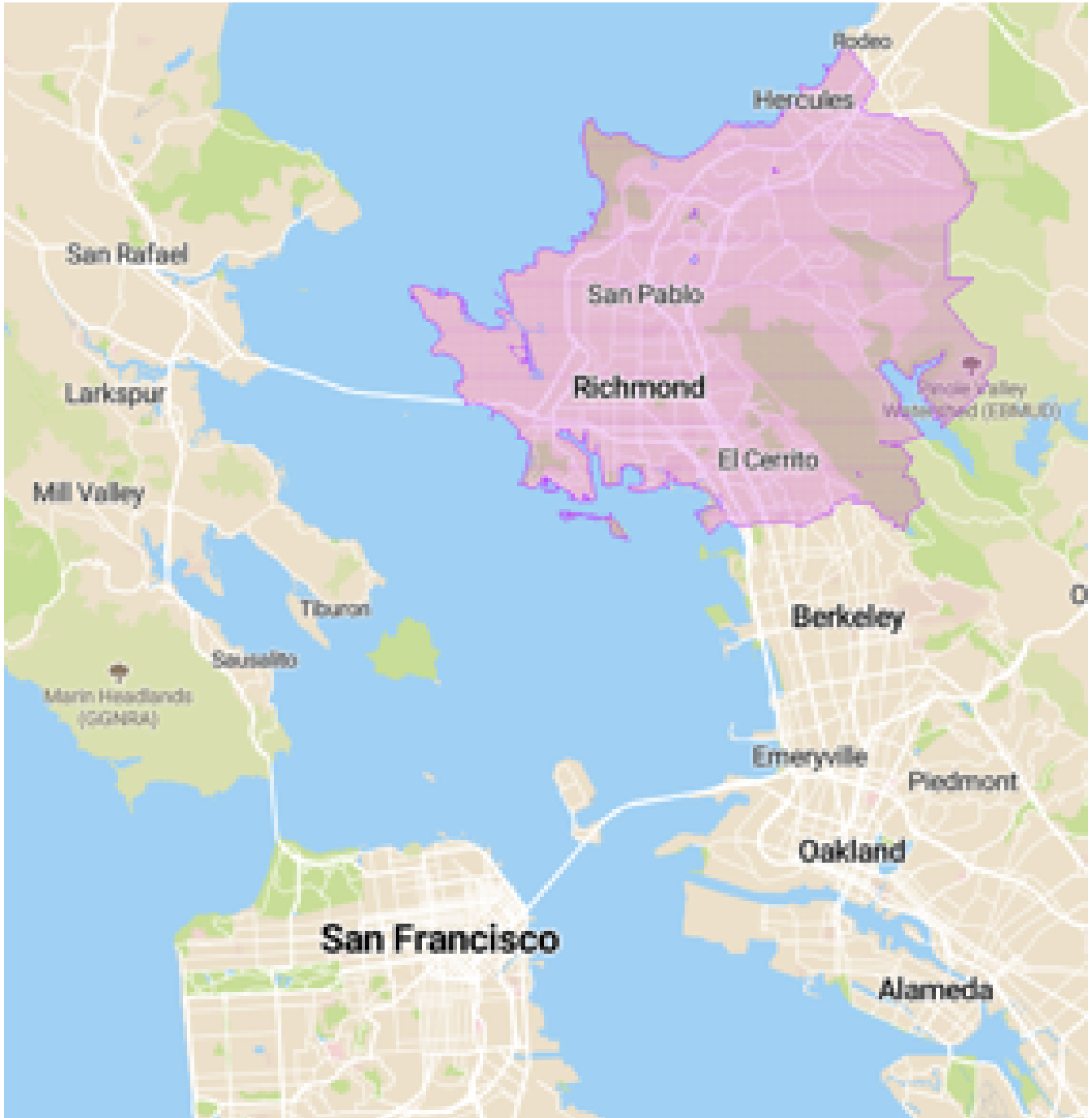


THERESA HARRINGTON / EDSOURCE

Facing a deficit of \$47.8 million over the next two years, the West Contra Costa Unified school board on [Wednesday](#) voted 4-1 to eliminate 300 [positions](#) next year to save \$22 million. But it hopes to rescind many of the layoffs in May if it is able to reach an agreement with unions for alternative cost-saving measures.



West Contra Costa Unified



These positions include about 230 teachers, who are expected to receive layoff notices next week. The district — which includes Richmond and surrounding communities — is negotiating with unions to come up with other ways to reduce expenditures, such as increasing

class sizes for one year and eliminating some teacher stipends for extra work or special qualifications.

All five board members expressed sorrow about the layoffs and board member Mister Phillips voted against them because he had too many unanswered questions about how the district would continue to operate with staff cuts that include the elimination of the chief academic officer and director of charter school oversight positions. Other board members told Superintendent Matthew Duffy and Tony Wold, the associate superintendent for business services, that they wanted to see a new organizational chart explaining who would take on critical responsibilities in the district in light of the planned cuts.

