Resolution No. 20-35

San Mateo County Board of Education
and
San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools
State of California

Support for State Education Funding in Light of Impacts Associated with COVID-19 Pandemic

Whereas, school districts and county offices of education rapidly adapted, under constantly changing and challenging circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, to continue delivering high-quality education to all students while safeguarding public health; and

Whereas, the challenges caused by an abrupt shift to distance learning has forced local educational agencies (LEAs), already faced with budget deficits, to purchase additional supplies, adopt new supports and redirect resources to shifting student needs in order to ensure continued learning; and

Whereas, LEAs have increased critical services to students and families, including meal distribution, access to technology, and mental and behavioral health services while grappling with an impending economic recession that is projected to cause a severe decline in revenues; and

Whereas, local budgets, hit by extreme upticks in unemployment rates and other impacts caused by COVID-19, are quickly being drained of reserves; and

Whereas, the San Mateo County Office of Education and our county’s 23 public school districts are incurring new costs to effectively respond to COVID-19; and

Whereas, public schools need substantial funding now in order to overhaul operations to accommodate distance learning and provide other support services for students; and

Whereas, many uncertainties remain over how schools will operate upon students’ return to campus in regard to staggered schedules, smaller class sizes, additional deep cleanings and other changes proposed by state officials in order to maintain a healthy environment for pupils, educators and staff; and

Whereas, recent analysis by the Learning Policy Institute found almost 320,000 teaching jobs could be lost nationwide if states cut their education budgets by 15% in response to COVID-19 economic impacts, resulting in increased class sizes; and

Whereas, a California School Boards Association (CSBA) survey of LEAs in March found that even before COVID-19, 77% of districts showed fiscal stress and are in deficit spending; and

Whereas, the CSBA survey also found that more than one-third of districts were already considering layoffs based on the January budget proposal; and

Whereas, conservative cost estimates from San Diego Unified and Los Angeles Unified suggest that districts have assumed added costs of approximately $400 per student equating to statewide costs as high as $2.4 billion above the Proposition 98 Guarantee; and

Whereas, a memo released by the California Department of Finance on May 7 projected an $18.3-billion reduction to the Proposition 98 Guarantee that will be devastating for our state’s schools and to our efforts to reopen; and
Whereas, the $31 billion in dedicated emergency funding for K-12 and higher education provided by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act falls far short of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act during the Great Recession-era stimulus, which provided $100 billion for education with investments in both state fiscal stabilization funds as well as public school categorical programs including Title I and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and

Whereas, an April analysis by the Collaborative for Student Growth predicted a loss of 30% of the typical yearly gains in reading and nearly a full year of lost gains in math for students in grades 3-8 due to the academic interruptions caused by COVID-19; and

Whereas, the San Mateo County Office of Education and our county’s 23 public school districts need additional funding to ensure that all students are able to make up for lost learning time and receive a world class education in a safe, clean environment; and

Whereas, schools deserve financial support from the state that reflects the realistic challenges caused by COVID-19 now and when classrooms reopen;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the San Mateo County Board of Education calls on the Governor of California and State Legislature, inclusive of our state Senators and Assembly members, to prioritize stable public school funding in the 2020–2021 state budget; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Legislature pass a 2020–2021 state budget, and that Governor Gavin Newsom sign said budget, that includes:

- The $1.2 billion allocation included in the January budget proposal in on-going Proposition 98 funds for a statutory 2.29% cost-of-living increase; and
- A repurposing of the $1.5 billion in one-time proposals from the January budget to discretionary funding that schools can use to cover costs associated with COVID-19; and
- A utilization of dollars within the State Reserve Fund — currently totaling more than $17 billion — to support schools; and

Be It Further Resolved that a bond of at least $2 billion be placed on the November ballot to address broadband access needs in schools, particularly in rural areas; purchase computer hardware; and support school health and safety activities related to COVID-19.

SAN MATEO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

SAN MATEO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Passed and Adopted on this
Twentieth Day of May 2020

President