Information Sheet – 5/8/18 - Board of Trustees Meeting

Item 7.5

TO: Board of Trustees
FROM: Celli Coeville
DATE: May 3, 2018
RE: Resolution for Full and Fair Funding of California's Public Schools

As part of its ongoing work to ensure that all students benefit from the resources needed for a high-quality education, the California School Boards Association is calling on the Legislature to raise school funding to the national average by 2020 and to the average of the top 10 states by 2025.

Despite boasting the sixth largest economy in the world and the highest gross domestic product of any state, California ranks at or near the bottom nationally in nearly every measure of school funding and staffing. Under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), revenue for K-12 schools has only recently returned to 2007 levels, meaning funding has not substantially increased, on an inflation-adjusted basis, for more than a decade.

In order to meet the growing needs of California's 6.2 million public school students and address the financial challenges faced by rising costs, CSBA has developed a Full and Fair Funding Resolution for adoption by its nearly 1,000 member school districts and county offices of education. The resolution highlights the threat that underinvestment in schools poses to our communities and calls on the State to meet its responsibilities to today's students and to California's future

Recommendation: Approve the Resolution for Full and Fair Funding of California Schools

Resolution Calling for Full and Fair Funding of California's Public Schools

WHEREAS, California has the sixth largest economy in the world, and the largest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of any state in the nation; and

WHEREAS, despite California's leadership in the global economy, the state falls in the nation's bottom quintile on nearly every measure of public K-12 school funding and school staffing; and

WHEREAS, California ranks 45th nationally in the percentage of taxable income spent on education, 41st in per-pupil funding, 45th in pupil–teacher ratios and 48th in pupil–staff ratios; and

WHEREAS, K-12 school funding has not substantially increased, on an inflation-adjusted basis, for more than a decade; and

WHEREAS, under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), state funding for K-12 schools has only this year recently returned to levels predating the Great Recession of 2007; and

WHEREAS, the modest revenue increases since the implementation of LCFF have been eroded by rapidly increasing costs for health care, pensions, transportation and utilities; and

WHEREAS, 58 percent of California's public school students are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch — 13 percent above the national average — and 23 percent of California students are English learners, more than twice the national average; and

WHEREAS, California's investment in public schools is out of alignment with its wealth, its ambitions, its demographics and the demands of a 21st-century education; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, a bipartisan group of California leaders commissioned a report titled *Getting Down to Facts*, which stated it would take an additional $17 billion annually to meet the State Board of Education achievement targets for K-12 schools; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, a California School Boards Association (CSBA) report, *California's Challenge: Adequately Funding Education in the 21st Century*, updated the *Getting Down to Facts* data and determined that, adjusting for inflation, an additional $22 billion to $40 billion annually would be required to provide all public school students with access to a high-quality education; and

WHEREAS, California funds schools at roughly $1,961 per student less than the national average, which translates to approximately $3,462 per student when adjusted for California being a high-cost state; and

WHEREAS, California trails the average of the top 10 states by almost $7,000 in per-pupil funding; and

WHEREAS, in *Robles-Wong v. State of California*, a group of plaintiffs led by CSBA argued that California's school funding system violated Article IX of the State Constitution by denying all students access to an education that prepares them for economic security and full participation in our democratic institutions; and

WHEREAS, the California Supreme Court declined to hear the case by a 4-3 margin, prompting Justice Goodwin H. Liu to write: "It is regrettable that this court, having recognized education as a fundamental right in a landmark decision 45 years ago [*Serrano v. Priest* (1971) 5 Cal.3d 584], should now decline to address the substantive meaning of that right."; and

WHEREAS, in order to prepare our students for participation in a democratic society and an increasingly competitive, technology-driven global economy, California must fund schools at a level sufficient to support student success; and

WHEREAS, despite its vast wealth, California has consistently underfunded public education while widening its scope, adding new requirements and raising standards without providing appropriate resources to prepare all students for college, career and civic life; and

WHEREAS, if California is to close opportunity and achievement gaps and create a public school system that offers consistently high levels of education, the State must provide schools with the resources to meet the needs of their specific populations;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the governing board of the Jefferson Elementary School District urges the State Legislature to fund California public schools at the national average or higher by the year 2020, and at a level that is equal to or above the average of the top 10 states nationally by 2025 and to maintain, at a minimum, this level of funding until otherwise decreed.

Adopted this 8th day of the month of May in 2018.

Motion made by: _____

Second made by: _____

List members voting "aye:" _____

_____

List members voting "no:" _____

List members abstaining: _____

List members not present: _____