A Call to Action for Hard Times

Scott P. Plotkin, Executive Director
San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina
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I. “Ain’t Got the Do Re Mi”
“California is a garden of Eden
A paradise to live in or see
But believe it or not, you won’t find it so hot
If you ain’t got the do re mi.”

- “Do Re Mi,” Woody Guthrie
LAO Fiscal Outlook Forecasts Dire Times

- General Fund budget problem of $20.7 billion
- School Districts will be affected by the loss of billions of dollars of temporary federal stimulus funding over the next two years
- “No way that the Legislature, the Governor, and voters can avoid making additional, very difficult choices about state priorities”
The LAO forecasts a lingering budget shortfall around $20 billion lasting through the 2014-15 fiscal year.

Additional budget risks and cost pressures include revenue volatility and the loss in federal stimulus funds in 2010-11 and beyond.

Other unknowns include the outcomes of state court cases and the federal health care debate.
“I Read the News Today, Oh Boy”

- “El Rancho Unified Employees Agree to Three-Day Furlough”
- “Paramount School Board Approves Cuts”
- “Trustees Urged to Resist Cuts”
- “Where to Cut School Budget?”
- “Tales of Fiscal Woes Continues at Chico Unified”
- “Educators Show Support for Budget Reform, Discuss Cuts”
- “Alisal Board Members Lose Benefits”
- “State’s School Funding Process is Failing”
II. I see the laws made in Washington, D.C.
“I see the states, across this big nation
I see the laws made in Washington, D.C.
I think of the ones I consider my favorites
I think of the people that are working for me.”

- “Don’t Worry About the Government,”
  Talking Heads
Myriad Federal Issues in Play

• Race to the Top grants
  • Final Regulations published on November 18
  • Governor making concerted push to ensure California eligible
  • Senate bill problematic – premature and beyond scope of RTTT

• ARRA Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund
  • $650 million in grants for applicants with a record of improving student achievement
  • LEAs and nonprofit organizations in partnership with LEAs or consortia of schools are eligible
Other Areas of Federal Focus

- ESEA Reauthorization
- IDEA
- School Improvement Grants
- Census
The Challenges for CSBA

• Leading the conversation and being influential at the federal level

• Being explicit in the Policy Platform on areas of federal education policy

• Embracing the principles of key federal initiatives while ensuring more harm than good is not done
III. People Have the Power
“I awakened to the cry
That the people have the power
To redeem the work of fools”

- “People Have the Power,”
Patti Smith
PPIC Survey: Widespread Discontent

• **Job Approval ratings among likely voters:**
  - Governor Schwarzenegger: 27% approve, 64% disapprove
  - State Legislature: 10% approve, 80% disapprove

• **General Direction of Things in California:**
  - Right Direction: 12%
  - Wrong Direction: 83%
2010: Last, Best Chance for Statewide Reform?

- The Local Voter Control and Government Accountability Act
- The Local Taxpayer, Public Safety and Transportation Protection Act of 2010
- Citizens’ Constitutional Convention Act
- The Call for a Citizens’ Limited Constitutional Convention
Local Voter Control & Government Accountability Act

• Would allow cities and counties to approval local facilities bonds with a 55 percent, rather than 2/3, vote

• Would allow cities, counties and school districts to approval local parcel tax measures with a 55 percent vote

• Both taxes would be subject to citizen oversight committees and independent audit provisions
Local Taxpayer, Public Safety and Transportation Protection Act of 2010

- Sponsored by the League of CA Cities
- Would make numerous changes to the constitution related to local taxes and revenues
- Initiative is in response to past actions of Legislature
- Will need further analysis to fully determine impact on school districts
Citizens’ Constitutional Convention Act

- Would make a permanent change to the constitution allowing voters to call for a convention every ten years

- Would permit the initiative calling for a convention to limit the scope of issues to be addressed

- Would specify a method for selection of delegates
  - Assembly district delegates (three per district; 240 total)
  - County delegates (one for each 175,000 residents in each county; 221 total)
  - Indian tribe delegates (4 total)
Scope of Constitutional Convention

• Limited to Governance, defined broadly as:
  – Government effectiveness, elections process, spending/budgeting, structure of state government, and state/local government relations

• Convention would be prohibited from considering:
  – Taxes, frequency of real property assessment, definition of “change of ownership” as it relates to taxes, marriage-abortion rights, gambling, affirmative action, freedom of the press and religion, immigration rights, and the death penalty
CSBA’s Role in Reform

- Participation on CCS Joint Task Force on State Fiscal Reform
- Hugely successful Local Government Summit in July 2009
- “Going viral” with YouTube videos
- Next May: consideration of positions for November ballot
Forcing the Issue: School Funding Lawsuit

• The State has violated its constitutional duty to provide a functioning system of common schools because of the disconnect between the programmatic and funding components of the system

• School funding amounts and mechanisms are insufficient to deliver to all students the comprehensive education that the State has defined and deemed necessary

• The State has violated its duty to ensure basically equal educational opportunities
Moving Closer to Filing Day

• Working with prominent school finance/policy experts, school law firms

• Partnering with ACSA, and a group of diverse districts on the suit

• Key component of the campaign will be a communications/outreach plan
“State of our Schools” Campaign

• Write a letter about the state of the schools in your district and/or local area

• Turn in your letter and receive the S.O.S. sticker

• Letters will be delivered to the Governor on the day of the State of the State address, and used with members of the Legislature