

K-12 Education

Promoting Achievement

Incentives for Students, Teachers, and Schools in the Era of Higher Expectations

K-12 Education

Governor Gray Davis has proclaimed education as his "first, second, and third priority." His first official act as Governor was to call on the Legislature to consider sweeping reform measures designed to launch what he termed an Era of Higher Expectations in our schools. The Legislature responded by approving—in record time and with bipartisan support—historic legislation holding every one of the 8,000 public schools in California accountable for improved student performance; providing the first statewide program of peer evaluation and assistance for teachers in the nation; requiring the first-ever exit exam for high school seniors; and providing high-quality teacher training in how to teach reading, and reading programs for struggling students.

In his first budget, the Governor further demonstrated his commitment to public education by proposing to increase total spending on schools by \$2.7 billion while, for the first time, linking the increased funding to measurable improvement in student performance. This year, the Governor's Budget again reflects his determination to further education reform by providing an additional \$2.9 billion in total resources for K-12 above the 1999 Budget Act. The Budget builds on the far-reaching reforms adopted in 1999 by focusing on three areas:

- Further improving student performance and rewarding individual student achievement.
- Recruiting qualified new teachers and providing intensive training for existing teachers.
- Providing schools with additional tools, including advanced technology and academic partnerships, to help them meet higher expectations.

Improving Student Performance and Recognizing Achievement

The Public Schools Accountability Act enacted by Senate Bill 1X (Chapter 3, Statutes of 1999), started California schools on the path toward accountability for improved student achievement. Among other things, the program implemented pursuant to that bill is designed to improve low-performing schools—schools with test scores in the bottom 50 percent of California's schools. Last year's Budget also provided financial incentives for teachers and schools to improve performance, and increased consequences for failure to improve. For students, the consequences for poor academic achievement have been growing as school districts move toward elimination of social promotion and as the State Board of Education develops a high school exit exam requirement for graduation. Incentives to stay focused on academic achievement, particularly in high school, are important motivators for success. In keeping with the Administration's philosophy that high achievement should be rewarded, this year's Budget proposes to offer California high school students merit-based college scholarship opportunities as a reward for demonstrating high academic achievement.

Governor's Merit Scholarships—If we expect high school students to excel in school and strive to meet college admission requirements, then we should recognize and reward students who meet the highest standards. The Budget provides \$112.0 million for new Governor's Merit Scholarships that will reward student achievement on the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) examination with \$1,000 invested in a Golden State ScholarShare Trust Account. Each pupil in the 9th, 10th, or 11th grades scoring in the top 10 percent of their class statewide, or in the top 5 percent of their school, will receive the award. A student who consistently scores at these levels in all three grades will receive a total of

\$3,000 toward a college education.

Governor's Distinguished Math and Science Scholars Program—Encouraging high school students to pursue rigorous course work is the pathway to high-paying careers in science and technology-related growth industries. Toward that end, the Budget provides \$6.0 million for \$2,500 scholarships to high school students who receive a Governor's Merit Scholarship **and** who achieve the highest scores on Advanced Placement (AP) tests in calculus and science.

Intensive Algebra Instruction Academies—Modeled after this year's successful implementation of Intensive Reading Academies for students in grades K-4, the Budget provides \$21.2 million to establish the Intensive Algebra Instruction Academies Program for pupils in grades 7 and 8. These pupils are the first who will be required to pass the High School Exit Exam in order to graduate; instruction in higher mathematics will help ensure that they are prepared for that exam. Instruction in pre-algebra and algebra will be offered during summer, intersession, before and after school, and on Saturdays. These Academies will serve an estimated 50,000 students. The Academies designed by the University of California (UC) and offered at local schools, will link one-week teacher training institutes with the summer instructional program provided to students.

California State Summer School for Mathematics and Science—This new residential program, a partnership of UC, the California State University (CSU), private universities, and industry, engages the most creative minds of our next generation of scientists, engineers, and mathematicians. Students are selected for this program based on demonstrating outstanding academic achievement and receiving student recognition in the fields of math and science. The first class of 300 students (grades 9 through 12) will participate in the summer of 2000 at UC Irvine and UC Santa Cruz campuses. The Budget adds \$1.0 million to expand this program on two additional campuses and will double the number of students able to participate in the summer of 2001.

Support for Summer School Programs—Eliminating social promotion of students, and requiring that students pass an exit exam as a condition of graduation from high school, place greater importance on the core educational program, but may also increase the need for remedial and supplemental instruction. Currently, the Education Code authorizes an array of overlapping programs that have become difficult and cumbersome for school districts to administer. The Budget proposes to consolidate these programs. The Budget also provides an augmentation of \$61.9 million to increase the funding rate for these programs from \$2.50 per hour to \$3.00 per hour, so that school districts can offer the highest quality supplemental instructional services for students not meeting grade level standards or who are at-risk of not passing the High School Exit Exam.