“You ‘d better make this worth it and successful, and do what you can to put these pieces back together,” board member Consuelo Lara told Duffy and Wold. “This is on you. I’m holding you accountable for this.”

Layoffs for teachers will be decided based on seniority and credentials. The board voted to eliminate the positions of 159 elementary school teachers and 72 teachers of subjects including social studies, English, physical education, math, science, art, music and foreign languages.

The cuts approved Wednesday are on top of \$6 million in cuts to contracts with outside consultants and \$2 million in direct funding to school sites the board approved Feb. 12. Besides laying off teachers, the job cuts include eliminating 13 central office directors or other high-level administrators, seven central office program coordinators, one principal, 25 assistant principals and vice principals, 13 counselors, three psychologists, three instructional specialists and one position each in maintenance, business and public service.

These cuts do not include expected cuts of classified non-teaching positions, who must be notified in April of layoffs, Wold told EdSource. He was unsure how many classified positions could also be affected, saying he hoped the number could be reduced through negotiations.

Board member Mister Phillips issued a [statement](#) earlier this month saying that he opposed laying off counselors or elementary vice principals and instead favored a pay freeze. But a teachers’ union survey found that teachers opposed this idea.

Teachers at Helms Middle School in San Pablo felt so strongly about maintaining hard-fought raises that they created a petition against pay cuts, noting that pay raises already approved by the board are set to go into effect in July and that some schools such as Kennedy High in Richmond are already having trouble attracting teachers to fill vacant positions.

The district canceled a planned teacher recruitment fair recently, as news of impending layoffs spread. But Wold said some teachers interested in jobs did contact the district and it is possible some teachers may need to be hired for difficult to fill positions such as special education. He assured the board on Wednesday that no special education positions were being cut.

To help plan for layoffs, employees who notified the district that they intend to leave at the end of the school year were offered bonuses. Wold told EdSource he wasn't sure how many of these notifications the district received, but said they would help lower the number of layoff notices the district will need to send out.

In a [statement](#) released Tuesday, Phillips said it is important to remember that these positions are filled by people, who are integral to the school district. "Families pick schools, stay at schools, and/or leave schools largely because of the people who work in them," he said.

Board member Tom Panas said he worried that some low-income schools would be hit harder by the cuts than more affluent schools, in part because they have more new teachers and also are served by district-funded administrators. He estimated that some of these schools could lose up to 10 teachers and asked Duffy to consider an equity-based formula for redistributing school funding after the cuts are made.

Duffy issued a [statement](#) earlier this month letting the community know about upcoming layoff notices for teachers as well as for assistant principals and some other administrators who oversee teachers. He said the district would maintain a principal at every school and hoped to staff each comprehensive high school with at least two assistant principals and each comprehensive middle school with at least one assistant principal.

"We are still investigating the administrative staffing ratios at the elementary and K-8 schools," he said, adding that the district hoped to minimize impacts on students' education. "We will get through this together and will remain committed to providing the best possible services to

all of our communities while we lobby the state of California to appropriately fund public education.”

The district’s teachers’ union is collecting signatures to get a proposed “Schools and Communities First” initiative on the November ballot that could provide billions of dollars to California schools in the future. Many districts, including West Contra Costa, are hoping voters will approve the measure, which could help alleviate the need to cut more money out of the 2021-22 budget.

West Contra Costa is one of 38 districts that adopted a “qualified” three-year budget in December, meaning that it may not be able to pay all of its bills through 2021-22 unless it makes cuts. The board has already agreed to cover a part of its deficit this year and next year by using a special reserve fund to cover its retiree benefits cost of \$15.8 million annually. But this will deplete that reserve fund and force the district to cut another \$15.8 million in 2021-22 to help cover its ongoing costs.

The district’s budget problems are the result of several factors, including costs for operations, special education and employee pensions rising faster than state and other revenues. It already used up its undesignated reserve funds to cover this year’s deficit and must maintain a 3 percent reserve to stay solvent.

But the district also got off course financially over the past few years in part due to high turnover in its finance department, which is responsible for tracking expenditures and projecting future costs and revenues. Wold, who is the fourth chief business official in four years, has been working with the Contra Costa County Office of Education and Fiscal Crisis Management and Assistance Team, or FCMAT — a state agency that helps districts in fiscal distress — to implement best practices and fiscal controls to prevent the district from overspending in the future.

Editor’s Note: As a special project, EdSource is tracking developments this year in the Oakland Unified and West Contra Costa Unified School Districts as a way to illustrate some of the most urgent challenges facing many urban districts in California. West Contra Costa Unified includes Richmond, El Cerrito and several other East Bay communities.



Home > Highlight > Senator: LAUSD Budget Crisis Could Take Down State Budget

UTLA Board. Facebook

Senator: LAUSD Budget Crisis Could Take Down State Budget

Moorlach warns crippling long-term debt may doom the school district and the state

By Katy Grimes, January 17, 2019 10:51 am





While the Los Angeles Unified School District contract negotiations with the Unified Teachers of Los Angeles labor union led to a massive strike this week, the fight over hiring more teachers and school staff in the nation's second largest school district may likely be a moot point if LAUSD's total \$25.9 billion deficit is not dealt with.

