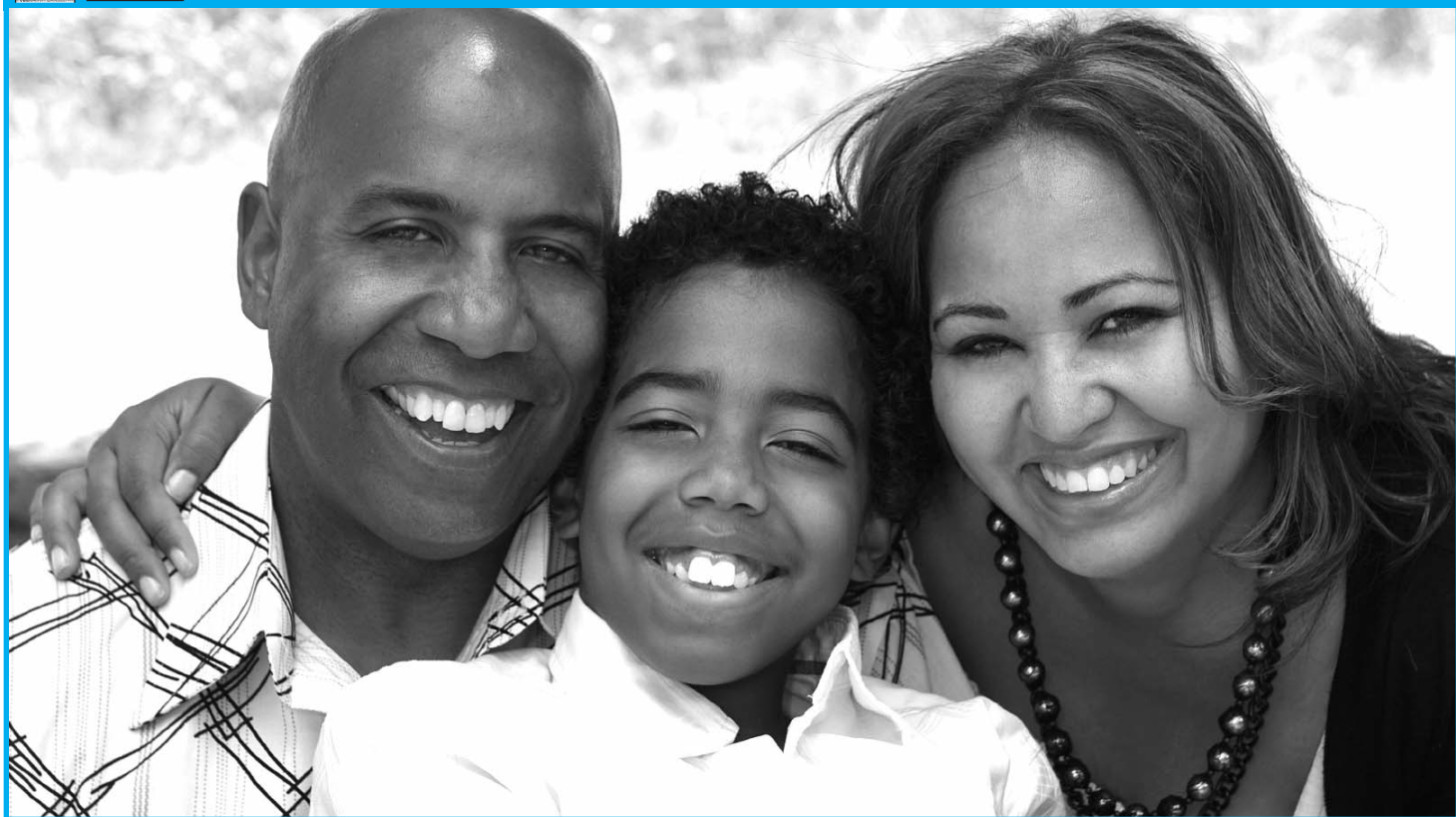




# Children's ADVOCATE



PUBLISHED BY ACTION ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN



*Hot topic*

**BUDGET DELAY IMPACTS FAMILIES AND PROGRAMS..... 3**

*Election 2010*

**BALLOT MEASURES THAT AFFECT KIDS ... 2**  
**CANDIDATES ON CHILDREN'S ISSUES ..... 6**

*Raising kids*

**PARENTS VOTE FOR KIDS..... 10**

*Early care and education*

**TEACHERS HELP RECENT IMMIGRANT CHILDREN ADJUST..... 11**

*Grassroots Snapshot*

**NORTH RICHMOND RESIDENTS REDUCE DIESEL POLLUTION..... 12**

**Register to vote by  
Oct. 18!**

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Oakland, CA  
Permit #1846

## November 2nd ballot measures

### Prop. 22: State could no longer borrow local funds



This measure would stop the state from borrowing city and county tax revenues dedicated to government services, community redevelopment projects, transportation, and public transit. The state has borrowed these funds in past years to help balance the budget.

