

Eureka Union School District

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Eureka Union Parents

Happy New Year and best wishes for a successful 2010. Our Annual Giving Campaign has begun and I encourage every parent to contribute this year. My letter to you will share some background information regarding our District's funding crisis and will explain why we need 100% participation.

State Funding Crisis Impacts Eureka Union's Per Student Funding

Eureka Union's funding has been reduced from over \$6,100 per student to just \$4,700. Last year, we reduced our budget by over \$1.3 million and this year by over \$2.4 million. When I first came to the district 18 months ago, the district budget was \$30 million. Today, we are at \$24.5 million and next year, in spite of recent promises by the State to keep educational funding at the same level, we will have lower funding. We are not laying blame at the Governor, legislature or Federal government, as the economy is in dire straits and jobs are hard to find. The fact is that our State funding will be reduced and our district will have to make difficult choices about which programs to keep. If Eureka parents want their children to continue to have an outstanding educational program, they must contribute to our Foundation's Annual Giving Campaign.

Eureka's Educational Successes, In Spite of the State Budget Crisis

Our district has made great efforts to ensure that our funds are well spent. Here are some facts about our successes. Our students have scored higher on State test scores than all other districts in Northern California, except a few districts in Marin and the greater Bay Area. We are maintaining important components of a quality educational program while neighboring districts are eliminating them. For example:

1. We have a longer kindergarten day, while other districts have only a half-day program.
2. Our 1st through 3rd grade class sizes are hovering around 20 while other districts range from 25-30 or higher.
3. Our 4th through 8th grades are averaging 30 students, while others are considering 35 and beyond.
4. Our students have the best access to technology. Our ESF donations, facilities funds and local school site funds were used to bring our students into the 21st century.
5. Our schools and classrooms are more modern than most districts and we are funding staff to keep the schools safe.
6. We provide exemplary professional development for our teachers so that their skills are continuously upgraded.
7. We have the best ratio of support services in comparison to our neighboring districts in areas such as counseling, reading specialists, library support staff, technical support, nurses and health staff and special education teachers.
8. Lastly, we have maintained our enrichment programs such as band/choir, second language programs, sports and fine arts.

What Parents can do to Keep Libraries, Computer Technicians, Music and PE programs

First, we want to thank parents for contributing throughout the year for items such as classroom supplies and PTC fundraisers. The ESF Annual Giving Campaign is different than our school-based fundraisers. This year our district is counting on the ESF Annual Giving Campaign to raise more funds than ever to support the entire cost of the media centers/libraries and the computer technicians. Without strong parental support for Annual Giving, we may have to substantially reduce or eliminate these programs for the 2010-11 school year.

Contributing strongly this year helps us protect programs for school years beyond next year. We will need local funds to maintain smaller class sizes, reading specialists, counselors, technology and our longer-day kindergarten programs.

Once again, we thank each of you in advance for contributing during this challenging time to our Annual Giving Campaign. The quality of your child's education is at stake and we will do everything we can to ensure a great program. Please join us in this effort. If everyone gives something, it will make a big difference for the future of our kids.

Tim McCarty, Ed.D., Superintendent

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