California State Sen. John Moorlach (R-Costa Mesa) has issued many warnings about the Los Angeles Unified School District budget crisis, saying it is so big it could wipe out the California budget surplus... and perhaps the state budget.

"The main culprit in negative CAFRs is unfunded pension liabilities," Moorlach wrote in a recent op-ed for California Globe.

The LAUSD has the largest unrestricted net deficit of any California school district, at \$10.9 billion, Moorlach said. And now that the district has to report the retiree medical unfunded liability on the balance sheet means it will increase LAUSD's deficit by another \$15 billion... the amount of the state's budget surplus, which is "a mirage," says Steven Greenhut for R Street.org. "The budget surplus doesn't take into account the size of California's unfunded pension and medical liabilities for public employees."

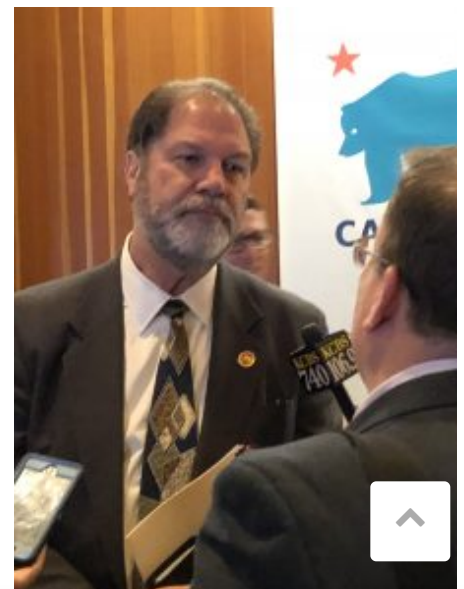
"LAUSD doesn't have two nickels to rub together," Moorlach told LA School Report. His research ranked the district's per-person contribution cost as one of the highest among California's 944 public school districts.

Moorlach's 2018 report, "Financial Soundness Rankings for California's Public School Districts, Colleges & Universities," found two-thirds of the 944 state school districts "bleed red ink."

The Senator's report found the worst school district was Los Angeles Unified at \$10.9 billion in the red. Closely behind is San Diego Unified at -\$1.5 billion, Fresno Unified at -\$849 million, San Francisco Unified at -\$770 million, Long Beach Unified at -\$564 million, and Sacramento City Unified at -\$540 million.

Moorlach's report found only seven districts in the whole state with enrollment of 2,000 or more were in the black.

"School districts that utilize California's Financial Crisis & Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) for emergency loans usually request amounts that are at a minimum two times, with most multiple times more, the size of their unrestricted net deficits," Moorlach warns. "Oakland Unified's unrestricted net deficit in 2003 was \$48.7 million when it was loaned \$100 million. South Monterey County Joint Union High's unrestricted net deficit was less than \$2 million when it borrowed \$13 million," he said.





will Sacramento find \$50 billion to lend it?"

While Moorlach recommended offering early retirement incentives as a cost-cutting measure, one of the **demands** the striking LA teachers union has is more teachers, staff and administrators. Moorlach said when a San Diego area school district board voted in December to offer early retirement incentives, the San Diego County Office of Education voted to take away the school board's decision-making control.

"United Teachers Los Angeles **has rejected** the district's proposal to shave off costs by adding two years to how long it takes new employees to become eligible for free lifetime health benefits — something other L.A. Unified unions have **already accepted**," said the LA School Report.

Sen. Moorlach warns against a blanket bailout of school districts by the state. "He'd support increasing education spending if he had some assurances that unions would give ground on negotiable benefits like retiree health care," the Sacramento Bee **reported**. "We can't just give districts that have not been good stewards more money. You have to ask for something in return," Moorlach said.

On his own blog, [JOHN MOORLACH'S POSTINGS](#), he writes:

"Sacramento City Unified has a population of close to 350,000 and covers a significant amount of real estate in the Capital area. It is also having issues... but at least its teacher's bargaining unit is not as out of touch as LAUSD's and has not called a strike. But it threatened to strike in 2017. The school district board of trustees gave in and granted wage increases, but now look where that has brought them."

*"I **warned** that the new Governor's first crisis may be the school districts. The drum beats on this topic continue to grow louder with each passing week."*

Gov. Gavin Newsom has not involved himself in the LAUSD strike, and has issued only **one statement**: "Last week, I submitted a budget to the Legislature that would make the largest ever investment in K through 12 education, help pay down billions in school district pension debt and provide substantial new funding for special education and early education," Newsom said.

"LAUSD's Unrestricted Net Positions per capita is three times that of the average for the entire Orange County!" Moorlach said. "That's how massive LAUSD's fiscal hole is... So, this CPA doesn't know where the union demanded pay raises are going to come from."