#### SUPPORT

“For too many years, [the state has] been raiding local funds—public safety, libraries, roads, buses. [Prop. 22] would protect funds...that families rely on,” says Kathy Fairbanks with the Yes on 22 Campaign.

- ★ Last year the state borrowed \$5 billion from local services.
- ★ Previous ballot measures allowed state borrowing during fiscal emergencies, but the state has used these funds to cover a structural deficit—and has to repay them with interest.

**Supporters:** Yes on 22 (<http://savelocalservices.com>), Housing California, California Chamber of Commerce, California Library Association, California Redevelopment Association.

#### OPPOSITION

“The state needs to borrow from local government to alleviate cuts to schools, children’s health care,” says Sandra Jackson with the California Teachers’ Association. If Prop. 22 passes, “communities will suffer disproportionately.” The measure would

- ★ Cut state funding for schools by \$1 billion the first year.
- ★ Go against the will of the voters. Previous ballot measures allowed state borrowing if funds were repaid.

**Opponents:** California Professional Firefighters (916-921-9111), California Nurses Association, California Teachers’ Association, Health Access California.

—Jessine Foss

### Prop. 23: State would suspend law controlling air pollution

This measure would suspend California’s global warming law until the state unemployment rate is 5.5% or lower for a year.



#### SUPPORT

If Prop. 23 doesn’t suspend California’s global warming law, “electricity rates could go up by as much as 60 percent,” says Anita Mangels with the Yes on 23 campaign. This would “disproportionately affect low-income communities.” The measure would

- ★ Save more than a million jobs because businesses won’t have to cut costs to afford compliance with global warming law.
- ★ Hold the line on energy costs for struggling families.
- ★ Maintain California’s tough air- and water-quality laws.

**Supporters:** Yes on 23 ([www.yeson23.com](http://www.yeson23.com)), California Small Business Association, California State Firefighters Association, Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association.

#### OPPOSITION

“Proposition 23’s attack on California’s clean air laws will result in more health-damaging pollution emissions, more asthma attacks for children, and more missed school days due to respiratory illnesses,” says Bonnie Holmes-Gen with the American Lung Association in California. The measure would

- ★ Effectively repeal the landmark clean energy and clean air law.
- ★ Create more air pollution and threaten public health—especially in low-income communities disproportionately located near polluting industries.

**Opponents:** No on 23 ([www.StopDirtyEnergyProp.com](http://www.StopDirtyEnergyProp.com)), American Lung Association in California, California League of Women Voters, Latino Coalition for a Healthy California.

—Jean Parietti

### More ballot measures on pages 4 and 5

**ACTION ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN (AAC)**, publisher of the *Children’s Advocate*, is a nonprofit dedicated to informing and empowering people who work with and on behalf of children. AAC is supported in part by a California Department of Education (CDE) grant.

**Executive Director** Lisa Shulman-Malul, JD  
**Administrative Coordinator** Eric Foss  
**Volunteer** Patty Overland

**Legal Counsel** Nonprofit Legal Services Network

**Board of Directors** Lea Austin, President; Catalina Alvarado, Vice President; Charles Drucker, Treasurer; Maria Luz Torre, Secretary; Susan Bowyer; Daniel Mai; George Philipp; Randy Reiter

**THE CHILDREN’S ADVOCATE** is published quarterly by AAC. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of CDE and opinions expressed by contributors or writers do not necessarily reflect the opinions of this paper. We reserve the right to refuse advertising for any reason.

**Editor in Chief** Lisa Shulman-Malul, JD  
**Editor** Jessine Foss

**Translator** Lucrecia Miranda

**Intern** Laura Savage

**Publication Design and Production** lockwood design

**Printing** Fricke Parks Press

**Circulation:** *Children’s Advocate* is available at select child care centers, social service organizations, and public libraries throughout California. Available by bulk order or individual subscription. **For subscription info, call 510.444.7136.**

© Children’s Advocate Newsmagazine ASSN 0739-45X  
 Next Issue: Winter 2010 ■ Printed on recycled paper

Action Alliance for Children  
 1201 Martin Luther King Jr. Way  
 Oakland, CA 94612-1217

Tel: 510-444-7136; Fax: 510-444-7138

[www.4children.org](http://www.4children.org) ■ e-mail: [aac@4children.org](mailto:aac@4children.org)



# State budget delay hurts programs and families

By Jessine Foss

**A**s California spends more than three months without a state budget, early care and education programs struggle to keep their doors open while waiting for state funds. Teachers and parents are anxious—and taking action for a fair budget.

## Impact of the budget delay

Centro Vida has been operating without funding since July and has exhausted loans and lines of credit, says executive director Beatriz Leyva-Cutler. Without a state budget, the program will have to end child care in October for families who receive state subsidies, and also lay off staff.

