

# EDUCATION

## Measure A Finding school funding in the real world

**I**n a perfect world, public education is funded by the government at both the state and federal levels. In an ideal world, programs and opportunities are available to all students at no additional costs. In our reality, programs in education are in constant threat of removal as a result of inadequate funding.

Back in the early 1970s, my parents moved from Queens, N.Y. to Long Island with the hopes that their children would get the best educational opportunities. Funding for public education was never a known issue as a result of New York's allotment of funds. Education came first. Schools provided courses at all levels for all students. Resources were abundant and facilities were more than adequate.

The funny thing is that in the mid-1980s, students enrolled in New York's public schools, which had a reputation of being within the top 20 in the country, according to the annual *Newsweek* poll, took California's standardized tests. California's standards were admired and expected of students in New York. However, here we are about 25 years later, living a California education system that is increasingly in turmoil.

Unfortunately, the ideal and perfect world is far from our current reach. California's fiscal crisis detrimentally hurts its students. Education is consistently being stripped of its funds, and the question of how and who will replenish these

funds is up for consideration. A solution of raising an existing tax on homeowners is the current offering to this unnerving

**By Vicki  
Isacowitz**



### ON THE CHALKBOARD

situation.

Without the necessary funding in public education, students potentially lose the opportunity to take classes that enrich their educational experience. These come in the form of electives, foreign language, music, art, computers, photography and other non-core classes. In addition, courses required for college admission might be eliminated, which will make preparing for higher education more difficult.

At this point in time, the state of California funds class size reduction in early primary grades. The lack of imperative funds in public education results in rising numbers in class size, when the nation's average remains at 16 students per classroom.

Materials and resources become limited and rationed. Opportunities grow scarce, leaving students with the responsibility of finding them

for themselves. Counselors, nurses, and other important faculty members will no longer be available to assist students with their needs.

Without funding in public education, teachers lose their jobs. Fewer classes are offered with larger numbers of students in attendance, which equates to less attention from the teacher for each student. Students get the short end of the stick due to the lack of replenishing these significant funds.

Students are forced to suffer from a situation where they have no control or ability to remedy it. The responsibility falls onto adults to take control and exercise their ability to voice their opinion that will ultimately contribute to the greater good for all students.

When adults chose to make decisions that take away from a student's opportunity within public educational settings, they need to ask themselves what is the return investment for thinking differently.

History has a tendency to repeat itself. Twenty-five years ago, California's educational system was pioneering some of the best school districts in the country. Today, it's ranked in the bottom third of quality education. Fingers can be pointed and words of blame can be focused on those who created this issue. The fact of the matter is that we all want to live in an ideal and perfect world. It costs money for our students to gain the opportunities that will allow our educational dreams to become a reality.