Author [Recent Posts](#)

Katy Grimes



San Diego Unified's Budget Woes Widen to Include Potential Layoffs

Posted By *Ashly McGlone* On December 11, 2019 @ 3:28 pm



San Diego Unified Trustee Richard Barrera said despite the district's current budget predicament, it would have been wrong to withhold the recent across-the-board 3.7 percent raises for San Diego Unified's 10,500 employees. / Photo by Jamie Scott Lytle

San Diego Unified will again consider laying off an unknown number of employees to help close a \$70 million budget hole expected next year following across-the-board raises, according to new projections presented to school board trustees Tuesday night ^[1]. The gap increased from a \$58 million shortfall estimated in September.

The district's chief business officer, Greg Ottinger, gave no explanation for the change before asking trustees to greenlight unspecified reductions and positively certify the district's \$1.44 billion budget, a move indicating the district will be able to pay its bills in the next couple years.

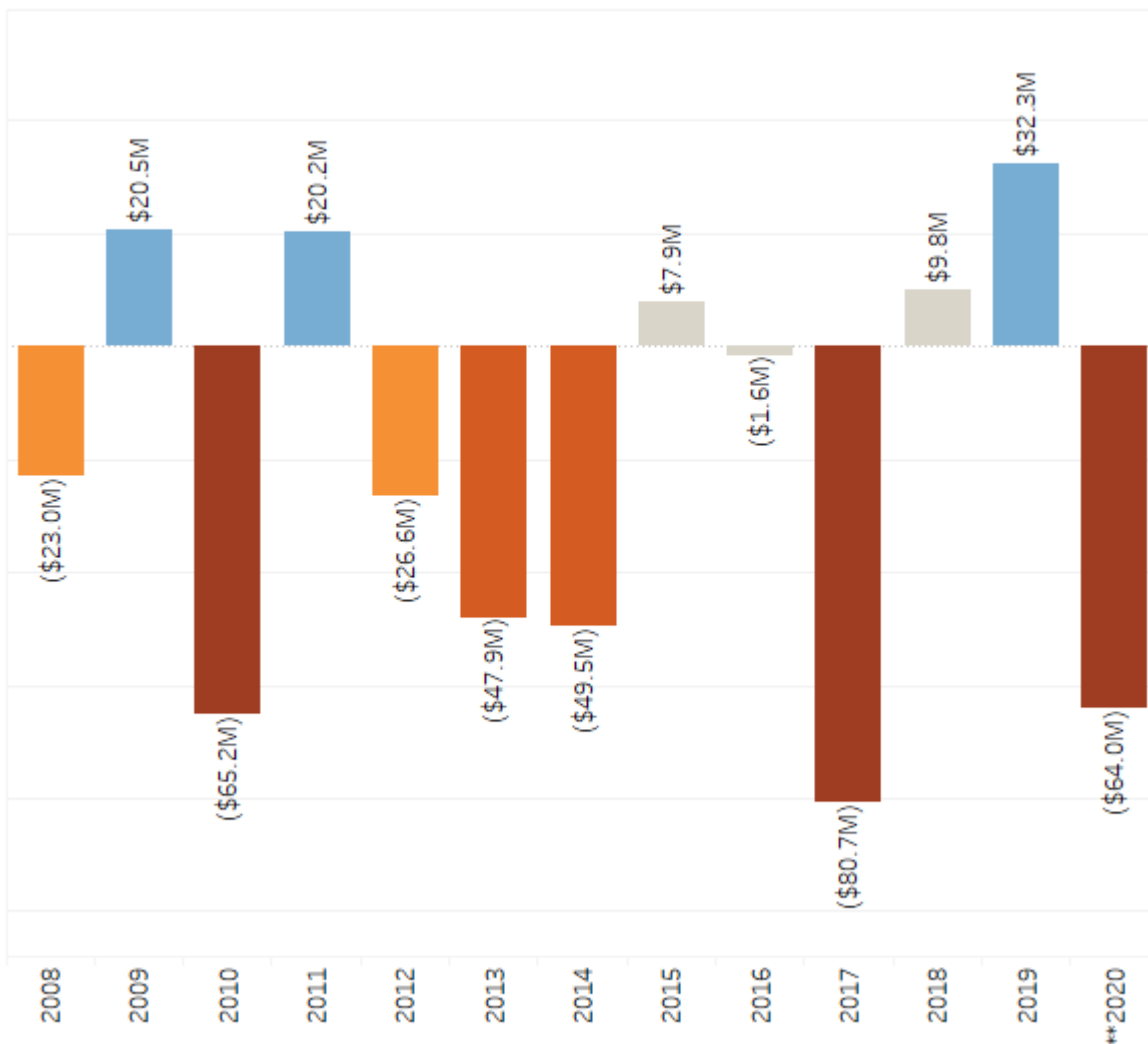
More budget cut details will come before March 15, but in Tuesday's [presentation](#) [2], the district called out "strategic layoffs of certificated/classified as needed in March" as a "potential shift" and listed a hiring freeze, spending freeze and program shifts among solutions.

In more bad news, district leaders anticipate outspending general fund revenues by \$64 million by the end of the current year, up from the \$38 million deficit anticipated in September, district [budget records show](#) [3].

