



Cave Creek Support Our Students

www.ccsupportourstudents.com

2009 Letter Writing Campaign – March 23-27

Dear Parents and Friends of the Cave Creek Unified School District,

Cave Creek Unified School District has been assigned the week of March 23-27 to write letters to the Governor and the Legislature in support of our schools. Even if you have already written letter/s, please take the time to do so between March 23-27. Thank you for supporting our students in this effort.

*Sincerely,
Sara Haugen - Desert Sun Representative
Cave Creek Support Our Students
shaugen@desertinet.com*

Guidelines for Contacting Your Legislator, Governor and AZ House of Representatives – Education Committee

- 1** Communicate via an original letter or email. Legislator contact information and a district map is available at www.ccsupportourstudents.com
Address Representatives as “Dear Representative (last name)”,
- 2** Address Senators as “Dear Senator (last name)”,
- 3** Open correspondence with “As a taxpayer and voter”...
- 4** Describe or share your concerns in a professional and non-combative way. Examples of talking points might be:
 - For smaller districts such as Cave Creek Unified School District, the District’s share of state cuts of \$6-\$7 million would result in a 17-18% cut to the overall budget. With much of the federal stimulus funds earmarked for districts with 40% plus free and reduced lunch students (and Cave Creek has 6%) that leaves a huge hole for funding. In this scenario, costs to these excelling grade schools include only 15 minutes of art and music every four days, no physical education for these young and growing students, greatly reduced library and computer lab access and a cut in classroom aides leaving teachers with greatly reduced prep time and student interaction.
 - With 83% of the daily operations budget (M&O) for salaries and benefits (and another 14% for plant operations and maintenance... items such as utilities which are relatively fixed), an overall 18% reduction to the budget goes straight to personnel and cuts in the classroom and specials.
 - My child has benefited greatly from participation in an excelling Cave Creek School. Examples of the positive outcomes have included (list examples).
 - A dramatic cut in funding as proposed by the State will affect his/her learning outcome in many ways including (list examples).
 - We moved to this district in large part due to the Cave Creek School District and its exemplary track record... all excelling schools which is rare! Cuts as proposed will greatly diminish these continued outcomes and set back years of hard work in creating exceptional student outcomes... the leaders for tomorrow! With proposed State cuts reaching as high as 18% of our total operating budget, and potential federal stimulus monies limited due to a low percentage of free and reduced lunch students in our district, the dramatic cuts to the curriculum and classroom will have a devastating affect on current curriculum.
 - Home values are directly linked to the quality of education and the report card of a district. With all excelling schools... one of only three districts in the state to achieve this... Cave Creek Unified School District adds a high value to the area home values and the tax base of the district.

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- One example of funding impact would be the repeal of Kindergarten B funding which supports all day kindergarten. The Cave Creek School District is committed to all day kindergarten due to the great gains in learning and impact into 1st grade and beyond... a cut of the Kindergarten B funding would create the need to move funds from other areas to replace these state funds and could result in cuts to other vital areas such as physical education, music, art, computer lab, library and other key learning areas.

5 Suggest some solutions/actions you are requesting:

- Do not divert the stabilization funds earmarked for education... every dollar is needed in Arizona's classrooms.
- Carefully review the funding model being used to disseminate the stabilization funds in order not to unfairly strip districts such as Cave Creek of desperately needed funds simply because they don't have as many free and reduced lunch students.
- Add a temporary override to enable communities to vote special assistance to school districts during this economic crisis.
- Allow public schools the opportunity to decide as a district whether to charge tuition and/or fees to parents to offset costs of programs such as full-day kindergarten, especially if the alternative is to disband it.

6 Close with a thank you for their time and a wish for their focused attention to this pressing matter. As the fifth youngest state in the nation in terms of demographics, educating our youth should be a priority for a successful and productive future for the State of Arizona.

7 Signature line from you

8 If mailing the letter, all correspondence should be addressed as follows:

The Honorable Jan Brewer
Governor of Arizona
1700 West Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Senators name
(ie Senator Jim Waring)
AZ State Senate
1700 W Washington
Phoenix AZ 85007

Note to Writers:

The above points under #4 and #5 are just a few ideas to get your thoughts rolling. Include areas that are critical to you. For a full list of possible education cuts the district is reviewing based on possible state budget cuts, visit www.ccusd93.org. The key is exercising your right to be heard and in letting the legislators, governor and education committee know there are a lot of constituents with concerns, voters and taxpayers who are paying attention to what is happening. Additional talking points are also available at the website www.ccsupportourstudents.com

Writing Project For Your Children

The most impact will be gained from correspondence from 'voters and taxpayers'. If you are interested in also involving your children a few ideas might include:

- I am a student at _____ and I'm in _____ grade.
- When the teacher or aide has time to help me I learn better so please help keep my classroom size small.
- I love my school because _____
- School is a place where people care about me and my future.
- I want to be _____ when I grow up.
- My favorite activity at school is _____
- Utilize pictures to show favorite things to do.

Thank You For Supporting Our Students!