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STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

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Message to Employees of the District From Superintendent Brewer

For those of us whose life mission is to educate children – whether as teachers, administrators, classified staff or board members – we share the common belief that we have a responsibility to work together to create a better future for students and families we serve. It is because of this immense sense of duty that the proposed \$3 billion in cuts to education funding statewide by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger are both unacceptable and terribly frustrating.

Please be assured that we will not shoulder these proposed cuts without a fight. We are working closely with our union partners, elected officials, with parents and with community leaders to push back on the Governor and legislators as well as propose solutions that protect our investment in children and their education.

Despite all the challenges we have faced together, especially during the past few months, we haven't forgotten why we're here: To help our students succeed – to prepare them for college or a career that will enable them to become productive and active citizens in a global economy.

That is why it is critically important not to place students into the middle of our budget fight with Sacramento. We are fighting on *behalf* of them and I would urge all of us to focus on strategies that send a clear message about our commitment to our students. Our fight is against these budget cuts. Our opponent is a school funding system that is antiquated and obsolete. It is our duty to convince the Governor and the legislature that providing a *quality* education for our children is a vital responsibility that cannot be sacrificed every time there's a budget shortfall.

Our priorities during this budget crisis are clear; we must protect the gains you have made in improving student achievement, we have to protect student health and safety, we must fight for our employees' jobs, and we have to ensure that whatever cuts we make do not create irreversible damage.

We must stand shoulder to shoulder in this fight in order to win. We must overcome our short-term differences in order to realize long-term gains. Let's continue to work together to send a strong unified message to Sacramento. And that message must be clear: We will fight at all costs on behalf of our students and our schools against these cuts!

The Governor announced his revised budget this week and the news is still bad from Sacramento. There's talk of new taxes or tax increases, heavy borrowing and more cuts. Together we must tell our elected officials, "Do what you must to balance our budget – but not at the expense of our children."

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