Parents and staff are stressed, says Mago Tamayo, a long-time Centro Vida teacher and mother of three. “We’re thinking about this every night. If I lose my job, what am I going to do?” Children worry, too—she recalls a five-year-old saying, “Maybe I’m not coming to Centro Vida anymore because my mommy told me no more money.”

Yen Do’s son attends an afterschool program that is running on emergency funds. If the program closed, “it would affect me in a huge way,” says Do, a Parent Voices member and former CalWORKs recipient. “The only reason I can pay bills is because of child care subsidies,” she adds.

The Oakland Unified School District has “been forced to come up with extraordinary measures to continue providing child care,” says spokesperson Troy Flint—including layoffs and borrowing from other programs. “[But] every child is receiving the same service at the same cost as before.” The district found funds to keep centers open until December 31 and placed children in nearby programs when one center was closed.

## Summer of activism

Parent Voices members have held actions, called and visited legislators, and testified at hearings nearly every week this summer, says statewide organizer Mary Ignatius—calling for a budget that protects child care



and other services and raises revenues to pay for them. Teachers and providers have also been active, and programs have organized rallies.

Many legislators are pushing for a fair budget. “I am trying to make sure [legislators] hold the line on no more budget cuts,” says Assembly Member Sandré Swanson.

Advocates also urge people to vote for candidates and measures that support children, and tell others, “This is really important—I’m voting for what will protect children and working families,” adds Leyva-Cutler.

## Resources for bridge funding

Some First 5 commissions are partnering with lenders to offer bridge funding as a last resort for some programs: Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Sonoma, Contra Costa, Marin, Alameda, San Francisco, Monterey counties. Additional commissions are “in touch with provider communities,” adds Sherry Novick of the First 5 Association.

- Contra Costa and Alameda County First 5 Commissions offer loans to nonprofit providers with contracts for state preschool or general child development.
- First 5 Sonoma County offers bridge funding for state-funded organizations administering subsidized child care programs.

Northern California Grantmakers’ emergency loan fund offers low-interest loans for organizations with a government contract or approved grant. Contact: [www.emergencyloanfund.org](http://www.emergencyloanfund.org)

# November 2nd ballot measures *(continued from p.2)*

## Prop. 24: State would repeal corporate tax breaks



The measure would repeal laws that would allow businesses to lower their state taxes (starting in 2011) by choosing between two formulas for determining profits.

### SUPPORT

“Last year, the [state] made \$30 billion in cuts that resulted in 16,000 teacher layoffs...but gave corporations \$1.3 billion in future tax breaks,” says the Yes on 24 campaign website. “We’ve had districts eliminate their early childhood programs because of the lack of funding,” adds David Sanchez, president of the California Teachers Association. Prop. 24 would

- ★ End \$1.3 billion in tax loopholes granted to big corporations.
- ★ Prevent deeper cuts in schools, health care, and public safety.

**Supporters:** Yes on 24 ([www.yesprop24.org](http://www.yesprop24.org)), California Teachers Association, California Nurses Association, California League of Women Voters.

### OPPOSITION

“...I believe [Prop. 24] would leave our schools much worse off in the long run,” says Shirley Hoch, a board member for the South San Francisco Unified School District. The measure would

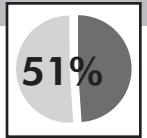
- ★ Threaten decades of cuts for schools, hospitals, and roads by adding roadblocks in front of the state’s economic recovery.
- ★ Cost California both jobs and new revenue—because corporations would not be able to hire additional employees or expand production.

**Opponents:** No on 24 ([www.stopprop24.com](http://www.stopprop24.com)), California Healthcare Institute, California Small Business Alliance, California Taxpayers’ Association.

— Jean Parietti

## Prop. 25: State would pass the budget with a simple legislative majority

Currently, California needs approval from two-thirds of the legislature to pass a budget or raise taxes. Prop. 25 would require only a simple majority vote to pass the state budget—but keep the two-thirds requirement to raise taxes. Legislators would also lose pay for each day the budget is late.



### SUPPORT

When legislators pass the budget late, “small child care providers can’t keep their doors open, or have to take out loans [while waiting for state payments],” says Richard Stapler, with the Yes on 25 campaign (see p. 3). Prop. 25 would

- ★ Stop a minority of legislators from holding up the budget.
- ★ Hold legislators accountable for failing to do their jobs.

**Supporters:** Yes on 25 ([www.endbudgetgridlock.com](http://www.endbudgetgridlock.com)), AFSCME, California Federation of Teachers, California Teachers Association, California Nurses Association.

### OPPOSITION

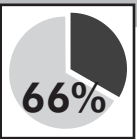
Prop. 25 would make it “easier for politicians to raise [fees]. Most families are already feeling the effects of a tough economy,” says Susan Shafer, with the No on 25/Yes on 26 campaign. The measure would

- ★ Remove an important check in the budget process.
- ★ Make it easier for legislators to increase spending, raise fees.

**Opponents:** No on 25/Yes on 26 ([www.no25yes26.com](http://www.no25yes26.com)), California Chamber of Commerce, California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association.

