



2017 – 2018 California Budget Proposal

“SACRAMENTO — As California steels itself for the fiscal implications of a Trump presidency and the possibility of another economic downturn, Gov. Jerry Brown on Tuesday presented a cautious budget proposal for 2017-18 that gives modest increases to schools and universities but reins in spending growth elsewhere. . . . In proposing the \$122.5 billion general fund budget, down slightly from last year, Brown urged fiscal restraint in a period of uncertainty and lower-than-expected revenue. . . . Brown underscored his point on one of the cautionary charts that have come to characterize his budget presentations. Without curtailing spending, he said, the state risks running \$1.6 billion in the red — the first deficit since 2012. The proposal adds money to university budgets, continues to support Medi-Cal expansion and calls for new taxes for transportation and infrastructure improvements. But those looking for more spending for affordable housing, child care and other social services came away disappointed.

“Instead, Brown proposes balancing the budget and shoring up the state’s Rainy Day Fund with a lower-than-expected increase to K-12 schools [emphasis added], keeping child-care subsidy rates flat and phasing out the popular new ‘middle class’ college scholarships. The roughly 37,000 undergraduates now getting scholarships to UC and CSU on a sliding scale based on family income would continue to receive their awards, but then the program would be discontinued. ‘It’s still not where we need to go for the future of education in California,’ said Susan Henry, president of the California School Board Association. ‘We still have funding that puts us (toward the bottom) in the nation when it comes to teachers, nurses, counselors and computers per student.’ But to many, the fiscal caution was no surprise. Bold new spending initiatives were unlikely given the uncertain fate of the Affordable Care Act and the \$20 billion in federal funding it brings to California each year, said Assemblyman Phil Ting, D-San Francisco, who heads the Assembly budget committee. According to the state Department of Finance, California receives \$105 billion annually in federal revenues each year — the bulk of it for health and human services. That’s on top of the roughly \$180 billion raised by the state. Major changes to Obamacare would likely be ‘painful’ for California, Brown said, but it’s impossible to craft budget plans around the unknown. So his proposal is based on the continuation of the current health care law. . . .

“At the Western Center on Law & Poverty, policy advocate Mike Herald characterized the proposed budget as a status-quo spending plan, ‘which means we are losing ground.’ California’s public schools and community colleges — which receive the largest share of the budget — would receive raises under the governor’s proposal, growing to \$73.5 billion from \$71.9 billion in the current fiscal year. But the state’s Legislative Analyst’s Office in November projected that K-12 schools and community colleges would get an even greater increase, based on a school-funding guarantee California voters approved in 1988. . . . Senate Republican leader Jean Fuller, R-Bakersfield, said Republicans approve of the governor’s solution to the projected deficit — ‘to cut expenses rather than to increase taxes.’ ‘Even a mild recession,’ Fuller said, ‘would put us into a difficult position.’ ”

The above is excerpted from the Mercury News and can be found at [HYPERLINK "http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/01/10/gov-jerry-brown-to-unveil-state-budget-proposal-tuesday/"](http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/01/10/gov-jerry-brown-to-unveil-state-budget-proposal-tuesday/)

February 1st Deadline to Submit Paperwork to Receive Retiree Dental and Vision Coverage.

All members considering retirement are strongly encouraged to submit their paperwork on or before February 1st. As an incentive to submit by the deadline the District will pay for five (5) years of dental and vision coverage. Retirees submitting paperwork after the deadline are not eligible for the benefit. No exceptions are made. We are currently in a teacher shortage and it is in everyone’s best interest if the District can go out early and aggressively recruit new employees.

Part-Time Schedules under New Block Schedule

AEA has been working with District Administration on finalizing part-time work options under the new block schedule. Options being discussed include morning and afternoon schedules for teachers working 80% time spread over a five day work week; teachers working 60% time spread over a five day work week; and 60% teachers working three full days with two days completely off during a five day work week. Teachers working less than 60% will be handled on a case by case basis with input from the member, the site admin, and AEA. The goal is to have part time options finalized by the end of February before master scheduling starts. Keep in mind final discretion regarding scheduling still rests with the site admin. If you have any questions, please contact a site rep or any AEA officer.

Proficiency vs. Growth

During the confirmation hearings of Betsy DeVos, nominee for Secretary of Education, the subject of whether proficiency or growth should be the metric by which schools are judged was front and center. Below is an excerpted article from Vox.com entitled "**Betsy DeVos was asked a basic question about education policy — and couldn't answer.**" The entire article can be found at

<http://www.vox.com/2017/1/17/14304692/devos-confirmation-hearing-education>.

"Senate Democrats hit Betsy DeVos, Donald Trump's pick for education secretary, on all sides at her confirmation hearing Tuesday night. But the question that made her look worst required her to demonstrate a basic understanding of education policy — a test DeVos failed. Sen. Al Franken asked DeVos to explain her thinking on whether test scores should be used to measure students' proficiency or their growth. That's an important, and basic, difference because it affects how schools are labeled as succeeding or failing.

But DeVos had no idea what Franken was talking about. 'I think if I am understanding your question correctly around proficiency, I would correlate it to competency and mastery, so each student according to the advancements they are making in each subject area,' she said to Franken. 'That's growth,' Franken retorted, correctly. 'That's not proficiency.' By the time DeVos understood Franken's question, she had no time left to answer. . . .

"Why the proficiency-versus-growth debate matters

Franken's question wasn't as aggressive as other Democrats' lines of inquiry about the [HYPERLINK](#)

"<http://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/1/17/14304606/bernie-sanders-betsy-devos>" DeVos family political donations or Trump's conflicts of interest. But it was relevant, because DeVos's opinions on proficiency and growth are about to matter for every public school in the United States.

The [HYPERLINK](#)

"<http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/Exploration-of-Two-Approaches-Student-Learning-Targets-April-2015.pdf>" proficiency-versus-growth debate is about how schools should be held accountable for their students' test scores. 'Proficiency' means judging whether kids hit a benchmark, such as whether they can read at grade level. 'Growth' means judging how much progress they've made — if they started the school year behind, are they catching up even if they're not at grade level yet? If they were already proficient, did they make progress and learn more, or just tread water? A school that looks fine if you're only measuring proficiency might not look as good if you measure growth. And a school that isn't hitting proficiency benchmarks could still be helping students make fast progress that shows up in a growth measurement.

" [HYPERLINK](#) "<http://www.vox.com/2015/1/23/7877893/no-child-left-behind-esea-reauthorization>" No Child Left Behind, the federal education law in effect from 2002 to 2016, required schools to measure proficiency (but not growth) and penalized them if their students weren't up to par. The [HYPERLINK](#)

"<http://www.vox.com/2015/12/11/9889350/every-student-succeeds-act-schools>" Every Student Succeeds Act, the law Congress passed in late 2015 to replace No Child Left Behind, gives states more freedom decide how to hold schools accountable. The idea that growth and proficiency are both important, but that growth was key to capturing what proficiency misses, came up frequently in the recent debate over rewriting the law.

"Here's where DeVos comes in: The next education secretary will have to decide [HYPERLINK](#)

"http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2016/11/ed_dept_releases_final_account.html" whether to rewrite the Obama administration's rules for what those state requirements for schools should look like, and will also have to sign off on states' plans to hold schools accountable. Right now, those plans have to include a measurement of proficiency and can also include a measurement of growth. Franken's question suggested a strong preference for

***The Next Rep Council Meeting is Wednesday, February
22th
at Las Lomas. All members welcome to attend.***