

Thursday, November 16, 2017

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Professional Learning Center, FUHSD  
589 West Fremont Ave, Sunnyvale, CA



## Adequate School Funding

## Raising Teacher Status

## Early Childhood Education

### CHALLENGES:

1. California's student achievement is well below the national average. States with high achievement invest significantly more in education than we do.
2. The Local Control Funding Formula has dramatically improved *equity* in funding, but we have done little to address *adequacy*. Props 30 and 55 have kept funding from dropping even further, but California still ranks 46th out of 50 in per-pupil spending.
3. Our school funding depends heavily on highly volatile capital gains taxes, exacerbating the difficulty of attracting and retaining great teachers, and of building and maintaining strong educational programs.
4. Shaped by media headlines, public opinion is that schools are sufficiently funded and doing well. The public does not understand the need for or the value of investing in public education.

### SOLUTIONS:

1. Invest in education. Better-performing schools save the state money, e.g., through lower remediation rates, lower special education costs, and lower incarceration rates; *and* they improve children's lives.
2. Commit to a long-term plan to increase education funding to the levels seen in the top 10 states in academic performance. This means increasing revenue, not taking a larger share of the general fund.
3. Begin planning now, with informational hearings in the Senate and the Assembly, and a plan of action approved by the legislature.
4. Educate the voters about the benefits to the state *and to California's children* of bringing our state into the top 10.

### CHALLENGES:

1. Teaching in the U.S. is no longer a high-status occupation.
2. Teaching is sometimes characterized as an easy job, with short hours & summers off.
3. Teachers are not always provided with proper training, ongoing support, or adequate funding for their classrooms.

### SOLUTIONS:

1. Raise salaries, offer benefits, and provide ongoing training.
2. Encourage and promote the teaching profession in colleges. Offer incentives and ongoing training to attract college students into the profession. Collaborate with educators when creating policy that affects our schools and therefore our children.
3. Provide funding for ongoing training; collaborate with teacher unions to create a system that supports teachers who go above and beyond their job. Provide adequate funding for schools, so that teachers can use the time in the classroom for teaching instead of having to find ways to provide their students with basic school supplies.

### CHALLENGES:

1. California does not currently have universal high-quality early childhood education.
2. California ranks near the bottom in meeting preschool standards. In 2016, state preschools met only 6 out of 10 quality benchmarks; transitional kindergarten met only 2 out of 10.
3. Only a small minority of California's low-income children are in the kind of high-quality preschools that can improve outcomes.
4. By age 3, children from high socioeconomic households have been exposed to 30 million more words, and have vocabularies 2 to 3 times larger, than those from socio-economically disadvantaged households. By the time children from lower-income families reach school, they are already behind their peers.

### SOLUTIONS:

1. Research indicates that investing in high-quality early learning programs for low-income children generates a 7% return for the child, the child's family, and society as a whole for the rest of that child's life.
2. AB 47, the Preschool for All Act, would have ensured that by June 30, 2018, all of California's economically disadvantaged 4-year-olds would have access to the state preschool program. It was vetoed, but the votes in the legislature were so strong that it might be worth trying again.
3. The Santa Clara County Office of Education--and many other agencies, nonprofits, and individuals in our region--are working on, and advocating for, improvements in how we support our youngest children. Are there ways for these groups to work more closely with the Legislature to expand and improve these supports? And can Santa Clara County serve as a model for statewide improvement?