



TIPS FOR PLANNING

“FLUNK-THE-BUDGET FRIDAYS” ACTIVITIES

In addition to taking the two most vital actions: responding to action alerts and meeting directly with your legislators (See “Take Action”); we encourage local PTAs to be creative in planning local “Flunk-the-Budget Fridays” activities.

WHAT IS A “FLUNK-THE- BUDGET- FRIDAY”?

Friday is the day that state legislators typically spend in their home districts, instead of in Sacramento. To make sure legislators hear directly from the people they listen to most – their local parents and constituents – PTAs across the state are planning to hold “**Flunk-the-Budget Fridays**” activities that call special attention to the harmful impact the proposed state budget cuts will have on children.

“Flunk-the-Budget Fridays” are any activities that you and your PTA organize in opposition to the proposed budget cuts. This document offers just a few examples. You can try a different one each Friday or concentrate your efforts on a single Friday each month. The goal is to make sure your local legislators hear PTA’s voice loud and clear in their legislative district each and every week!

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

- **“Can You Hear Us Now?”** Ask parents and students at your PTA meeting or at a rally in front of the campus after school to take out their cell phones all at the same time and call their legislators on the spot! All you need is a list of your local legislators and their local office phone numbers. Follow-up the phone calls by asking everyone to send an email when they get home. Invite your local news reporters to observe the calls.
- **Field Trip.** Take a group trip to your local legislators’ offices. Meet at a public place and walk together, if possible. Bring parents, students, teachers, business leaders, community members, etc. Bring signs and wear buttons. Call your local reporters and bring them along as well. Be respectful of the legislators and let them

know ahead of time that you plan to gather in front of their office – invite them to come out and speak to your group and to listen to your concerns.

- **Meet the Press.** Make sure your local newspapers and news stations understand PTA's opposition to the budget cuts by inviting them to a press event in your community. Emphasize that local parents are the ones taking the lead in opposing this budget. Select 3-5 representatives to speak. Use sample talking points from PTA – but remember to personalize the story. The press is most interested in the local angle – how will the proposed cuts affect the children in your communities? Contact your district PTA or the State PTA for assistance, and for opportunities to collaborate on press events with others in your area.
- **Local Forum.** Hold a special meeting that allows local parents, students, teachers and others in the community to express how budgets cuts will affect them. Multiple groups in your area can collaborate to demonstrate their concern for the state's children. You can download a PowerPoint presentation on the budget from the California State PTA website. Invite local legislators and the press to attend these forums. Also invite friends and family who are not yet PTA members, but support our cause.
- **Letters and More Letters.** Many PTA's have already delivered tens-of-thousands of letters to their legislators and the governor opposing the budget cuts. This is a great way to show how strongly your community feels about protecting children. Everyone can take a few minutes to write a letter. Letters should be as personal as possible, though they do not need to be long. (Samples are available from PTA.) Collect all the letters and deliver them in-person to your legislators in their home offices on Fridays. Invite local media along on your deliveries.

BE CREATIVE. “Flunk-the-Budget Fridays” are an opportunity for local PTAs to demonstrate in creative ways their passion for the well-being of all children. The best ideas are local ones that you think up and carry out – and that stick to the main message of California State PTA: Flunk the budget!