Ottinger did not discuss that deficit increase either, and VOSD's questions about both changes have gone unanswered.

The higher deficit may point to deep cuts ahead, if past low points in 2010 and 2017 are any indication. Here's a look at how the district's general fund spending has fared over the years, as revenues and expenses have ebbed and flowed.

SDUSD General Fund Surplus/Deficit



Despite the challenge ahead, school board Trustee Richard Barrera praised the district's leadership team, including Superintendent Cindy Marten.

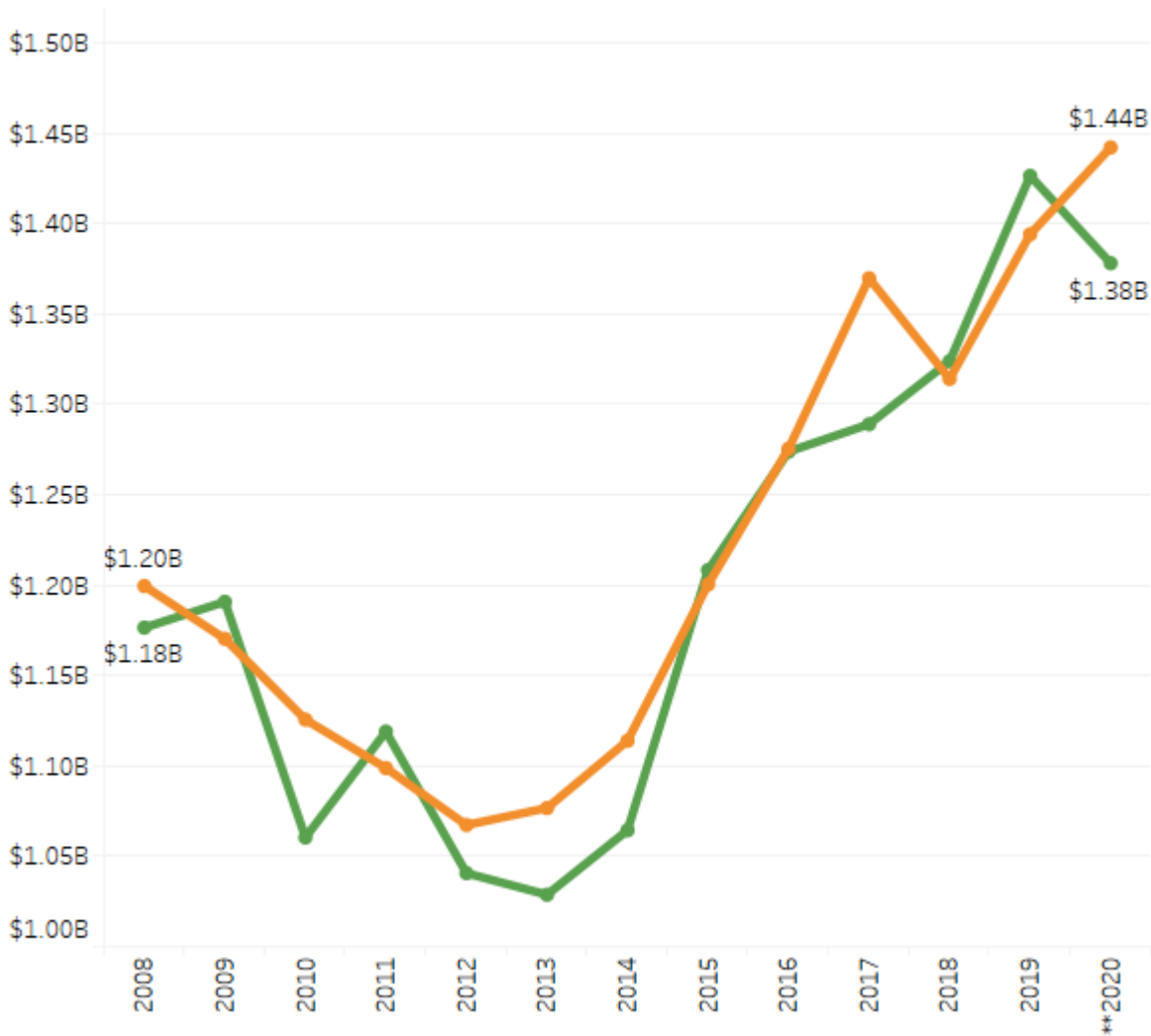
"When we look at a \$70 million challenge at this point in time ... we know that we turn over every rock every time we go through this budget process. That there is no efficiency that we don't identify that we use to then provide a budget solution. This is the most efficiently operated school district that it's ever been. And it's the most efficiently operated that a school district can possibly be," he said.

In a familiar turn ^[4], both Ottinger and Barrera pointed to Sacramento as a primary source of their budget woes.

"Quite frankly, the costs to operate the organization are increasing much faster than the revenues that we are provided by the state," Ottinger said.

District budget records show total general fund revenues surged to an all-time high last year, with most of the \$1.43 billion coming from the state. Revenue projections total \$1.38 billion for next year.

