

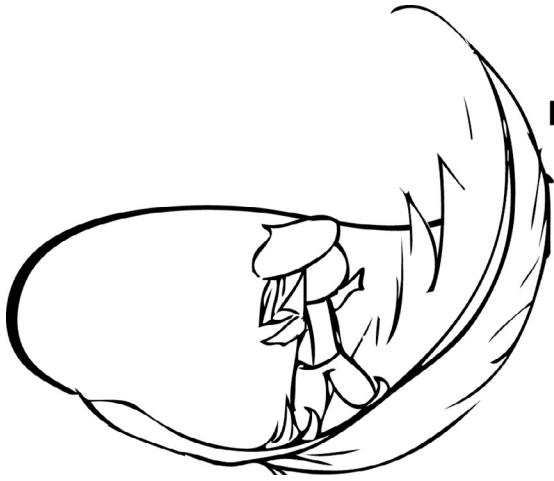
There is a disturbing trend online where teens post videos asking "Am I ugly?"



Explore the multiple part-time job opportunities for teenagers such as baby-sitting.



Varsity boys' volleyball plays against the Mark Keppel Aztecs in their season opener.



the MOOR



Governor Brown Introduces Tax Initiative to Offset Educational Budget Cuts

SHANNON LI
Staff Writer

The state of California has the highest population in the United States. Four years ago, it ranked as the 43rd state out of 50 in terms of per-pupil spending in education. This year, California slipped into 47th place; when adjusted for regional differences, the state spends \$8,667 per student, which is about \$3,000 below the national average of \$11,665, according to the Quality Counts report from *Education Week*.

Governor Jerry Brown introduced a ballot to increase taxes on sales and wealthy earners, "designed to balance the state budget, prevent further cuts to education, provide a progres-

sive tax structure and provide constitutional protections of public safety realignment funding," according to his website.

The original plan would raise taxes on those who make more than \$250,000 and raise sales tax by 0.5 percent until 2017, which was projected to raise \$5 billion for K-12 education and

measure, the Millionaires Tax Initiative, in order to increase its chances of passing the November 2012 ballot. The combination also changed the duration of the tax increases from five to seven years.

per *The Sacramento Bee*, the initiative also frees up general funds that can be used for other state programs, such as corrections, universities or social services.

Numerous teachers, public

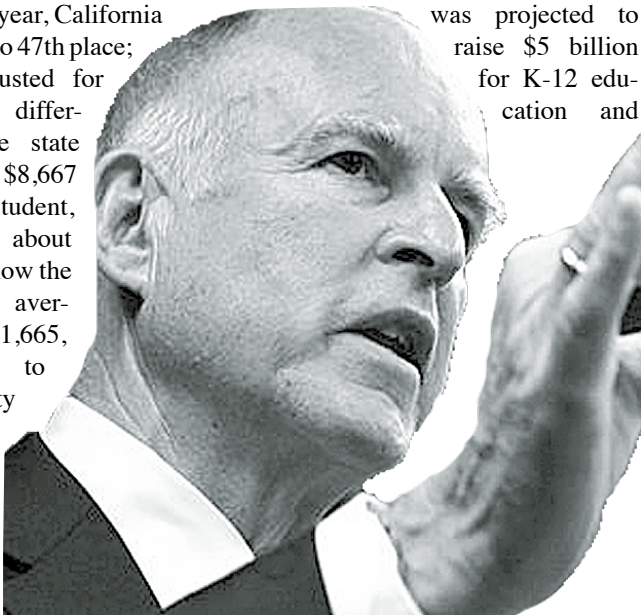
break the bonds of learning, and you send the message that education is not a priority in our state."

Many children and parents rallied throughout the state in to protest against the state's continual lack of funding for public schools and garner support for the bill.

"This bill should be passed because it helps sustain our core and extracurricular programs," senior Alex Perez said. "We won't have to worry about more and more budget cuts like we have had [to] for years."

The act will not only offset the budgetary problems for Californian elementary and high schools, but CSUs and UCs as well. However, it is not without its flaws.

"I'm generally in favor of the measure, but its language is a bit vague because it does not guarantee a set proportion of the budget will go specifically to K-12 education," math teacher Paul Stein said. "The language doesn't guarantee that money originally meant for education won't be diverted elsewhere. However, we don't have much of a choice; any law that gives money to the schools is better than none."



