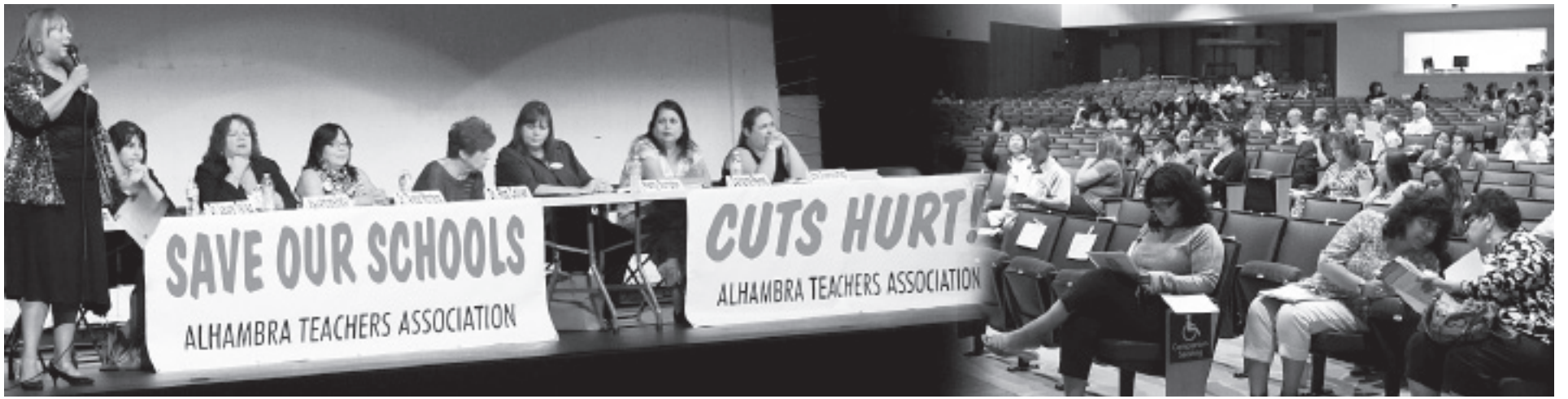


INITIATIVES ON BALLOT TO DRASTICALLY AFFECT STATE FUNDING



MOOR photos by JOYCE TSUI

NO MOOR CUTS Alhambra PTA President Marcia Wilson led this year's Town Hall meeting hosted by San Gabriel High School on Oct. 17. The meeting's main focus surrounded Propositions 30, 32 and 38, which concern state funding. Propositions 30 and 38 involve funding for education, while Proposition 32 involves banning political contributions. Voting for these propositions will occur on Nov. 6, along with the presidential election.

CAROLINE REN
Copy Editor

Over the past years, funding for education has decreased as the budget has tightened. Proposition 30, which will be voted on Nov. 6, will increase income taxes on individuals who earn \$250,000 or more for seven years and will also increase California sales tax from 7.25 percent to 7.5 percent for four years. If passed, the tax money will go to K-12 schools. However, if Proposition 30 is rejected, then California will lose \$6.8 billion, mainly to education.

"Without revenue, our school district will lose \$8.8 million a year. Over the past three years, we have lost \$53 million," President of the Alhambra Teachers Association (ATA) Dr. Rosalyn Collier said.

If budget cuts have to be implemented, AUSD will increase the number of furlough days, which are non-instructional days on which students do not attend school, from three days to approximately ten days. On these furlough days, the entire district will be closed, meaning that students lose

time in the classroom that could be spent learning and that employees also lose pay.

Moreover, funding for extracurricular programs and teachers' salaries in AUSD will diminish. AHS has already lost the Advancement via Independent Determination (AVID) program and Crossroads Tutoring this year.

"[P]rograms that are not A-G requirements, like music and sports [...] are programs that kids really enjoy and when they are cut, school is less interesting for some students," social science teacher and union representative for ATA and the California Teachers Association (CTA) Jose Sanchez said.

Furthermore, California education has shifted to Common Core Standards, which are guidelines for the information that all California teachers now have to teach, meaning that schools will need to buy new textbooks. In order to buy these textbooks, AUSD may have to lay off teachers, increase class sizes or cut extracurricular programs.

In addition, Proposition 30 affects higher education as well. If the proposi-

tion is rejected, the CSU Board of Trustees plans to make up for budget cuts by increasing college tuition by five percent.

"All students' futures are at stake with [the increase in] university tuition. Opportunities at universities are going to be limited," Sanchez said.

The option is between paying thousands of dollars more for college tuition or paying a 0.25 percent increase

"All students' futures are at stake with the [increase in] university tuition."

-Jose Sanchez

Two other initiatives on the ballot are Propositions 32 and 38, which relate to campaign funding and taxes, respectively.

Corporations can endorse groups that affect campaigns. For instance, Americans for Responsible Leadership donated \$11 million to Small Business Action Committee, which opposes Proposition 30.

Proposition 32 bans corporate and union donations to candidates and prevents corporations, unions and the gov-

ernment from using automatic deductions from employees' wages on political affairs. However, opponents of Prop 32 claim that it is disguised as political reform but actually favors special interest groups.