SDUSD General Fund Revenues vs. Expenses



"It's a revenue issue," said Barrera, who criticized the state for amassing an estimated \$18 billion rainy day fund ^[5] by 2021 that he said could be used to increase education funding. Barrera also pointed to California's poor performance in education funding analyses ^[6] that take into account cost of living. He then argued escalating state pension contributions required of schools aren't necessary to keep the pension fund solvent.

Ottinger also lamented the pension contributions needed by the district, and said the millions extra going toward pensions could be spent elsewhere.

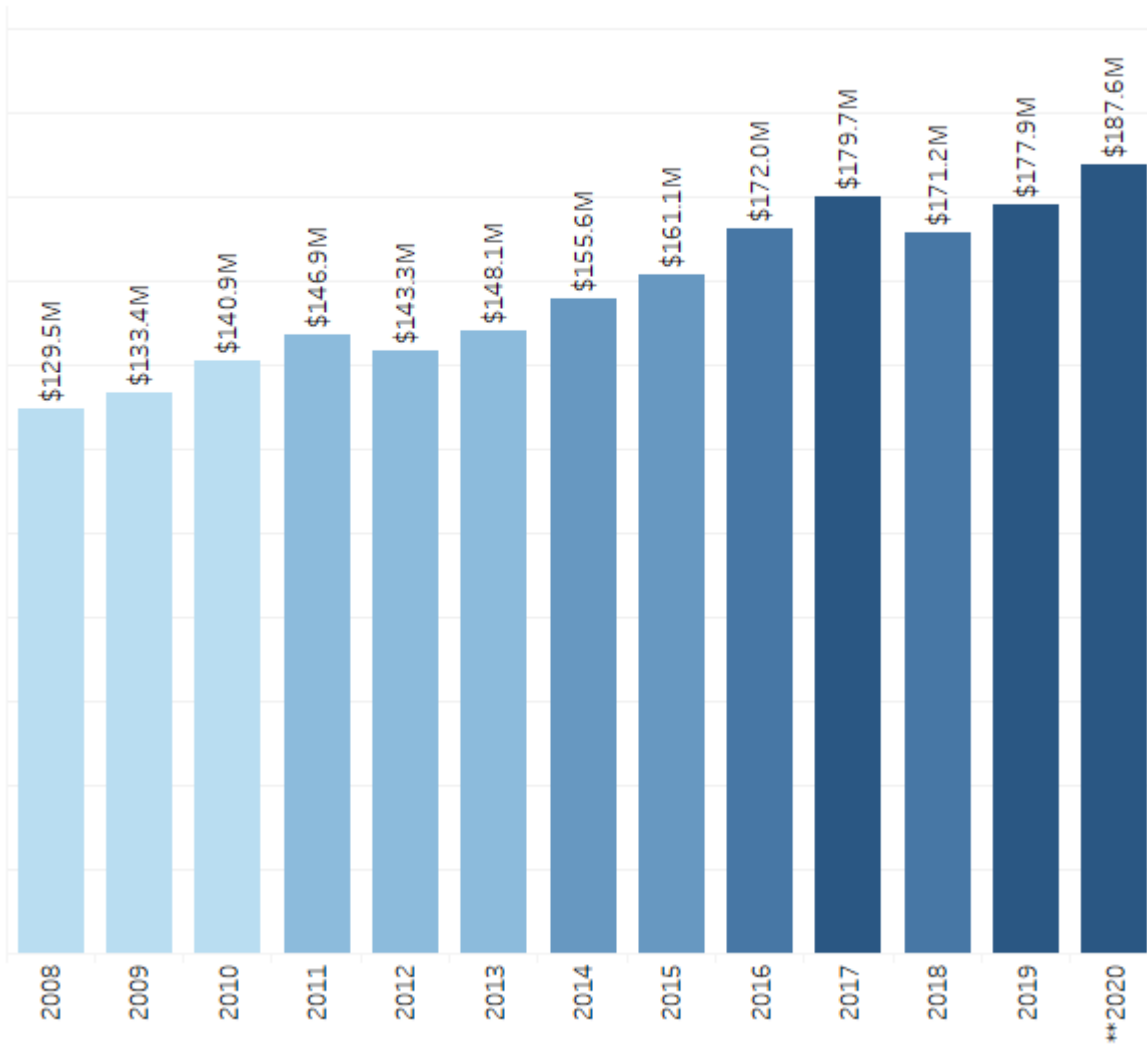
Barrera said despite the district's current budget predicament, it would have been wrong to withhold the recent across-the-board 3.7 percent raises for San Diego Unified's 10,500 employees, a move that added \$45 million in annual operating costs and blew up the district's balanced budget ^[7].

“Some people want to say that the solution to our budget challenge every year is to simply pay our employees less. Yes, if our employees were paid less, the district would have more money. That is true and obvious. And it is also true and obvious that if we were to do that, if we were to fail to allow our employees to keep up with the basic cost of living every year, that we would have a very difficult time recruiting and retaining employees. And we know that this district has benefited significantly from stability of our employees,” Barrera said in a 14-minute speech. “The answer is not to not allow our employees to keep up with the cost of living ... where we would be seeing continued and significant turnover of our employees every single year, because they cannot simply afford to live in San Diego. That is not the answer.”