— Jean Parietti

## Prop. 26: State would require two-thirds vote to increase fees and taxes



The measure would require that certain fees be approved by a two-thirds vote of the legislature, and certain local fees by two-thirds of voters. In particular, the measure affects regulatory fees (imposed to address health and other concerns) and business tax assessments.

### SUPPORT

Prop. 26 would “give voters more control to stop state and local politicians from imposing hidden taxes on California families by calling them fees,” says Susan Shafer, with the No on 25/Yes on 26 campaign. The measure would

- ★ Force the legislature to cut spending and live within its means.

### OPPOSITION

Prop. 26 would mean “a billion dollars in [budget] cuts...from schools or child care or other programs,” says Lenny Goldberg of the California Tax Reform Association. The measure would

- ★ Make it almost impossible to enact regulatory fees on corporations—taxpayers would have to pay for the pollution and health effects of cigarettes, alcohol, and pesticides.



## Prop. 26: State would require two-thirds vote to increase fees and taxes, *continued*

★ Have no impact on user fees, such as driver's licenses.  
**Supporters:** Yes on 26/No on 25 ([www.no25yes26.com](http://www.no25yes26.com)), California Chamber of Commerce, California Grocers Association, Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association.

★ Cut state and local government revenues by billions of dollars.  
**Opponents:** No on 26 ([www.stoppolluterprotection.com](http://www.stoppolluterprotection.com)), California Federation of Teachers, California Teachers Association, California League of Women Voters, California Nurses Association.

— Jean Parietti

## Prop. 20 and Prop. 27: Who should draw district lines?

Prop. 20 and Prop. 27 are two conflicting measures about who should draw the districts for members of Congress and the legislature. In 2008, voters approved a measure that took away the legislature's power to redraw their districts and gave it to an independent committee. Prop. 20 would have the committee also draw congressional districts. Prop. 27 would abolish the committee, return power to redraw state districts to the legislature, and let voters reject district maps.



### Prop. 20: Commission able to redraw Congressional districts

#### SUPPORT

Prop. 20 would “hold politicians more accountable, [so] they’re not drawing districts to the advantage of friends in Congress,” says Susan Shafer with the Yes on 20/No on 27 campaign.

- ★ Legislators help make sure their friends in Congress are re-elected by drawing district lines that divide communities.
- ★ Districts would include people with “similar living standards” to make sure communities are not divided.

**Supporters:** Yes on 20/No on 27 ([www.yes20no27.org](http://www.yes20no27.org)), California Chamber of Commerce, California NAACP State Conference, Latin Business Association.

#### OPPOSITION

“[Prop. 20] would add income to the list of things taken into consideration” when drawing districts, says Kevin Murray with the Prop. 27 campaign. “If you put all the poor in one district that does kids a disservice” because fewer elected officials will advocate for them. The measure

- ★ “Harks back to the Jim Crow laws, when there were only affluent people or poor people in the same district,” adds Murray.

**Opponents:** No on 20 ([www.noprop20.org](http://www.noprop20.org)), League of Women Voters, AFSCME, California Labor Federation.

### Prop. 27: Legislature able to redraw districts

#### SUPPORT

Since 1998, “redistricting is being done with an unseen panel. They don’t know anything about our communities,” says Murray. “It affects [children’s advocates’] ability to advocate effectively if the community is split into two districts.”

- ★ The legislature should have the power to redraw districts because legislators are accountable to voters.

**Supporters:** Yes on 27 ([www.yesprop27.org](http://www.yesprop27.org)), AFSCME, California Labor Federation.

#### OPPOSITION

Prop. 27 “is supported by politicians protecting their turf. It goes against the will of the voters” who approved the independent commission, says Shafer.

- ★ When politicians draw their own districts, they often create safe districts to get re-elected each year—and have little incentive to fix problems.

**Opponents:** Yes on 20/No on 27 ([www.yes20no27.org](http://www.yes20no27.org)), California Chamber of Commerce, California NAACP State Conference, Latin Business Association.

— Jessine Foss

## NONPARTISAN ELECTION RESOURCES

- ★ **California League of Women Voters** offers Easy Voter Guides in multiple languages, nonpartisan explanations of ballot measures, and information on polling places and local elections, <http://ca.lwv.org>
- ★ **Early Learning on the Campaign Trail**, from Preschool California, provides resources for talking with candidates about early learning issues, [www.preschoolcalifornia.org/take-action/2010.html](http://www.preschoolcalifornia.org/take-action/2010.html)
- ★ **Mobilize the Immigrant Vote** helps the immigrant community mobilize around elections, [http://mivcalifornia.org/docs/MOVE\\_Toolkit](http://mivcalifornia.org/docs/MOVE_Toolkit)
- ★ **Why should I vote?** A comic flyer from the *Children’s Advocate* for parents and people who care about kids, English and Spanish, [www.4children.org/issues/2008/september\\_october/why\\_should\\_i\\_vote](http://www.4children.org/issues/2008/september_october/why_should_i_vote)

**REGISTER TO VOTE BY OCTOBER 18.**



# Candidates for Governor

**Jerry Brown, Attorney General  
(Democrat)**

**Meg Whitman, Former Business  
Executive (Republican)**

## How would you make sure all children have access to quality child care and preschool programs?

★ Supports expanding afterschool and summer programs to help children learn English.