Recruiting and Training Qualified Teachers

California faces a shortage of fully qualified teachers, and has a projected need to hire nearly 300,000 new teachers over the next decade. The Administration is committed to enhancing the prestige of the teaching profession and implementing measures that will attract and retain talented, fully credentialed teachers for every school in the state. Research shows that teacher quality is one of the most important factors in student performance. Because we are placing high expectations on students and teachers, this Budget gives high priority to focused professional development activities so that teachers will have the skills they need to teach children to meet higher standards.

Teacher Recruitment—Successful efforts to recruit and retain well-trained, experienced, and fully credentialed teachers are critical to improving student achievement. The Budget includes several key initiatives to accomplish this goal, as follows:

- **Governor's Teaching Fellowships**—To attract the best and brightest individuals to classroom careers in the schools with the greatest need of qualified teachers, the Budget establishes a \$20.0 million program of Teaching Fellowships for 1,000 candidates. Teacher candidates who are selected will receive an award of \$20,000 to help pay living and educational expenses so that they may remain in quality teacher programs through completion. To be eligible for a fellowship, teacher candidates must be engaged in a full-year teacher preparation program at UC, CSU, or an independent college, and make a four-year commitment to teach in a hard-to-staff school. This year's Budget includes \$3.5 million for the first six months of the program; when fully implemented the funding commitment will be \$21.0 million.
- **Teacher Hiring Incentives**—The Budget includes \$52.9 million to provide cash awards of \$2,000, to be awarded to schools for every credentialed teacher hired that reduces the number of emergency permit holders on staff. An additional \$2,000, for use in the classroom, will be awarded to each fully credentialed teacher hired.

- **National Board Certification**—Teachers who are nationally board certified are already eligible for a \$10,000 bonus. If they also agree to teach in a low-performing school for a minimum of four years, they will be eligible for an additional \$20,000 bonus. This certification is the highest a teacher can obtain. To be certified, teachers must undergo a rigorous process to assess their competence in subject matter knowledge, teaching skills, school leadership, and community participation.
- **Teacher Housing Incentives**—To attract qualified teachers, and to encourage them to remain in the classroom, the Budget provides \$50.0 million to provide up to \$10,000 in loans for the down payment on a home to 5,000 fully credentialed teachers. These loans are forgivable if the teacher agrees to serve for five years in a hard-to-staff school.
- **Teacher Recruitment Campaign**—The Budget provides \$9.4 million to establish five teacher recruitment centers in regions with the highest concentrations of emergency permit holders, including Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, and the Central Valley. These centers will develop and implement aggressive recruitment strategies. By centralizing recruitment efforts for these regions, the centers can maximize efforts to recruit every available teacher for our schools, by working with teacher preparation programs, recruiting at career fairs, and pursuing non-traditional teaching candidates. Additional funding of \$9.0 million is provided to support an outreach and media campaign for teacher recruitment targeted to the areas of highest need in the state (\$7.0 million), and to recruit teachers from outside of California (\$2.0 million).
- **Retired Teacher Incentive**—As an incentive for retired teachers to return to the classroom, the Budget calls for legislation to suspend the statutory earnings limitation for retirees of the State Teachers' Retirement System.
- **Teacher Internships**—Internship programs, or Alternative Certification programs, allow individuals pursuing teaching as a second career, such as individuals transitioning from private industry to the classroom, to complete teacher preparation while also serving as classroom teachers. School districts and universities jointly provide training and support to these interns. The Budget provides \$20.8 million to expand teacher internship programs for 5,400 additional teacher interns and to increase the reimbursement amount for participating school districts from \$1,500 to \$2,500 per intern.
- **Loan Forgiveness**—The Assumption Program of Loans for Education provides education loan forgiveness of up to \$11,000 over four years for teachers who teach in critical subject matter shortage areas, schools in low-income areas, and rural schools. The existing program serves 5,500 teachers each year. The Budget increases this program to serve an additional 1,000 teachers, resulting in a future State commitment of \$11.0 million, and streamlines eligibility.

Teacher Professional Development Institutes—Aside from involved parents, the most important factor influencing student achievement is an experienced and qualified teacher. In order to establish a world-class public school system, California must have an effective and well-trained teaching force. Unfortunately, as California has struggled to reduce class size in recent years, the number of teachers with emergency permits has skyrocketed. Too many of California's K-12 teachers today do not hold a major or even a minor in the subject matter they teach. If California is to succeed in pushing students to reach a higher level of academic achievement, teachers must meet the highest standards of qualification and training.

With the Administration's initiatives last year promoting partnerships among UC, CSU, and K-12 schools, California is becoming a national model for teacher training and staff development with its successful Teacher Professional Development Institutes. This year the Administration proposes to substantially augment the Reading Institute, and expands the model into critical new areas, including English, writing, algebra, math, and English Language Learners (ELL) institutes. More than 70,000 additional elementary, middle, and high school teachers will receive intensive training in 2000-01 in these new programs. Participating teachers will earn stipends of \$1,000 per week during their training. The Budget provides \$115.5 million for these initiatives as follows:

- **Reading Professional Development**—This past year, the Governor's Reading Professional Development Institutes trained more than 6,000 of the state's K-3 reading teachers. Participants have reported that the program was a resounding success. Research reveals that students who are reading at grade level by grade 3 are much more likely than those reading below grade level to be successful in their academic careers. The Budget provides \$28.0 million to greatly expand participation in the California Reading Professional Development Institutes in the coming year. This expansion will train a total of 20,000 teachers in 2000-01, including pre-kindergarten teachers. It

will also extend a second year of training to selected teachers, so that they may train other teachers in reading.