The Schools and Local Public Safety Protection Act of 2012

What's at stake?

If this initiative is passed, California will receive enough money for the AUSD to survive the 2012-13 school year with almost all of its funding intact. Failure to pass would mean a \$370 cut per student, or almost \$6.5 million for AUSD.

Governor Brown estimates that his initiative would raise \$6.9 billion per year, with roughly \$2.4 billion per year going toward education.

PHOTO courtesy of Google images

It also raised the tax rate for high earners and lowered the sales tax increase from 0.5 percent to 0.25 percent. If passed, the initiative is estimated to raise about \$7 billion annually. The California State Universities (CSU) and Universities of California (UC) would also gain a four percent increase in state funding starting in 2013.

According to the daily newspa-

safety officials, businesses and community leaders across the state are declaring their support for the act.

"When you issue thousands of layoff notices for educators, you are hurting students," California Teachers' Association President Dean Vogel said in *San Mateo's The Daily Journal*. "When you continually lay off teachers, you

community colleges, according to the California Department of Finance.

Brown combined his initiative with another similar education

Earlier Start to School Year Made to Benefit Students

ELLEN LI
News Editor

For most students in California, the last couple weeks of August are seen as the final opportunities to enjoy summer vacation before school begins in September. However, in the last several years, many schools throughout the state have been transitioning to an earlier start and end date for their school years.

Recently, the Alhambra Unified School District (AUSD) decided that for the 2012-2013 school year, students will be starting school on Aug. 20 and ending on May 31, with two days off for Thanksgiving break.

For the 2013-2014 school year, school will begin on Aug. 14 and end on May 30, with a one week break for Thanksgiving.

This decision was a result of a culmination of discussions be-

tween certificated and non-certificated staff throughout the district about the advantages of beginning and ending school earlier; three key reasons were brought up.

Ofentimes, when graduating

are offered remediation courses in the summer. However, those remediation courses begin before AHS students end the school year in mid-June, but that problem would be eliminated with the ear-

offer Advanced Placement (AP) classes that allow high school students to earn college credits if the students pass the AP exams that are offered in May. Schools with earlier start dates have an ad-

often look for jobs after graduation. Those who are on break earlier have an edge; they are able to search for jobs earlier, as well as start working earlier, so employers tend to hire them first.

"It's been discussed all year," Alhambra Teacher Association (ATA) AHS Segment Director and English teacher Kathleen Tarr said. "Ultimately, it was driven to help students."

Many students agreed that this change would be beneficial to them in the long run. However, some expressed difficulties adjusting to a temporarily shortened summer and different end month for the school year.

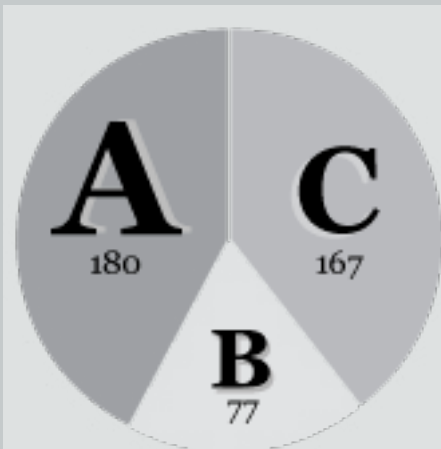
"I'm happy that an earlier start would mean more time to prepare for the AP exams, but I'm not sure I could adjust to going to school in August because I'm used to having all of August [to] relax," junior Mabel Wong said.

seniors do not pass writing tests with high enough scores to enroll in college English classes, they

liar start date. Furthermore, many educational institutions across the country

vantage as they have several more weeks to prepare for the tests.

The last reason is that seniors



Which of the options would you prefer for the 2012-2013 school year?

- A. August 14, 2012--May 30, 2013 (1 week of Thanksgiving Break)
- B. August 20, 2012--May 31, 2013 (2 days of Thanksgiving Break)
- C. August 27, 2012--June 12, 2013 (1 week of Thanksgiving Break)

424 students were surveyed.

MOOR graphic by ALISON TRAN