State data shows San Diego Unified’s average teacher salary was \$80,624 in 2018, roughly the same as the state average for all districts. The latest raises pushed the top teacher base salary above \$100,000 ^[8] for the first time, according to a district press release.

San Diego Unified continues to provide full health care coverage to employees and their dependents. The cost of health benefits paid out of the general fund dipped in 2018 following layoffs but are expected to rise at the end of this year by \$9.7 million. The district is budgeting annual 6 percent increases for health care premiums in the coming years, records show.

General Fund Health Benefits



Article printed from Voice of San Diego: <https://www.voiceofsandiego.org>

URL to article: <https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/education/san-diego-unifieds-budget-woes-widen-to-include-potential-layoffs/>

URLs in this post:

[1] Tuesday night: <http://go.boarddocs.com/ca/sandi/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BGQPRM63CB1F>

[2] presentation: [https://go.boarddocs.com/ca/sandi/Board.nsf/files/BJKVDU78F2C9/\\$file/2019-20%20First%20Interim%20Presentation%2C%2012.10.2019.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/ca/sandi/Board.nsf/files/BJKVDU78F2C9/$file/2019-20%20First%20Interim%20Presentation%2C%2012.10.2019.pdf)

[3] budget records show: <https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/GF-Summary-Pages-from-2019-20-First-Interim-Financial-SACS-Report-12.10.2019.pdf>

[4] familiar turn: <https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/education/fact-check-californias-not-blame-district-budget-woes/>

[5] \$18 billion rainy day fund: <https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2019/4111/fiscal-outlook-112019.pdf>

[6] California's poor performance in education funding analyses:

https://edlawcenter.org/assets/files/pdfs/publications/Is_School_Funding_Fair_7th_Edit.pdf

[7] blew up the district's balanced budget:

<https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/education/how-san-diego-unified-blew-up-its-balanced-budget/>

[8] top teacher base salary above \$100,000: <https://www.sandiegounified.org/bargaining-progress-update>

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unexpected shortfall

Jill Tucker

Jan. 16, 2020 | Updated: Jan. 16, 2020 4 a.m.



Stephen Torres Esquer teaches his students in a special education class at Lowell High School in San Francisco, Calif. on Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2019. The San Francisco Unified School District is facing a steep \$31.8 million budget deficit, a portion of which has been attributed to unexpected costs to fund special education programs in the district.

San Francisco schools are scrambling to cover an unexpected \$31.8 million projected shortfall this school year, a financial hole that district officials say will only deepen over the next two years.

after shuffling funds — that would require staffing or other reductions to balance the \$1.04 billion total budget.

With an additional \$60.5 million deficit expected next year and another \$55.6 million the following year, the district likely will have to make some hard decisions before passing a new budget in June.

“California refuses to fund schools at an appropriate rate,” said school board President Mark Sanchez. “I don’t know how we’re going to make up that difference if we don’t have another funding stream.”

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For the past two years, the district has been spending \$10 million to \$20 million more than it gets from local, state and federal funding sources, but has covered the gap with reserves. That money is running out and state funding is unlikely to keep up with cost increases, officials said.

In 2017, the district negotiated an 11% raise for teachers and other personnel, expecting a voter-approved parcel tax to help pay for it. But since Measure G’s passage last year, the

education costs, which surprised district officials.

The additional special education costs were driven by an extra \$9.6 million required to send disabled students to non-public schools and another \$15 million for additional staff to help special needs students in the district. That could include individual aides, speech or occupational therapists or other support.

“These pressures related to special ed costs ... that’s a systemic challenge that all districts are facing,” said Myong Leigh, deputy superintendent of policy and operations. “The magnitude of that increase is one of the things we’re trying to bear down on.”

The district, with 60,000 students, has seen a significant increase in the number of special education students. An additional 550 special ed students joined the district in 2018, pushing the total to about 7,400 — although it’s not clear why the number spiked, Leigh said.

The district also is anticipating \$6 million more than expected in costs for substitutes, in part to cover medical, maternity or other staff leaves, as well as other minor budget increases.

Sanchez said he would like to see a city ballot initiative that would set aside city funding to boost spending to the national average adjusted for cost of living — or a \$3,000 increase per student.

In the meantime: “My feeling is we’re are going to have to cut,” Sanchez said.

That could include cuts to the supply budget — including paper and pens — this year, but possibly central office staff layoffs in the next year or two. The cuts, however, would be “as far away from the classrooms as possible,” he added.

Like many districts across the state, San Francisco Unified is grappling with a combination of fiscal issues, including skyrocketing pension costs and salary increases.

and Management Assistance Team, which works with the state's school districts on financial stability. "They're all feeling the pressures, both revenue pressures and the expenditure pressures."

In general, districts need the state to provide about a 4% cost-of-living increase to keep up with cost increases, Fine said.