★ We could not find any information related to child care on the campaign website or in other sources.

## How would you make sure all children get an equitable, quality education?

★ As Mayor and Governor, increased education funding.  
 ★ Would combine categorical funds (funds earmarked for specific purposes) and give schools a set amount per pupil. Schools with the most need would get more funds.  
 ★ Proposes to more effectively train and evaluate teachers.  
 ★ Supports instructional materials that provide intensive intervention and support for English learners.  
 ★ Supports continuing to narrow the achievement gap.  
 ★ As Mayor, founded two charter schools in Oakland. Supports closing “bad” charter schools and encouraging “good” ones.

★ Proposes grading schools A-F and letting parents transfer kids out of a failing school or convert to a charter school.  
 ★ Supports closing under-performing schools or replacing the staff—and giving bonuses to high-achieving educators and schools.  
 ★ Also supports simplifying the state’s categorical grants and giving remaining funds directly to districts.  
 ★ Opposes bilingual education.  
 ★ Supports eliminating the cap on charter schools.

## How would you make sure every child has quality, affordable health care?

★ Supports recent federal health care reform legislation.  
 ★ As Governor, supported healthy communities by adopting laws to reduce air pollution and lead.  
 ★ As Attorney General, fought to reduce air pollution and protect children from unsafe products.  
 ★ Supports protecting children from toxic chemicals.

★ Objects to parts of the recent federal health care reform legislation—has supported repealing it in the past.  
 ★ Supports free-market, fiscally responsible solutions that help more Californians become insured.

## How would you reduce the number of children in poverty?

★ Supports investing in construction jobs for working-class families. Also supports expanding job training and apprenticeship programs.  
 ★ Would break down regulatory barriers that deter investment and new jobs in manufacturing and clean technology.

★ Would reform welfare by imposing tougher work requirements and penalties. Would also reduce welfare’s life-time limit for adults from five years to two. The cuts would not affect aid to children.  
 ★ Supports more aggressive enforcement of child support.  
 ★ Would encourage job growth through targeted tax cuts and reduced regulatory burdens on small businesses.

## What immigration reforms would you support?

★ Supports comprehensive federal immigration reform. Opposes sanctuary cities, but says reform would make them unnecessary.

★ Opposes any form of amnesty. Would seek to prevent sanctuary cities—and withhold non-vital funding for these cities.  
 ★ Opposes Arizona’s controversial immigration law—which empowers law enforcement to ask about people’s immigration status while enforcing other laws—but also says she “would let it stand” for Arizona.

*continued on p.8*



# Candidates for Senate



**Barbara Boxer, Senator  
(Democrat)**

**Carly Fiorina, Former Business  
Executive (Republican)**

## How would you make sure all children have access to quality child care and preschool programs?

- ★ Has supported quality, affordable child care for many years.
- ★ Wrote legislation that increased the child care tax credit, supports current proposal to expand it further.
- ★ Would continue to push for a bill providing incentives for states to provide one year of preschool through the public school system.
- ★ Supports investing in improving education from preschool through higher education by increasing accountability.

## How would you make sure all children get an equitable, quality education?

- ★ Supports efforts to target funds to close the achievement gaps and address the needs of disadvantaged students.
- ★ Also supports tough education standards—plus adequate education funding—to make sure kids have the skills they need to succeed.
- ★ Would champion policies that help make sure children are given the opportunity to learn the skills they need.
- ★ Committed to making sure tax dollars get into classrooms and existing education programs are fully funded.
- ★ Supports accountability, high standards, performance-based compensation.

## How would you make sure every child has quality, affordable health care?

- ★ Actively supported the recent federal health care reform legislation.
- ★ Co-sponsored laws that created and later expanded low-cost state health insurance (Healthy Families in California).
- ★ Wrote legislation to create a patients' bill of rights, also to strengthen drinking water standards and toy safety requirements. Co-sponsored legislation to help communities provide more opportunities for children to be physically active.
- ★ Pledged to repeal the recent federal health care reform legislation because it will cost taxpayers millions through higher premiums and taxes.
- ★ Supports bipartisan reforms that provide incentives for preventative care, greater access to community clinics, more market-based competition for health insurance and prescription drugs—and make sure no one is denied coverage because of a pre-existing condition.

