



Carlsbad Unified School District

... a world class district

We're Working to Preserve Educational Excellence in a Tough Economy

March 2011:

Dear Carlsbad Unified School District Parents, Friends and Community Members:

During this 2010-11 school year, we have enjoyed many triumphs and overcome a near-tragedy. I am deeply grateful to our close-knit school families and the wider Carlsbad community for supporting our efforts as together we strive to continue improving the achievement of each of our nearly 11,000 students.

The State's continuing budget crisis has presented challenges to all public school districts in California. Currently, the State has a \$26.6 billion deficit, resulting in probable education cuts and placing schools in a precarious position. According to the California Teachers Association, as of March 2011, districts have issued some 19,000 layoff notices.

Thank to our status as a Basic Aid district and our Board of Trustees' prudent fiscal approach, we have thus far been able to minimize adverse impacts and avoid draconian measures. We were able to balance our 2010-11 budget by using \$10 million from reserves. Over the course of this school year to date, we utilized funds from various sources, restructured departments and increased efficiencies to bring the projected 2011-12 shortfall from the originally estimated \$12 million to about \$1.2 million. That shortfall was one we could handle with little pain. Unfortunately it has grown.

Due to the State's recalculation of the "fair share" percentage it will "seize" from Basic Aid districts, it now appears that the State will take \$6.0 million, leaving us with a projected 2011-12 deficit of \$3.7 million (above the initially projected shortfall of \$1.2 million). Since we had funds set aside only to cover a \$3.5 million loss, this sudden \$6.0 million hit is very painful news. The figures are not final; depending upon the outcome of the statewide tax extension measure slated to be decided in California's projected June 2011 election, the shortfall could even increase.

Increasing Grades 1-3 Class Size Preserves Educational Excellence and Permanent Teachers' Jobs

Just as with household finances, only two ways exist to remedy our District's shortfall: increase revenues or decrease expenditures. [Increasing class size in grades 1-3 next year to as many as 32 students will enable us to decrease expenditures by \\$2.0 million while avoiding permanent teacher layoffs, reducing student school days or negotiating salary reductions.](#) Some teachers working under temporary contracts will not be invited to return.

In normal times, this class size modification would not be optimum. In the current situation, I strongly believe it is the most viable solution for CUSD at this time. [For that reason, I will have my staff work with the elementary principals to increase class size from the current average of 20-24 to as many as 32 students per class in grades 1-3.](#) We also will work assiduously to research and utilize an array of other means to save the remaining \$1.7 million, to ensure that our outstanding quality of education will not diminish.

Currently, class sizes vary within our District. Many kindergartens, which share teachers, have as many as 30 students or more per class. The majority of 4th and 5th grades average more than 30 students per class; 6th-8th grade classes, around 30; and a handful of 9th-12th classes (depending upon the subject) might go as high as 40.

I am very proud of what we have been able to accomplish together: administrators, staff, students, parents and the community. Carlsbad is a special place for families to live, work, play ... and learn! I am confident that, thanks to our immediate and extended District family, our children's educational and career futures will be bright.

More information will be forthcoming on our website at www.carlsbadusd.k12.ca.us. I also invite you to follow me at www.twitter.com/suptroach or email me at jroach@carlsbadusd.net. Thank you.

Sincerely,

John A. Roach, Ed.D.

District Superintendent