But last year, they got 3.36% and Gov. Gavin Newsom's recent budget proposal included a 2.26% boost.

"The reality is we've been underfunding our schools, but we have these really high expectations for our students, which we should have," said Xilonin Cruz-Gonzalez, president of the California School Boards Association. "Having a cost-of-living increase that doesn't even meet the true increases year to year, that means districts across the state are looking at deficit spending, looking to make cuts or dipping into reserves year after year."

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Michelle Obama: Northern California elementary school honors former FLOTUS by doing this



Michelle Obama / Facebook

Sunday, February 23, 2020 2:28 PM UTC

Even years after she left the White House, Michelle Obama continues to inspire people everywhere. In a nod to the former FLOTUS, the West Contra Costa Unified School District Board will be renaming the Wilson Elementary school, located in Northern California, to Michelle Obama Elementary School, according to [CNN](#).

The idea of changing the school name came from its PTA when the organization sent a letter to the school's board. The proposal was met with unanimous support from the school's students, their parents, and even community leaders.

As explained by the President of the PTA Maisha Cole, the decision to choose Michelle Obama's name was made because they wanted someone who's known globally. "We wanted to choose someone on a global level," Cole said.

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1D 1M 3M 1Y 5Y ALL

SPX...	2960.4	+0.42%
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NAS...	8385.0	+0.56%
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think beyond Richmond, to think beyond California, and remind them that they can make a difference locally and globally,” Cole explained.

The change in name will also coincide with a brand new school. The elementary school is scheduled to be rebuilt for the 2020-2021 school year.

“We have the opportunity to have a beautiful new school named after a person who really represents our diversity and values,” explained Claudia Velez, the school’s principal. “Our school is diverse, modern and innovative, and the things that the kids will be doing will prepare them for a very strong and successful future in whatever career they choose.”

For Michelle Obama, this isn’t actually the first time that a school was named after her. Back in 2012, a similarly named Michelle Obama Elementary was opened by the Los Angeles Unified School District, according to [Express](#).

There was even a school that was named after the former First Couple. This happened in 2009 when a school in St Paul, Minnesota was renamed Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary.

It has been a while since they left the White House but the Obamas remain one of the most popular personalities in U.S. Michelle, in particular, has left her mark as one of the most influential First Ladies for the role that she created for herself while her husband was still in office.

“What makes Michelle Obama so remarkable is not just that she was the first African-American First Lady (although that is an outstanding feat of its own) but the fact that she created a role for herself outside of her position as Barack Obama’s wife,” [Grit Daily](#) wrote.

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Paul Anthony Daniels, 81

Renowned Educator and Berkeley High School Coach

By **Saskia Hatvany** - February 20, 2020

Paul Anthony Daniels passed away peacefully Feb. 4, 2020 at the age of 81, after a sudden illness. He will always be remembered as a wonderful husband, father, grandfather, and supportive mentor to close relatives and friends.

The youngest of three sons born to Gladys and William Daniels, he entered this world on Aug. 11, 1938. He was raised in Berkeley and spent most of his free time playing baseball at San Pablo Park under the coaching of Bill Haywood.

When he went to Berkeley High School he made the baseball team as a sophomore. He was a three-year letterman in baseball at Berkeley, earning All League Honors as a shortstop in 1956.

He graduated from Berkeley High the same year and attended Santa Rosa Junior College, where he continued to play baseball before transferring to the University of California, Berkeley, in 1958. While at UCB, he met and later married Barbara Perry upon their graduation in 1961.

After working for the Berkeley Recreation Department, he returned to Berkeley schools to teach physical education and coach basketball, baseball and track. At Berkeley High, he served as department chairperson for physical education, athletic director and vice principal. During his coaching career he was known throughout the state for his championship teams.

He produced nine straight basketball championships during his nine years as Berkeley High's varsity basketball coach. He led his team to win one NCS (North Coast Section) 3A championship and two runner-up finishes in the Tournament of Champions.

He posted a 220-64 career record and an amazing 109-10 record in league competition.

The Yellow Jackets averaged 24 wins a season under Daniels. He coached some of the outstanding athletes in the Bay Area. In 1983, Daniels became the first NCS Honor Basketball Coach.

He played a major role in landing a \$3.4 million grant for Berkeley High that was used to build the Donahue Gym that he helped design.

Daniels also worked for the Oakland Unified School District as a principal at King Estates Junior High and assistant principal at Oakland High School.

He became the El Cerrito High School principal in 1992 and retired in 1998.

Daniels is survived by his wife of 58 years, Barbara Daniels; sons, Troy and Brent Daniels, and grandchildren, Trey, Gen and Kimiko Daniels.

A quiet hour was held at Fouché's Hudson Funeral Home, 3665 Telegraph Ave. Oakland, CA on Feb. 19, 2020, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

The funeral service was held on Thursday, Feb. 20, 2020, at 11:00 a.m. also at Fouché's Hudson Funeral Home.. The interment followed the funeral service at Rolling Hills Memorial Park, 4100 Hilltop Dr. El Sobrante, CA.