"Proposition 32 is a deliberate attempt to mislead the public about how political affairs are funded," Collier said at the Town Hall meeting.

Proposition 38, like Proposition 30, raises taxes; however, Prop 38 raises income taxes for 12 years on all California residents who earn over \$7,316 a year. It uses a sliding scale, which means that the lowest income earners pay a 0.4 percent increase, while individuals who earn over \$2.5 million pay a 2.2 percent increase.

If Prop 38 passes, seven of the ten billion dollars that will be generated will provide for public schools and early childhood development programs. The other three billion is saved by the state to pay off debts.

With these three initiatives on the ballot, funding for education is a prominent issue.

"It will be harder for the future generation [to get a college education], especially in this economy," senior Anthony Le said.

INCREASED TURNOUT WITHIN FRESHMEN COUNCIL ELECTIONS

OLIVIA CHEUNG
Editor in Chief

Freshmen class council elections are held annually to determine the respective year's nine-member council, whose responsibilities center on building school spirit and fundraising for class events. Compared to last year's voting turnout of 26 percent when 178 out of 687 freshmen voted, this year's elections achieved a turnout of approximately 66 percent, a dramatic increase from previous years. Out of 687 freshmen, a total of 457 votes were counted.

Numerous changes contributed to this turnout, such as the change in election season. Council elections are usually held in spring, alongside Associated Student Body (ASB) elections; however, this year's Freshmen Council elections were held in the fall from Sept. 24 to Sept. 28. This change sought to make freshmen feel more involved within the school from the beginning.

"If freshmen [only

begin] to feel involved in school activities in spring, then school spirit and pride would [...] have been lower during the first few months of school," Freshmen Council member Angela Yang said. "If you don't feel like you have a place in something, it's hard to be proud of it."

"ASB has really made an effort to reach more students and be more inclusive."

-Abelardo Bourbois

There was also an increase in student and teacher cooperation. A number of teachers made previous arrangements to bring their classes down to the Student Government Room to vote using a new clicker method, allowing students to vote in under ten seconds.

Another method introduced this year provided freshmen candidates with the opportunity to present their speeches in the Quad during lunch the day before elections. Election booths were up every period, including lunch, providing students with more opportunities to cast their vote.

The Freshmen Leadership

class teacher, Abelardo Bourbois, attributes a large amount of the success to his freshmen leadership class and ASB.

"[The leadership class's] energy, enthusiasm and word-of-mouth helped get out the vote and build interest," Bourbois said. "ASB has really made an effort to reach more students and be more inclusive. [...] We used this Freshmen Council election as a medium for testing new ideas, methods

and strategies for reaching more students and including them in voting."

As the school year progresses, both the Freshmen Leadership class and the newly elected Freshmen Council will continue working to integrate the 2016 class.

"Everyone knows what it's like to be a [freshman] and feel completely out of place in a new environment," Freshmen Council member Vanessa Gutierrez said. "[It is] up to Freshmen Council to make [every ninth grader feel] like an actual Moor and not just a 'newbie.'"

AUSD TRUANCY POLICY SERVES AS MODEL FOR OTHER LA SCHOOLS

SEAN NGUYEN
Staff Writer

A major issue that is often tackled by school systems is truancy. In this frontier, the Alhambra Unified School District (AUSD) has been credited with making strong efforts in curbing student truancy.

In a report by the Los Angeles County Student Attendance Task Force (SATF), AUSD is cited as one of the nation's best practice models for addressing attendance-related issues.

"AUSD has implemented a research-based, comprehensive approach to addressing student attendance issues that is nationally recognized and has generated several years' worth of improved student attendance data," the 2012 report stated. "As a result, in the 2009-2010 school year, the num-

ber of students labeled as truant fell to 2,263, a 42 percent reduction from 2008-2009."

According to Assistant Principal of Student Services John Ashby, the AUSD takes a preventive stance towards attendance issues rather than a reactive one. Instead, AUSD

"AUSD has implemented a [...] comprehensive approach to addressing student attendance issues."

- 2012 LA SATF report

leans towards measures that help students become able to make the decisions necessary to show up to class on time and ready to learn.

"We use progressive discipline to work with students as they actually make the decision to be truant," Ashby said. "We have seen a lot of teacher and administrative involvement, but it ultimately is a student's choice to be in attendance."

Essential to AUSD's preventive policies is the Gateway to Success program. This pro-

gram connects schools, parents and students in an effort to provide the necessary resources for students to attend school regularly and on time.

"The goal of Gateway is to increase access to high-quality school-based

mental health care by developing innovative, research-informed approaches that link the school system with the local mental health system," the SATF report stated.

The district's Director of Student Services, Laurel Bear, is credited for spearheading the original push to policies aimed at prevention and intervention throughout the district.

"[Bear] is fantastic," Ashby said. "She's responsible for the Gateway to Success program and she often participates as a keynote speaker for educating the districts administration and teachers about important truancy policies."

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