## How would you reduce the number of children in poverty?

- ★ Top priority is creating good California jobs, as well as giving parents skills and training.
- ★ Strongly supports recent federal legislation to help stave off teacher layoffs and cuts to Medicaid (Medi-Cal in California).
- ★ Would continue to advocate for investment in high-quality education for every child, good jobs, access to affordable housing, increased child care, and expanded health care.
- ★ Calls for supporting businesses that create jobs in the US.
- ★ Top priorities would be economic growth and job creation to reduce California's unemployment.
- ★ Opposes recent federal legislation that provides state aid to help prevent teacher layoffs and cuts to Medicaid.
- ★ Supports giving small-business owners the opportunity to succeed by cutting taxes and reducing burdensome regulations, such as the new health care reform legislation.

## What immigration reforms would you support?

- ★ Supports comprehensive immigration reform that includes a path to citizenship and tougher border security while keeping immigrant families together.
- ★ Supports Arizona's controversial immigration law, which empowers law enforcement to ask about people's immigration status while enforcing other laws.

*continued on p.8*

## Candidates for Governor *(continued from p. 7)*

**Brown**

**Whitman**

### What kind of violence prevention efforts would you support?

- ★ As Mayor, hired new police officers to focus on community policing, domestic violence, child abuse, and child prostitution.
- ★ As Attorney General, enacted mandatory sentences for child molestation.
- ★ Supports safe routes to school.

- ★ First priority is to keep communities safe.
- ★ Would advocate for the rights of crime victims.

### How would you ensure the state has enough revenue to support needed programs for children?

- ★ Pledged to preserve social programs, including welfare, from budget cuts.
- ★ Has vowed not to raise taxes unless approved by voters.
- ★ As Governor, built up a budget surplus, supported state spending limits, and reduced taxes. Also had on-time budgets.

- ★ Has called for \$15 billion in state budget cuts.
- ★ Pledged not to raise taxes. Supports a strict cap on state spending based on economic growth.
- ★ Opposes changing the two-thirds requirement in the legislature for passing a budget or tax increase (see p.4) Promised to make sure the budget is passed on time.

**SUPPORTERS:** California Federation of Teachers, California Nurses Association, SEIU, California Teachers Association.

**SUPPORTERS:** California Peace Officers' Association, Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association PAC, Small Business Action Committee.

**FOR MORE INFO:** 510-628-0202, [www.jerrybrown.org](http://www.jerrybrown.org)

**FOR MORE INFO:** 408-400-3887, [www.megwhitman.com](http://www.megwhitman.com)

—Compiled by Laura Savage and Jessine Foss

**Sources:** campaign websites, Bay Area News Group, CNBC, KGET.com, KNBC, KQED, LA Times, Mercury News, Politics Verbatim, Sacramento Bee, San Diego Union-Tribune, San Francisco Chronicle, Ventura County Star.

## Candidates for Senate *(continued from p. 7)*

**Boxer**

**Fiorina**

### What kind of violence prevention efforts would you support?

- ★ Introduced legislation that helps law enforcement handle crimes against children and children who are victims.
- ★ Championed increased federal funds for afterschool programs.
- ★ Supports reinstating the ban on military-style assault weapons and requiring all handguns be sold with child safety devices.

- ★ Opposes a ban on assault weapons.

### How would you ensure the country has enough revenue to support needed programs for children?

- ★ Would end tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas, cut tax breaks for oil and gas companies, and end the wars.

- ★ Committed to reducing government spending and lowering taxes. Pledged to oppose tax increases of any kind.

**SUPPORTERS:** California Nurses Association, California Teachers Association, California Federation of Teachers, United Farm Workers of America.

**SUPPORTERS:** Orange County Taxpayers Association PAC, Orange County Business Council, Hispanic 100, New Majority California.

*Thanks to the Boxer campaign for completing our survey.*

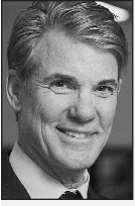
*The Fiorina campaign did not complete our survey.*

**FOR MORE INFO:** 323-836-0820, [www.barbaraboxer.com](http://www.barbaraboxer.com)

**FOR MORE INFO:** 877-664-6676, <http://carlyforca.com>

—Compiled by Jessine Foss





★★★★★ ELECTION 2010 ★★★★★



**Candidates for Superintendent of Public Instruction**

*(California's chief public education spokesperson, provides policy and direction to school districts)*

*Thanks to both campaigns for completing our candidate survey.*

**Tom Torlakson,  
Assembly Member**

**Larry Aceves,  
Retired School Superintendent**

**How would you make sure all children have a chance to succeed in school?**

- ★ Says schools need enough funding to reduce class sizes, improve teacher training, and hire more counselors.
- ★ Authored the Quality Education Improvement Act (nearly \$3 billion for low-performing schools). Would build on this.
- ★ Championed legislation to eliminate the achievement gap and improve student health.

- ★ Supports better training for educators and holding them accountable for students' outcomes.
- ★ Would share best practices of high-achieving schools in low-income communities.
- ★ Supports strong preschool programs and helping parents support their babies' development.

**What would you do to eliminate the achievement gap between ethnic groups?**

- ★ Says the achievement gap is the civil rights issue of our time.
- ★ Supports investment in low-performing community schools, also increased access to preschool, afterschool programs, good food, health care.