- **English Language Professional Development**—California's students cannot succeed academically or economically without mastering English. This Budget provides \$10.0 million to expand training for an additional 5,000 ELL teachers in grades 9 through 12. This will train a total of 10,000 teachers to help ELL students achieve English proficiency in academic content areas in 2000-01.
- **Algebra and Math Institutes**—The Administration proposes \$17.5 million to create Algebra and Mathematics Institutes. Specifically, the Budget includes:
 - \$5.0 million for 2,500 secondary school algebra teachers to be trained at a two-week intensive Algebra Institute to better prepare students for the High School Exit Exam. This program is modeled after the successful Reading Institutes both in terms of intensive focus and stipend support, and provides the opportunity for all high school algebra teachers to receive intensive training.
 - \$12.5 million for 5,000 elementary teachers in grades 4 through 6 to be trained at a two-week Mathematics Institute. These teachers will specialize in teaching mathematics in elementary classrooms, and will become teacher trainers at their schools. With the support of the Institute and follow-up training, these teachers will be prepared to work collaboratively with fellow teachers to improve instructional strategies.
- **Expand Subject Matter Projects**—The Budget proposes \$20 million for an overall expansion of the California Subject Matter Projects, the inter-agency professional development collaboration between UC, CSU, independent colleges, universities, and K-12 schools, that trains teachers to teach both core and enrichment academic subjects. This \$20.0 million will increase the number of sites from 97 to 170, and will train an additional 15,000 teachers through the Subject Matter Projects at state and private universities.
- **High School Math and English Professional Development Institutes**—The Administration proposes \$40.0 million (\$20.0 million for UC, \$20.0 million for teacher stipends) to train 20,000 secondary school teachers in intensive week-long Institutes, across all core subject areas, to better meet the needs of students in the areas of English and mathematics. These Institutes will be designed to improve overall student academic performance, and increase the number of students eligible to meet requirements for entrance to CSU and UC. The High School English Professional Development Institute will train 12,000 teachers, and the High School Math Professional Development Institute will train 8,000 math teachers.

Technology and Academic Partnerships: Meeting the Demand for Higher Expectations

California has set the achievement bar higher for its students and schools. During the initial year of this Administration, significant public school accountability measures were enacted. The State Board of Education adopted an Academic Performance Index (API) to measure student academic progress in schools. The Budget expands on those efforts by providing schools and teachers with the tools necessary to meet these higher standards. These tools include:

The Public School Accountability Act—Last year, 430 schools received funding to improve academic achievement. These schools will receive grants of up to \$200 per student to raise test scores over the next two years. The Budget includes an additional \$19.7 million to begin improving student performance in a second group of 430 low-performing schools, and also contains \$96.2 million, for a second year, to provide awards to high-achieving schools showing improvement in student performance that meet or exceed goals adopted by the State Board of Education.

Advanced Placement Courses for High School Students—The Administration is committed to ensuring that every high school student has access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses, beginning in the 2000 academic year, and fully implemented by the beginning of school in 2001. Currently, the availability of AP courses varies considerably among school districts throughout California. The Budget provides \$20.5 million to increase the availability of, and student access to AP classes, including \$700 million in UC's budget.

The Secretary for Education will work with school districts and institutions of higher education throughout California to help ensure that all students in California who desire to take AP courses have access to them. Solutions may include co-attendance at a nearby high school that offers AP courses, setting up regional courses taught by college faculty or graduate students, or enrollment in on-line courses.

Supporting the Use of Technology in Education—California is a national leader in the use of technology for the

information age, but is dead last in the availability of technology in the classroom. The Administration's initiative for education technology calls for the development of a state master plan for education technology, and a major commitment of \$200 million to increase the number of computers in classrooms and train teachers to use them effectively. The Budget includes the following:

- \$175.0 million in one-time funds for computer acquisition for K-12 schools. First priority for these funds will be those high schools that do not currently offer AP courses so that these courses may be offered on-line. Second priority for these funds will be increasing the number of computers available to students in schools.
- \$25.0 million to train K-12 teachers to effectively use computers and technology in the classroom.
- \$164.0 million for the fourth and final year of the Digital High School program. This program provides funds to support network development, connect classrooms to the Internet, and train teachers in technology-based instruction.

One-Stop Website for Public School Construction—The Budget includes \$3.3 million in 1999-00 and \$2.4 million in 2000-01 for the Department of General Services, the Department of Education, and the Department of Toxic Substances Control to develop jointly a one-stop website for public school construction. The site will provide school districts, parents, and other interested parties with information on the state approval process and the status on public school construction projects.