- ★ Supports holding educators accountable.
- ★ Calls for more instructional programs in English and math, particularly in rural districts.

**What would you do to improve education for children learning English as an additional language?**

- ★ Would help spread best practices about teaching English Language Learners.

- ★ Supports providing multiple opportunities for children to learn English.

**How would you ensure all children have access to quality child care and preschool programs?**

- ★ Says a publicly funded, universal access kindergarten-readiness program is one of the best tools to close the achievement gap and reduce the terrible drop-out rate.
- ★ Would continue to fight for universal preschool from zero to five and high-quality wraparound care.

- ★ Advocates for access to quality preschool and early childhood education. As superintendent, developed preschool programs at every site.
- ★ Would work to keep access to early childhood education a priority.

**How would you make sure all students have access to quality afterschool programs?**

- ★ Authored bills to create California's afterschool program and later expand it 300%.
- ★ Supports expanding access to quality afterschool programs.

- ★ Supports working with stellar providers that combine enrichment and academics.
- ★ Worked closely in San Jose to help providers and parks departments offer afterschool programs.

**What changes would you support to California's education funding system?**

- ★ Calls for strengthening Prop. 98 (provides funding for schools). Authored and supported efforts to reform California's budget process and raise taxes to increase school funding.
- ★ Supports recent lawsuits that charge California is not adequately and equitably funding public schools.

- ★ Top priority would be working to restore adequate and equitable school funding. Supports recent lawsuits that charge the state with failing to do this.

**SUPPORTERS:** California Federation of Teachers, California Teachers Association, many school board members and unions.

**FOR MORE INFO:** 925-682-9998, [www.tomtorlakson.com](http://www.tomtorlakson.com)

**SUPPORTERS:** La Raza Roundtable de California, Los Angeles Times, many superintendents.

**FOR MORE INFO:** 408-288-8181, [www.larryaceves2010.com](http://www.larryaceves2010.com)

— Compiled by Jessine Foss

# Raising Kids **Parents vote for kids**

By Julieta Santana

**P**arents are mobilizing around the elections as a way to campaign for programs that support children. As the *Children's Advocate* goes to press, California still does not have a state budget, and cuts to children's programs are not completely off the table. Meanwhile, many cities and counties are cutting programs for children and families—and some are trying to stave off deeper cuts with ballot measures to raise local taxes.

Proposed budget cuts are targeting “the programs low-income communities need the most,” says Astrid Campos, the LA Regional Organizer for the California Partnership. Many elected officials are advocates for children, but “in one of the hardest-hit cities...the Senator is not voting for his community. Why not? The low-income voting presence [there] is not strong enough,” she adds.

## **Educate your community—and your children**

San Francisco mom Toni Hines registered voters and collected signatures to help get a measure on the ballot to off-set recent city budget cuts by taxing hotels an additional two percent. Hines also shows her daughter how to be politically active—the seven-year-old goes with her mom to the voting booth, rallies, community meetings, and even decided to speak at a First Five meeting about funding for children's programs.

“I tell my daughter, ‘A lot of people fought and died for me to vote. It's a privilege and obligation,’” says Hines, a parent advocate with Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth. “I am the go-to person in my family,” she adds. “They call me and ask, ‘Which way would you vote?’”

Another San Francisco mom Maritza Di Cicco talked with her nine- and fourteen-year-old children about the Hotel Initiative: “I told them, ‘That way you will have an afterschool program.’” Originally from Guatemala,



*LIFETIME members Dawn Love and Ashley Smith help parents register to vote.*

Di Cicco is also with Coleman Advocates and a recent US citizen.

Even if parents cannot vote, they can “engage other community members and affect political decisions,” says Arnulfo De La Cruz, Associate Director of Coleman Advocates. Coleman parents are also campaigning for a measure that would allow undocumented parents to vote for school board members. “Undocumented parents have a powerful story to tell,” he adds.

## **Work with politicians to support children**

After the elections, parents plan to continue speaking out to elected officials. “It doesn't take a lot to make a difference,” says Diana Spatz, once a single mother on welfare who went on to found LIFETIME. LIFETIME encourages parents to meet with officials—or even call about an issue. An aide once told parents that if the legislative office got five phone calls about an issue, they would brief staff, Love recalls. Parents also sent baby shoes to an Assembly Member with notes reminding her who would be hurt by the budget cuts, she adds.

Parents need to mobilize, adds De La Cruz, because California's budget climate is the result “of having a whole group of parents shut out of the system.”

**For more election-related resources, see p.5**



# Teachers help immigrant children adjust to life in the US

By Soledad Palacios

**T**eachers share strategies for welcoming and working with children who have recently arrived in the country.

## Provide a welcoming environment

The first step is to offer children a familiar environment, says Virginia Turner of Centro Vida in Berkeley. “We try to make this their second home. If the main language [at home] is Spanish, this is how we’re going to talk to them.” Both the meals and the colors of the classrooms reflect the Latino culture, while teachers provide children with the nurturing they need, she adds.

## Support learning in two languages

Minerva Pérez recalls when an Asian child entered her program who did not speak English. “Before the family arrived, I looked for books in their language and learned a few words to communicate with them,” says Pérez. The child spent most time with his grandmother, so to help him get used to the new school the grandmother would come to the classroom—at first for a good part of the day—to be with him. As both Grandma and the child felt more at ease and learned some English, the child felt safe and was able to become part of the group, Pérez adds.

“When I was a teacher in San Jose,” says Maria Gómez, who runs Annie’s Playhouse Child Care Center in Dublin, California, “I would stay after class with the Latino children so [I could] explain to them in Spanish what they had not understood. Sometimes teachers who are not bilingual mistake this difficulty for learning problems,” she adds.

## Help with the transition

Pérez recalls how teachers helped Pablito and his family become part of his preschool classroom. The teachers visited Pablito and his family, and brought the child a toy. But the four-year-old child hid in his room. On the second visit, the teachers and Pablito’s parents invited him to play, read stories, and draw—he felt more comfortable and participated. Then, the teachers invited the whole family to visit the classroom and the



KIDANGO

Pablito “responded favorably in an environment of trust and security,” adds Pérez.

*This article was reported and written originally in Spanish, thanks to the support of the Zellerbach Family Foundation.*

## Tips to support immigrant children

- Provide extra attention to help recent immigrant children adjust
- Provide rich language environments that help children learn English as well as their home language
- Play a tape of a parent telling a story or have children dictate stories in their home language
- Welcome families—and help connect them with community resources.

## Resources

*English Learning for Preschoolers Project*, from WestEd, provides materials and trainings, [www.edgateway.net/pub/docs/pel/home.htm](http://www.edgateway.net/pub/docs/pel/home.htm)

*Preschool English Learners: A Resource Guide*, California Department of Education, [www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/psenglearnersed2.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/psenglearnersed2.pdf)

More *Children’s Advocate* articles, [www.4children.org/topics/immigrant\\_families](http://www.4children.org/topics/immigrant_families)

## North Richmond residents reduce diesel pollution

By Laura Savage and Jessine Foss

**R**esidents joined forces with health and re-development officials to re-route polluting diesel trucks and reduce pollution in North Richmond.

Community activist Delphine Smith had been speaking out about big rig truck traffic for years. Smith and her son have asthma, so she was concerned about air quality and pedestrian safety.

Meanwhile, Cedrita Claiborne with the Asthma Program at the county health department was trying to understand why asthma hospitalizations were rising in the area. Together they mobilized a work group on air quality in the neighborhood.

**Trucks impact neighborhood:** North Richmond is near railways and shipping ports which, combined with the traffic congestion and idling of big rigs, has spiked diesel air pollution to alarming rates. Residents found that North Richmond's diesel pollution was six times the county average and forty times the state average. Diesel pollution contributes to asthma and other illnesses, especially in children. The constant truck traffic also tore up asphalt and blocked intersections.

**Strong coalition:** "Community members prioritized diesel air pollution as one of several environmental concerns at a town hall meeting," says Claiborne. A coalition of health and environmental groups also produced a report, *Deluged by Diesel*, which helped rally residents. The community formed a work group with residents, community organizations, health and redevelopment officials, and staff from Board of Supervisors member John Gioia's office. The year-and-a-half-long process of community meetings helped the community find their voice, adds Smith.

**Residents collect data:** "The knowledge of community members about what streets were being used and alternative routes was key," says Claiborne. Smith and other residents collected in-depth data on air quality in the area using monitoring devices from the health department. They also counted trucks at different times of the day and talked with drivers to find out how many trucks were in the area and what routes they took.



North Richmond residents at a community meeting

CRAIG COMMUNICATIONS

**New truck routes drawn up:** The community used the data to find two alternate truck routes that would reduce traffic in North Richmond. Staff from the redevelopment agency and Supervisor Gioia's office presented the route recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. The county had already been looking for ways to re-route trucks, says Gioia, but the *Deluged by Diesel* report made the project a high priority. "The community's understanding of the health issues helped solidify advocacy," he adds.

**Parents key:** Parents and the community truly spearheaded this project, says D'Andre Wells of the county redevelopment agency, by voicing their concerns to officials and collecting data to highlight the project's urgency.

**Victory:** The Board of Supervisors approved the alternate routes and is planning to put up signs and put in special pavement to mark the routes. The county is also seeking \$22 million to build a bypass.

**Continued advocacy:** Delphine Smith continues to be an active force in the community. She serves on a neighborhood oversight council, teaches about asthma, and has spoken before Congress about health issues in her community. "As a community person, you should educate yourself about what's going on and get involved," she says.

**CONTACT:** Cedrita Claiborne, Contra Costa Health Services Asthma Program, 925-313-6861